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University of Glasgow
School of Humanities
Celtic and Gaelic

Oilthigh Glaschu
Sgoil nan Daonnachdan
Ceiltis is Gàidhlig

**The *Bórama*:
the poetry and the hagiography
in the Book of Leinster**

Elín Ingibjörg Eyjólfsdóttir
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 scís* '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

AFM	Annals of the Four Masters
AI	Annals of Innisfallen
AS	<i>Acallam na Senórach</i>
AT	Annals of Tigernach
AU	Annals of Ulster
BS	<i>Buile Suibhne</i>
CA	<i>Cáin Adomnáin</i>
CBDB	<i>Cath Belaig Dúin Bolc</i> episode in the <i>Bórama</i>
CGSH	<i>Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae</i>
CJIS	<i>Canadian Journal of Irish Studies</i>
CMCS	<i>Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies</i>
CnC	<i>Comram na Clóenfhera</i>
DIL	<i>Dictionary of the Irish Language</i>
DIS	<i>Dictionary of Irish Saints</i>
ÉC	<i>Études Celtiques</i>
FA	Fragmentary annals of Ireland
FÓ	<i>Féilire Óengusso</i>
GMB	<i>Genemain Moling ocus a Bethu</i>
HTR	<i>The Harvard Theological Review</i>
JIS	<i>Journal of the Ivernian Society</i>
JRSAI	<i>The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i>
Lec	The Book of Lecan
LL	The Book of Leinster
MD	Martyrology of Donegal
MG	Martyrology of Gorman
MT	Martyrology of Tallaght
OG	<i>Onomasticon Goedelicum</i>
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
PHCC	<i>Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium</i>
PRIA	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</i>
RC	<i>Revue Celtique</i>
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
SCF	<i>Studia Celtica Fennica</i>
SGS	<i>Scottish Gaelic Studies</i>
SH	<i>Studia Hibernica</i>

<i>UJA</i>	<i>Ulster Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>YBL</i>	The Yellow Book of Lecan
<i>VSH</i>	<i>Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae</i> (C. Plummer)
<i>VSHH</i>	<i>Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae</i> (W.W. Heist)
<i>VT</i>	<i>The Tripartite Life of St. Patrick</i>
<i>ZCP</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie</i>

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 Cumail instead of Find mac Cumail. In terms of place-names, initially the Irish standardised form is given based on *OG*, followed by the English, as in Ross mBruicc (Broccross), 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 Clóenfhera* 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 Cumail 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 síis.*²

The *Bórama* is a twelfth-century text and is preserved on ff. 294^b – 308^b 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 *éraic* (‘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.’

³ W. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, *RC* 13, (1892), pp. 32-124. S.H. O’Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, 2 vols (London, 1892), 1, pp. 359-390, ii, pp. 401-424.

⁴ C. Buttimer, ‘The Bórama: literature, history and political propaganda in early medieval Leinster’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, (Harvard University, 1983).

⁵ M. Dillon, *The Cycles of the Kings*, (Dublin, 1946 (reprint 1994)). D.M. Wiley, ‘An Introduction to the Early Irish King-Tales’, in *Essays on the Early Irish King Tales*, D. M. Wiley ed., (Dublin, 2008), pp. 13-67.

of the words *bó* and *rím* which effectively means ‘cattle-counting’.⁶ 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.⁷ 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, *Bórama Laigen*.⁸

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 levying of the bórama and Finn mac Cumail⁹

At the start of the text Tuathal Techtmar, 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 Techtmar, as wife. When he brought her home to Leinster it was met by resentment of the people of Leinster, saying that Tuathal Techtmar’s younger daughter Dáirine had been preferable. Therefore he goes

⁶ W. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, p. 32. *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, E.G. Quin ed., (Dublin, 2007), p. 79.

⁷ G.S. Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death of Loegaire mac Néill’, *SH* 8 (1968), pp. 21-48; 28.

⁸ K. Meyer, ‘Brian Borumha,’ *Ériu* 4 (1908 – 10), pp. 68-73; 71 M. Ní Mhaonaigh, *Brian Boru: Ireland’s Greatest King?*, (Stroud, 2007), p. 15. The term *bórama* is mentioned in the Annals of Ulster entry 798. *Combustio Inse Patraicc o genntibh, & borime na crich do breith*. ‘The burning of Inis Pátraic by the heathens, and they took the cattle-tribute of the territories,’ *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)*, S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill eds., (Dublin, 1983), pp. 253-4. *DIL*, p. 79. Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death’, p. 28.

⁹ *LL* II. 37638-38310. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 36-55, §§1-42.

back to Tuathal Tectmar, where he lies about the demise of his first wife and requests the younger daughter in her place. Tuathal Tectmar 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 Tectmar 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 Tectmar techta in talman* occurs here (with no specific speaker indicated).

Some years later Tuathal Tectmar 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 comairli*. The Leinstermen suggest that Finn mac Cumail 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 mBroccross*. 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 Broccross 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.

¹⁰ This poem has been edited and translated by Desirée Goverts. Cf. D. Goverts, ‘*Mór in gním*: an edition of some poems from the *Bórama*, with translation and textual notes’, unpublished M.A. thesis, (Utrecht, 2009), pp. 23-32.

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)¹¹

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 *sáerchuart* ‘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 rí* 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*

¹¹ LL II. 38311-38743. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 54-99, §§43-124. This section is referred to as the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* section, because it also exists as a separate text in YBL. When referring to the text of the YBL manuscript I will refer to it by its full title, when I am specifically discussing the section within the *Bórama*, I will abbreviate it to *CBDB*.

techta úain co hAilech occur, recited by Bishop Aedán and Brandub respectively.¹² 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 aslingthi 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 bórama¹³

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 Fínnachta Fledach mac Dúinchada [king of Ireland in AD 675 AU], to ask that the *bórama* be rescinded. Poems 23 *Turchan duin a*

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*.

¹³ *LL* ll. 38744-39321. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 98-117, §§125-161.

Thuathail and 24 *Érig a Mo Lling* occur here (and are conversation poems with two to three speakers).¹⁴

Moling sets out on his journey and brings with him the poet Tollchenn as part of his retinue, with poem 25 *In-anmum 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 Donnigilla 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 Huib Néill*. When Moling has recited his poem Fínnachta accuses him of passing off 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. Fínnachta 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

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.¹⁵

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*.¹⁶ 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.¹⁷ In size it is *circa* 13" x 9", 'with an uncommonly complicated palaeography.'¹⁸ 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. 313^a, 'Aed mac meic Crimthaind ro scrib in leborso 7 ra thinoil a llebraib imdaib.'¹⁹ It has however been noted by O'Sullivan that there are in fact six distinct hands

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.

¹⁶ *The Book of Leinster*, vol. 1, ed. R.I. Best, (Dublin, 1954), p. xii.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. xviii. W. O'Sullivan, 'Notes on the Scripts and Make-Up of the Book of Leinster', *Celtica* 7 (1966), pp. 1-31; 6. D. Schlüter, *History or Fable? The Book of Leinster as a Document of Cultural Memory in Twelfth-Century Ireland*, (Münster, 2010), p. 21.

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.

¹⁹ 'Aed Húa Crimthaind wrote this book and collected it from many books.' *The Book of Leinster*, vol. 1, p. xv. *The Book of Leinster*, vol. 6, ed. A. O'Sullivan, (Dublin, 1983), p. 1337, cf. Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, p. 19, fn.

responsible for the manuscript.²⁰ 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 Éirenn*, *Táin Bó Cúailgne*, and the earliest version of the metrical *Dindsenchas*.²⁵ The *Bórama* begins on f. 294^b and reaches until f. 308^b. 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

²⁰ O'Sullivan, 'Notes', pp. 6-7. Cf. Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, pp. 27-29.

²¹ Bishop Find of Kildare, included a letter to Aed mac Crimthainn in the bottom margin of f. 288, asking him to finish the text of *Cath Maige Mucrima*, '7 scribthar dam deired in sceoil bicse.' '...and let the end of this little tale be written for me.' O'Sullivan, 'Notes', p. 7, fn. The letter is not reproduced in the diplomatic edition. Cf. Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, p. 243.

²² *The Book of Leinster*, eds. R. I. Best, O. Bergin, M. A. O'Brien and A. O'Sullivan, 6 vols., (Dublin, 1954 – 1983).

²³ U. Mac Gearailt, 'Review: The Book of Leinster, formerly Lebar na Núachongbála, vol. 6', *SH* 24 (1988), pp. 190-197; 190.

²⁴ Irish Script on Screen (ISOS): <<http://www.isos.dias.ie/english/index.html>> [accessed 2008 – 2012]

²⁵ *Celtic Culture: a historical encyclopedia*, J. Koch ed., 5 vols, (Oxford, 2006), p. 1126.

²⁶ Cf. Buttimer, 'The *Bórama*'.

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.²⁷ 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 Cuirnín and Murchadh Riabhach Ó Cuindlis, working at the family seat in the north Connaught province.²⁸ In addition to these scribes, there are some ‘manuscript headings, additions, and unimportant marginal jottings’, in the manuscript by later hands, which are unknown.²⁹ 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.³⁰ 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 Oileáin Inse Duin*, *Lebor Sochair Lothra*, *Lebor Lothra Ruadáin*, *Cín Dromma Snechta*, *Lebor Dairi*, *Lebor Dúine Geimin*, *Lebor Sabail Padraig*, *Lebor Sochair Flatha O Fiachrach*.³¹ 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 a text

²⁷ *The Book of Lecan*, facsimile, prepared by K. Mulchrone, (Dublin, 1937). ISOS <<http://www.isos.dias.ie/english/index.html>> [accessed 2012].

²⁸ *The Book of Lecan*, foreword and pp. xi-xiii, xiv. K. Jackson, ‘Review on The Book of Lecan: Introduction and Indexes by Kathleen Mulchrone’ *Speculum* 15.3 (1940), pp. 360-1; 360.

²⁹ *The Book of Lecan*, p. xiii.

³⁰ *Ibid*, pp. x-xi.

³¹ *Ibid*, p. xiii.

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^a, 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 oculus 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

³² Jackson, 'Review', p. 360.

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.

³⁶ A. Maniet, 'Cath Belaig Duin Bolc', *Éigse* 7 (1953 – 55), pp. 95-111; 108-9.

³⁷ Poem 33 *A Brigit bennach ar sét* is not included in Lec, along with eight other poems of the *LL* text.

regarding Fínnachta's fate.³⁸ The text then ends with the comment *conad he f. forcenn na Boroma*.³⁹ 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.⁴⁰ It dates from around late fourteenth century to early fifteenth century.⁴¹ 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.⁴² 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.⁴³ 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.'⁴⁴ Atkinson had 'planned to give the title to his facsimile and it has consequently now been transferred to the manuscript itself.'⁴⁵ It has now been made more readily available by the Irish Script on Screen Project.⁴⁶ The YBL contains in addition two texts which are relevant to the *Bórama*, *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg*, ff. 207^b – 209^a (cols. 942 – 945) and *Cath Almaine*, which is considered to be the sequel to the *Bórama* and is situated just before *Cath Belaig*

³⁸ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 116-117, §162.

³⁹ Ibid. 'So that is the end of the Bórama.'

⁴⁰ H.P.A. Oskamp, 'The Yellow Book of Lecan Proper', *Ériu* 26 (1975), pp. 102-121; 102. Van Hamel Wiki < http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Dublin,_Trinity_College,_MS_1318 > [accessed 18 April 2012].

⁴¹ Ibid. T. Ó Concheanainn, 'Gilla Ísa Mac Fir Bhisigh and a scribe of his school', *Ériu* 25 (1974), pp. 157-171; 157.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ W. O'Sullivan, 'Ciothruadh's Yellow Book of Lecan', *Éigse* 18, vol. 2 (1981), pp. 177-181; 177.

⁴⁴ *The Yellow Book of Lecan facsimile*, ed. Robert Atkinson, (Dublin, 1896). O'Sullivan, 'Ciothruadh's Yellow Book of Lecan', p. 177.

⁴⁵ O'Sullivan, 'Ciothruadh's Yellow Book of Lecan', p. 177.

⁴⁶ ISOS < <http://www.isos.dias.ie/english/index.html> > [accessed 18 April 2012].

Dúin Bolg, on ff. 206^a – 207^b (cols. 939 – 942).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^{ra} – 87^{vb}, a vellum manuscript of the fifteenth century, preserved in Royal Irish Academy in Dublin.⁴⁸ A. Maniet used the YBL text primarily for his edition and translation of the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* in 1955.⁴⁹ 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.

⁴⁷ *Catalogue of the Irish manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin*, eds. E. Gwynn et al., (Dublin, 1921), pp. 94-110, 109. Van Hamel Wiki <http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Cath_Belaig_D%C3%BAin_Bolg> [accessed 18 April 2012]. Van Hamel Wiki <http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Cath_Almaine> [accessed 18 April 2012].

⁴⁸ *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy*, eds. Mulchrone et al., (Dublin, 1926 – 70), 3297 – 3307 (no. 1223). Van Hamel Wiki <http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Dublin,_Trinity_College,_MS_1318> [accessed 22 April 2012]. Van Hamel Wiki <http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Dublin,_Royal_Irish_Academy,_MS_D_iv_2> [accessed 22 April 2012]. ISOS <http://www.isos.dias.ie/master.html?http://www.isos.dias.ie/libraries/RIA/RIA_MS_D_iv_2/english/index.html?ref=http://www.isos.dias.ie/libraries/RIA/english/ria_menu.html> [accessed 22 April 2012].

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^a – 207^b (facsimile), where it is followed by the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* text.⁵⁰ It is also preserved in MS D iv 2 (992), ff. 87^{ra} – 87^{va}, where it follows on from the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* text.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.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*.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 Dúin Bolg* section and the textual relationship between these three texts in the following chapter, and it will be important to that particular discussion.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*

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

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid. ISOS < <http://www.isos.dias.ie/english/index.html> > [accessed 22 April 2012]. Van Hamel Wiki < http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Dublin,Royal_Irish_Academy,_MS_23_E_29 > [accessed 22 April 2012]. *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland*, J. Radner ed., (Dublin, 1978), pp. 66-81.

⁵³ W. Stokes, 'The Battle of Allen', *RC* 24 (1903), pp. 41-70. P. Ó Riain, *Cath Almaine*, (Dublin, 1978). P. K. Ford, *The Celtic Poets*, (Massachusetts, 1999), pp. 56-63.

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.⁵⁵ 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.⁵⁶ The MT is contemporary with the Martyrology of Óengus (*Félire Óengusso Céili 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.⁵⁷ 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.⁵⁸

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 – 16.⁵⁹ 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 1630.⁶⁰ Brussels 5100 – 4, ff.209 – 224, is a paper manuscript, dated between 1625 and 1630.⁶¹ In 1931, the MT was published, edited by R.I. Best and H.J. Lawlor out of

⁵⁵ *Martyrology of Tallaght*, eds. R. I. Best and H. J. Lawlor, (London, 1931).

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. ix. *The Book of Leinster*, vol. 6, pp. 1596-1648.

⁵⁷ MT, p. ix. P. Ó Riain, 'The Tallaght Martyrologies, Redated', *CMCS* 20 (1990), pp. 21-38. L. Breatnach, 'Poets and Poetry', *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies*, (1996), pp. 65-78; 74. P. Ó Riain, 'The Martyrology of Óengus: The Transmission of the Text', *SH* 31 (2000 – 2001), pp. 221-242. D. Dumville, '*Félire Óengusso*: Problems of Dating a Monument of Old Irish', *Éigse* 33 (2002), pp. 19-48. P. Ó Riain, *Feastdays of the Saints*, (Brussels, 2006), p. 320.

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 *Feastdays 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.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. xiv. Ó Riain, *Feastdays*, p. 333.

these two main manuscripts.⁶² 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.⁶³

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.⁶⁴ *FÓ* is also found in Brussels 5100 – 4, on ff. 94a – 119b, the same manuscript which contains MT and MG.⁶⁵ 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*.⁶⁶

The third martyrology to be noted here is the MG. Its full text only survives in a single manuscript, Brussels 5100 – 4, ff. 124^a – 197^b, along with MT and *FÓ*.⁶⁷ 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 1174.⁶⁸ 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.⁶⁹

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 Mícheál Ó Cléirigh, in collaboration with his cousin Cú Choigríche, in 1630 at the Franciscan Convent of Donegal.⁷⁰ 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

⁶² MT, p. xix.

⁶³ Ibid, p. xiv.

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.

⁶⁶ *The Martyrology of Óengus the Culdee*, ed., W. Stokes, (London, 1905 (1984)), pp. viii-xxiv.

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 Leabhar Breac, in his second edition of the text. Ó Riain, 'The Tallaght Martyrologies, redated', p. 23.

⁷⁰ *Martyrology of Donegal*, J.H. Todd and W. Reeves eds., (Dublin, 1864), p. xi. Ó Riain, *Feastdays*, p. 148.

Book of Hymns, poems and Lives of Saints.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 *Felire na Naomh nErennach: Martyrologium Sanctorum Hiberniae*.⁷²

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

...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]...

The fact, however, that O [*FÓ*], which survives in its entirety, also used T in its original form, very probably as its only sources...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 *LL*.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.⁷⁵

The earlier martyrologies have been invaluable sources for contextualising the saints of the *Bórama*, and their Leinster composition and preservation has been particularly helpful. As we shall see, there are good reasons to read the *LL* text of the *Bórama* alongside MT which was also present in *LL*. However, the relationship between the *Bórama* and the Martyrologies extends back to the early modern period at least, when the *Bórama* became a source for interpretation of Martyrology entries. Ó Riain notes that in terms of MD, the *Bórama* served as a source, where Ó Cléirigh added commentary to the entries of the saints.⁷⁶ Therefore when researching the possible candidates for the saints contained in the *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.

⁷¹ MD, pp. xiii-xx.

⁷² Ó Riain, *Feastdays*, p. xxiv, fn.

⁷³ Ó Riain, ‘The Tallaght Martyrologies, redated’, p. 22

⁷⁴ Ó Riain, *Feastdays*, p. 156.

⁷⁵ Ó Riain, ‘The Tallaght Martyrologies, redated’, p. 22, fn.

⁷⁶ Ó Riain, *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*.⁷⁷ 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*.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ *FÓ*, pp. 150-157.

⁷⁸ *Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae*, P. Ó Riain ed., (Dublin, 1985). *A Dictionary of Irish Saints*, P. Ó Riain ed., (Dublin, 2011).

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 Buttimer 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 Uí 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 Uí 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. Buttimer divides the discussion of the *Bórama* into five sections devoted to Uí 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, Buttimer 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 Buttimer 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 Buttimer’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 Buttimer 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 Buttimer, ‘The *Bórama*’, pp. i, 128.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p.ii. R. Ó hUiginn, ‘The Literature of the Laigin’, *Emania* 7 (1990), pp. 5-10; 8.

⁸¹ Buttimer, ‘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'.⁸³ 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'.⁸⁴ 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.⁸⁵

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.'⁸⁶ 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.'⁸⁷ 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.⁸⁸

In 1968 Mac Eoin published an article on Loegaire mac Néill and his mysterious death, a tale which has survived in numerous sources.⁸⁹ This death tale features in the *Bórama*, in the short account of how Loegaire mac Néill broke his promise and died

⁸³ L. Ó Buachalla, 'The Leinster tribute feud', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* 66 (1961), pp. 13-25.

⁸⁴ Ó Buachalla, 'The Leinster tribute feud', pp. 14-17.

⁸⁵ Buttimer, 'The *Bórama*', p. 142.

⁸⁶ Dillon, *Cycles*, pp. 2, 103.

⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 103. This view is shared by P. Mac Cana in 'Prosimetrum in Insular Celtic Literature', in *Prosimetrum: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Narrative in Prose and Verse*, J. Harris and K. Reichl eds., (Cambridge, 1997), p. 115.

⁸⁸ E. Knott and G. Murphy, *Early Irish Literature* (London, 1967), pp. 136-7.

⁸⁹ Mac Eoin, 'The mysterious death', pp. 21-48.

as a result.⁹⁰ In his article Mac Eoin suggests that the *Bórama* may be the Leinster answer to the *Táin Bó Cuailgne*, as there are many features similar to a ‘cattle-raid’ tale.⁹¹ While generally well received this hypothesis has not been developed further.⁹² Mac Eoin was among the first to suggest that the *Bórama* was the product of the tenth-century ecclesiastic Flann mac Máelmaédóc.⁹³ This discussion was continued by E. Bhreathnach in 1994 and in 2002 C. Doherty suggested that while Flann mac Máelmaédóc may have been primarily responsible for the outline of the *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.⁹⁴

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 *Bórama* in his *Irish Kings and High Kings*, published in 1973, where he identifies that ‘the chief protagonist of the *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.’⁹⁵ Doherty, is among the few who have given the *Bórama* a cursory overview, and does notice the ‘strong hagiographical flavour’ it presents.⁹⁶ Doherty states that ‘In origin this was a tribute due to the king of Tara from the Leinstermen’ indicating that he views the *Bórama* as being in a state of development and that the ‘redactor’ gives the material a ‘pro-Laigen slant’.⁹⁷ It is safe to say that Doherty was the first to identify the apparent insertion of the hagiographical material into the *Bórama* text, and while others had

⁹⁰ LL II. 38284-38294. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 52-3, §40.

⁹¹ Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death’, p. 30.

⁹² Ó hUiginn, ‘The Literature of the Laigin’, pp. 8-9.

⁹³ Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death’, p. 29

⁹⁴ E. Bhreathnach, ‘Killeslin: An Irish Monastery Surveyed’, *CMCS* 27 (1994), pp. 33-47, 39. C. Doherty, ‘The transmission of the cult of St. Máedhóg’, in *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: texts and transmission*, P. Ní Chatháin and M. Richter eds., (Dublin, 2002), pp. 268-283; 271.

⁹⁵ F. J. Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings*, (Dublin, 2001), p. 144.

⁹⁶ C. Doherty, ‘The Irish hagiographer: resources, aims, results’, in *The Writer as Witness*, T. Dunne ed., (Cork, 1987), pp. 10-22; 19.

⁹⁷ Doherty, ‘The Irish hagiographer’, pp. 18-19. C. Doherty, ‘Was Sulien at Glendalough?’, in *Glendalough: City of God*, C. Doherty, L. Doran and M. Kelly eds., (Dublin, 2011), pp. 261-271; 265-6.

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.⁹⁸

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*.⁹⁹

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*).¹⁰⁰ 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

⁹⁸ 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.

⁹⁹ M.T. Davies, ‘Kings and clerics in some Leinster sagas’, *Ériu* 47 (1996), pp. 45-66; 65.

¹⁰⁰ D. Goverts, ‘The origin of the *bórama* tribute’, unpublished MA thesis, (Utrecht, 2009). Goverts, ‘*Mór in gním*’.

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 Buttimer, 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.¹⁰¹ 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.’¹⁰² 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.¹⁰³

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*.¹⁰⁴

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’.¹⁰⁵ The idea of the ‘immanent cycle’ is that, there can be a collection of texts representing a ‘...“whole” epic’

¹⁰¹ Based on E. Poppe’s table representing the history of the classifications of cycles: Arbois de Jubainville in 1883, D. Hyde in 1899, E. Hull in 1906, K. Meyer in 1909, E.C. Quiggin in 1910-11, R. Thurneysen in 1921 and finally M. Dillon in 1948. Cf. E. Poppe, ‘Of Cycles and Other Critical Matters’, *E. Quiggin memorial lecture 9* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 13.

¹⁰² Dillon, *Cycles*, p. 2.

¹⁰³ Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ Dillon, *Cycles*, pp. 103-114.

¹⁰⁵ Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, pp. 14-15.

although never being performed or presented as a whole, the audience will recognise it as such.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.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.’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.’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: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] ...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’:¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 15.

¹⁰⁸ Wiley, ‘Introduction’, p. 16.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, p. 10.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 39.

¹¹² P. Mac Cana, *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

*Acus iss iat so na prímscéoil .i. Togla 7 tana 7 tochmarca 7 catha 7
uatha 7 imrama 7 oitte 7 fessa [7] forbassa 7 echtrada & aithid 7
airggne.*¹¹³

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

and sixteenth century, RIA, 23 N 10, p. 29; Bodleian Library, Rawl. B. 512, f. 109; and British Library, Harl. 5280, f. 47.

¹¹³ LL II. 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.

¹¹⁴ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, pp. 41, 50. G. Toner in his discussion on the tale lists of Ireland, states that the tale lists themselves went through changes. G. Toner, ‘Reconstructing the Earliest Irish Tale Lists’, *Éigse* 32 (2000), pp. 88-120; 115-18.

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

¹¹⁶ P. Ó Riain, ‘The Materials and Provenance of “Buile Suibhne”’, *Éigse* 15 (1973 – 4), pp. 173-188; 176.

¹¹⁷ H.L.C. Tristram, ‘Early Modes of Insular Expression’, in *Sages, Saint’s and Storytellers*, D. Ó Corráin, L. Breathnach and K. McCone eds., (Maynooth, 1989), pp. 427-448; 438.

episodes into macroforms.¹¹⁸ Weighing up the possibility of the episodes forming the *Bórama* as macroform, it brings attention to the author or compiler of the text, as it is preserved in *LL*, and A. Burnyeat discussed such matters in her recent article ‘*Córugud and Compilatio in Some Manuscripts of 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 *auctor*: where an *auctor* is responsible for both content and form, the *compiler* is only responsible for the form which he imposes upon his *auctoritates*, that is the text or texts with which he works.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 *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.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 *iarsin t-slicht sa* ‘according to this version’ or *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.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 *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 *Bórama*.¹²² Burnyeat in her discussion of the *Táin* mentioned the various ways in which a compiler may impart his own intervention in the text. In respect of the *Bórama*, there is possibly only a single instance where such an overt intervention is displayed, and that is at the inclusion of poem (14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach*, where the Latin sentence *alibi in hoc libro scripsimus* ‘we have written (this poem) elsewhere in this book’ is inserted.¹²³ These instances will be explored further in the context where they occur

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p. 438.

¹¹⁹ A. Burnyeat, ‘*Córugud and Compilatio in Some Manuscripts of Táin Bó Cúailgne*’, *Ulidia* 2 (2009), pp. 356-367; 357.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 359.

¹²¹ Ibid, pp. 360-1.

¹²² *LL* 1. 38718. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 94-5, §119.

¹²³ *LL* 1. 38425. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 62-3, §56.

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.¹²⁴ 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*.¹²⁵ 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 Cumail¹²⁶

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.¹²⁷ 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*.¹²⁸ 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.¹²⁹ 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*.¹³⁰ 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 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.

¹²⁶ *LL* ll. 37638-38310. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 36-55, §§1-42.

¹²⁷ Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’. For this particular section see Chapter 2: The Poetry.

¹²⁸ Goverts, ‘The origin’, pp. 5-43.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 46.

¹³⁰ Cf. Goverts, ‘The origin’, p. 6.

daughters, Fithir and Dáirine, nor is there mention of the *bórama* in these instances.¹³¹

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 Senórach* (*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*

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 f. 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 Máelmaédóc was the author of *Túathal Techtmar ba ríg Temrach* who was the *airchinnech* of Killeslin (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, 'Killeslin', p. 39. Mac Eoin, 'The mysterious death', p. 29. C. Doherty also suggests that the *Bórama* may have been the product of Flann mac Máelmaédóc, 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 *Andiu 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 Flaithiusaib 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 Buttmer, 'The Bórama', chapter 1.

¹³² B. Ó Cuív, 'Comram na Cloenfherta' (*CnC*), *Celtica* 11 (1976), pp. 168-179. W. Stokes, ed., 'Acallamh na Senórach' in *Irische Texte*, (1900).

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 Garbthanach. 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 *CnC* and of the *bórama*:

*Lecht in trichait rígingen
ar thrí milib mod n-ainmech
ba hí in chomrama Chloenferta
dia mbaí in bórama Laignech.*¹³⁵

This seems to indicate that the *Bórama* 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 *bórama* was a relatively well-known part of Ireland's early history at this time.¹³⁶

The story of the two sisters also features in a short passage in *AS*, where unlike the *CnC* it is not the event as such that is highlighted but rather *AS* 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 Caílte the motivation for telling how the place came by its name.¹³⁷

*Ocus tangadur reompo assa h-aithle-sin co Carnn na Curad, risa raiter in Garbthanach i nd-Uaib Muiredaig issin tan-so. 'Ocus indis duind, a m'anam, a Chailti,' ar Patraic, 'cid imam tucad in Garbthanach ar in n-inad-sa?'*¹³⁸

G. Parsons discusses this particular episode in her thesis 'A Reading of the *Acallam na Senórach* as a literary text', and concludes in relation to its situation in *AS*:

...there are other significant points to be drawn from this example. First, the structural function of *dinnshenchas* is very clear: the story of the sisters is enveloped by the question concerning the toponym and its answer. An appreciation of this structure is aided by comparison of this episode from *AS* with the same episode in *BL* [the *Bórama*]. Therein, the episode concludes with an onomastic statement which is very close to that of *AS* [...] However, it is not prefaced by any reference to the toponym. Secondly, although in contrast to *Findtulach*, *Garbthanach* is thought to be a real place-name, we see here another example of an apparently pre-existing tale being incorporated into *AS* by means of an onomastic formula.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ *LL* II. 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', *ZCP* 24 (1953 – 4), pp.139-153; 146.

¹³⁶ Goverts, 'The origin', p. 46.

¹³⁷ Stokes, '*Acallamh*', pp. 117-118. Dooley and Roe, *Tales*, pp. 122-3. Goverts, 'The origin', p. 20.

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 Caílte,' said Patrick, 'why this place is named the Rough Washing?' Dooley and Roe, *Tales*, p. 122.

¹³⁹ G. Parsons, 'A Reading of *Acallam Na Senórach* as a Literary Text', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, (2006), pp. 101-2.

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*.¹⁴⁰ 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*.¹⁴¹

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.’¹⁴² 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.¹⁴³ 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*.¹⁴⁴ 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

¹⁴⁰ Dobbs, ‘Graves’, pp. 139-153.

¹⁴¹ Dooley and Roe, *Tales*, pp. 122-3. *LL* 1. 37670. ‘Hence Garb-thanach (Rough Washing) is so called.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 38-9, §5.

¹⁴² Goverts, ‘The origin’, p. 40.

¹⁴³ Mac Cana, *Learned tales*, p. 42.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* ‘The Wooing of Fithir and Dáirine: the two daughters of Tuathail.’

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 Cumail is also closely linked to the text of *AS*. *AS* tells how after the battle of Mag Rath, Finn mac Cumail 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 Broccross, 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 Cumail 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 *fianaigecht* material and the suggestions of K. McCone and others that:

¹⁴⁵ Stokes, ‘*Acallamh*’, p. 75. Dooley and Roe, *Tales*, pp. 81-2.

¹⁴⁶ Stokes, ‘*Acallamh*’, p. 75. This poem will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2: The Poetry.

¹⁴⁷ Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, p. 189.

¹⁴⁸ A. Dooley, ‘The Date and Purpose of *Acallam Na Senórach*’, *Éigse* 34 (2004), pp. 97-126.

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 *fiánaigecht* was for a time the tradition of less powerful groups in Irish society. Hence, it has been argued, *fiánaigecht* 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 *fiánaigecht* material. Within *LL* there are also a number of texts relating to Finn.¹⁵¹ 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 *fiánaigecht* 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 *fián*-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 Cuind 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 7 Darine da ingen Tuathail*.¹⁵⁴ Its already recognised tradition

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 Cumail 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*.¹⁵⁵ It therefore seems highly likely that both the tradition of the girls' fate and of Finn mac Cumail were used in the creation of the legend of the *Bórama*. It seems almost certain, from what both episodes of Finn mac Cumail in the *Bórama* and in the *AS* portray, that Finn mac Cumail 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)¹⁵⁶

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 1955.¹⁵⁷ 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.

<i>LL</i>	<i>YBL</i>
<p>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 Ua Dúnlainge comes to Brandub and presents him with gifts.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>12 Faillet sund aisceda rí</i></p> <p>Máedoc leaves.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>13 M'ael trébend torcbálach</i></p> <p>Brandub in disguise of a slave prepares a cauldron full of meat. Cummascach demands Brandub's wife, she gets away from him. Glasdám, Cummascach's</p>	<p>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 Uí Néill and to Leinster. He is advised by his father to avoid any disgraceful act.</p> <p>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</p>

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

¹⁵⁶ *LL* ll. 38311-38743. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 54-99, §§43-124.

¹⁵⁷ Maniet, 'Cath Belaig Duin Bolc'.

LL

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 *erenagh* of Kilranelagh who kills him. Bishop Aedán of Glendalough comes to Brandub. He is uterine brother of Áed mac Ainmerech.

(14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach*¹⁵⁸

Bishop Aedán advises Brandub to send messengers to Áed mac Ainmerech to tell of his son's death. Brandub recites a poem:

15 *Tiagat techta úain co hAilech*

The messengers tell Áed mac Ainmerech 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 Dúin Bolg. Bishop Aedán prophesises for Áed the outcome of the battle. Bishop Aedán goes from Áed mac Ainmerech 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 *Itchúsa na merggi*

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 *Atchonnarc aslingthi 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 *Lussán Æda 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 Ainmerech prepares to face the

YBL

decide to burn down the house where Cummascach was. Cummascach escaped through the roof of the burning building. Conal, abbot of Kilranelagh kills him, by severing his head.

a) *Tiagaid techta (uadaib) co hAileach*

Brandub sends messengers to Áed mac Ainmerech with an offer of peace and compensation for the death of his son. Áed mac Ainmerech refuses.

Áed along with his troops attack Leinster. Again a messenger, this time Bishop Aedán, is sent by the men of Leinster to offer him compensation and friendship, because they recognised the crime they had committed by killing the son of the king of Ireland. Áed still refuses and insults Bishop Aedán.

b) *Is itchi conaigim-sea*

Insults are exchanged and Bishop Aedán prophesises the demise of Áed mac Ainmerech.

Áed mac Ainmerech placed his camp at Kilbaylet and gets into a dispute with the king of Ulster over the location of his tent.

Diarmaid, son of Áed Rón, king of Ulster is captured by Brandub and after negotiations, was set free and a treaty of alliance was made between the two regions. Brandub gave him a hermitage.

Brandub and the men of Leinster, decide to send messengers to Cóemgen of Glendalough because Áed did not accept their peace proposals. The messenger tells Cóemgen what has been going on, while Cóemgen is trimming the brambles and bushes, and he only replies 'You see what I do'. The messenger returns to Brandub and tells him what transpired, saying that he had received no further message. Brandub interprets the words and the actions of the cleric, and understands that he has the permission of the cleric to attack. Brandub and his men outfit horses with bags of stones and a great torch and send it into the camp of Áed mac Ainmerech. The men flee from the great clamour and terrible cries of the

¹⁵⁸ Situated on f. 48^a in the Book of Leinster.

<i>LL</i>	<i>YBL</i>
<p>Leinstermen, asks for his cowl which had been given to him by Columba. The cowl had been left behind, which was a bad omen.</p> <p>A short anecdote of how Áed mac Ainmerech received the cowl from Columba.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>This was the battle of the Pass of Dún Bolg where Áed mac Ainmerech was killed.</p>	<p>attacking men and many fell in this battle.</p> <p>Rón Cerr had been disguised as a monk and it was he that dealt Áed mac Ainmerech his death-blow.</p> <p><i>c) Loicine lond ledrad cath</i></p> <p>Then a she-wolf, just as Bishop Aedan had predicted, came and mutilated the body of Áed mac Ainmerech, because he had forgotten to take along with him the cape of Colum Cille which was for his protection. In this battle Beac, king of Airgiolla, also fell. Bishop Aedan came and buried Áed mac Ainmerech in his church, because they had the same mother, this is also the burial-place for Beac, king of Airgiolla.</p> <p><i>d) Truag lium na ndernad and</i></p> <p>Second mention of Aed dying and being buried by Bishop Aedán with full honours. The lament of the wife of Áed mac Ainmerech</p> <p><i>e) A mBuach</i></p> <p>Third mention of Áed dying and being buried by Bishop Aedán with full honours. This was the Battle of Pass of the Dún Bolg.</p> <p><i>Follows on with:</i></p> <p>A battle between the southern and the northern Uí Néill and who died there, this was the Battle of the Dathi.¹⁵⁹</p>

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*.¹⁶⁰ 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

¹⁵⁹ Maniet, 'Cath Belaig Duin Bolc', pp. 99-111.

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 à 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 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 Belaig Dúin Bolg*. That it is not stated clearly which church Bishop Aedán belongs to in *Cath Belaig 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

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.

¹⁶² Cf. *LL* ll. 38384-38389, including footnote. Cf. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 58-9.

¹⁶³ Cf. Chapter 2: The Poetry.

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 Belaig Duin Bolc', p. 106.

Aedan with Glendalough had been omitted.¹⁶⁵ On the other hand, in *LL* the metrical tract, *Lecht Cormaic meic Culennain*, it says in quatrain fourteen:¹⁶⁶

Lecht Aeda meic Ainmereich
ac Cill Rannairech randgil,
...¹⁶⁷

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 Ainmereich 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.¹⁶⁸ 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 Ainmereich 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.¹⁶⁹

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

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, pp. 96-97.

¹⁶⁶ *LL* ll. 6158-6382. Dobbs, 'Graves', pp. 139-153.

¹⁶⁷ *LL* ll.6211-6212. 'The grave of Aed son of Ainmereich, at Cill Rannairech – bright portion ...'. Ibid, pp. 140, 145.

¹⁶⁸ 'Wherefore freedom is granted to Cell Rannairech.' Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 60-1, §55.

¹⁶⁹ L. Price, *The Place-Names of Co. Wicklow*, vol. 3, (Dublin, 1945), p. 120.

the *Bórama*.¹⁷⁰ It also strengthens the view that Maniet expressed that the YBL version of *Cath Belaig Dúin 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 Dúin Bolg* was familiar with the poem *Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin* as well.¹⁷¹ 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.¹⁷²

Why the compiler of the *Bórama* chose to use *Cath Belaig Dúin 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.¹⁷³

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.’¹⁷⁴ 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.¹⁷⁵ 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*.¹⁷⁶ In his article G. Toner discusses at length these two tale lists, List A

¹⁷⁰ Dobbs, ‘Graves’, pp. 140, 145.

¹⁷¹ Maniet, ‘Cath Belaig Duin Bolc’, pp. 98-9.

¹⁷² Ibid, pp. 100-1.

¹⁷³ Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, p. 226.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 280.

¹⁷⁵ Maniet, ‘Cath Belaig Duin Bolc’, p. 99.

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’.¹⁷⁷ 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 Duin 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

¹⁷⁷ Toner, ‘Reconstructing’, p. 89.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 88.

¹⁷⁹ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, pp. 41-49, esp. 42-3.

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 Duin Bolg*. Cf. *LL* 1. 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 Cumail, 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 Dúin Bolg* fits very well within the textual outlay.

¹⁸² Cf. discussion on Moling and poem *18 Dénaid dún ar cotach* in Chapter 4: Moling.

¹⁸³ P. Ó Riain, 'The Lives of Kevin (Caoimhghin) of Glendalough', in *Glendalough: City of God*, C. Doherty, L. Doran and M. Kelly eds., (Dublin, 2011), p. 137. MD, pp. 142-3.

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.¹⁸⁵ 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 Culennáin*.¹⁸⁶ 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.¹⁸⁷ 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.¹⁸⁸ 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 bórama¹⁸⁹

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*.¹⁹⁰ 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. 283^b – 285^b just before the *Bórama* (which begins on f.

¹⁸⁵ *LL* I. 38425. 'We have written (this poem) elsewhere in this book.' Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 62-3, §56. Cf. *LL* II. 6882-6961.

¹⁸⁶ *LL* II. 6067-6157, 6158-6382.

¹⁸⁷ M. O'Daly, 'A chóicid choín Chairpri crúaid', *Éigse* 10 (1961 – 1963), pp. 177-197. Dobbs, 'Graves', pp. 139-153.

¹⁸⁸ Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, pp. 228, 243.

¹⁸⁹ *LL* II. 38744-39321. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 98-117, §§125-161.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. discussion in Chapter 4: Moling.

294^b), in addition there is a short poem, initial line *Rochuala* found on f. 149^a.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

¹⁹¹ W. Stokes, ed., *Goidelica*, (London, 1872), pp. 179-182. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’. K. Meyer ed. and trans., ‘Anecdotes of St. Moling’, *RC* 14 (1893), pp. 188-194. *FÓ*, pp. 150-157. K. Meyer ed., *Miscellanea Hibernica*. (Urbana, 1917), pp. 17-18. V.Hull, ‘Two anecdotes concerning St. Moling’, *ZCP* 18 (1930), pp. 90-99.

¹⁹² *FÓ*, pp. 150-157. Stokes, *The Birth and Life of St. Moling*, (London, 1907). When referring to *GMB* in the main text I am referring to the Irish Life of Moling in Stokes’ edition. C. Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, vol. 2, (Dublin, 1997), pp. 190-205. W.W. Heist, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, (Brussels, 1965), pp. 353-356. P. O’Leary trans., *The Ancient Life of Saint Molyng*, (Dublin, 1887). P. Grosjean, ‘Textes Hagiographiques Irlandais’, *ÉC* 2 (1937), pp. 269-303. J. G. O’Keeffe ed. and trans., *Buile Suibhne*, (London, 1913).

¹⁹³ Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings*, p. 144.

¹⁹⁴ Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, p. 295.

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

¹⁹⁵ *LL* II. 38633-38680. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 84-89, §§ 94-105.

¹⁹⁶ *LL* II. 39075-39091. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 110-111, §§ 147-151.

¹⁹⁷ Buttimer, 'The Bórama', pp. 311-312.

¹⁹⁸ Davies, 'Kings and Clerics', pp. 62-3.

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 Fínnachta 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 Duin 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 AI) of the Uí 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. *LL* l. 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 leith for leth. Araísín níro fulangair do Leith Cuind
co roemid forru. 7 coró marbait nóí míle díb im thrí maccu Cairpri
Liphecair...*²⁰²

The poem, which follows the prose, gives:

*In cath ac Cnámros ni chelam
coscrad síde.
Im thrí rígu docerddatar and
tri trí míle.*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 Éirenn*:

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.

*Ro bris [Nemed] tri catha for Fomóire .i. loingsig na fairgge .i. Cath
Badbgna la Connachta. Cath Cnamrois la Laigniu. Cath Murbuilg i
nDal Riatai.*²⁰⁶

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. Preceding the poem *Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin*, is the poem, *A chóicid chóem Chairpri chrúaid*, although it is incomplete in *LL*.²⁰⁷ This poem touches on a number of events in the history of Leinster. In M. O'Daly's edition and translation verse fourteen gives:

*Cath cruaid Cnamrois rind
ria mac Fiachach co ngliu duind
tri rí gnoi míle mór dremm
focerar and de chlaind Chuind.*²⁰⁸

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.²⁰⁹ 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*).²¹⁰ This text has been a part of some discussion among scholars as to its

²⁰⁶ *LL* ll. 628-630. 'He [Nemed] won three battles against the Fomoraig [or sea rovers]: the battle of Badbgna in Connachta, of Cnamros in Laigne, of Murbolg in Dal Riada.' R. Macalister ed. and trans., *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, vol. 3, Irish Text Society vol. 39, (1940), p. 123.

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 Fíachu (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.

²⁰⁹ Stokes, 'The Boroma', p. 51, fn.

²¹⁰ Ó Cuív, 'Comram na Cloenfherta', pp. 168-179.

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 1. 37830) and *Iar sain gabais Corpre Liphechair ...* (LL 1. 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 slogaib hi Laigniu, ar Samuin int sainrud. 7 luid Dunlang 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 Énna. According to traditional synchronisms Cormac mac Airt was alive around the end of the third century while Dúnlang mac Énna 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:

²¹¹ LL 11. 37830-37831. ‘Cormac son of Art levied it’ and ‘Thereafter Carpre Lifechair assumed [the kingship of Ireland]....’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 42-3, §§20, 22.

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.

²¹⁴ Ibid, p. 168.

...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*.²¹⁵

The problem here is that both Dillon and Ó Cuív take Cormac mac Airt's mention in *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 *CnC* part is placed correctly within the *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 *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 *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 *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.²¹⁶

Another such temporal anomaly occurs in section two (the '*Cath Belaig Duin Bolg*' episode (or *CBDB*)), when Brandub encountered Diarmait, son of Áed Rón who was king of the Ulstermen. In the *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].²¹⁷ Buttimer 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:

...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

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ AFM, pp. 214-215.

²¹⁷ T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, (Cambridge, 2000), p. 623.

the northern Uí Néill at this time which lends an air of credibility to the character of the events represented in the narrative.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 *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg*.²¹⁹ This lends some support for the hypothesis that section two of the *Bórama* (which covers the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* episode) in *LL* and the YBL version of *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 *Bórama* seems to share with a number of texts, and while Buttimer 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 *Bórama*. In this chapter the question was raised whether the *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 *LL*, shows that whether or not the compiler of the *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 *ǵianaigecht* material, *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.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, pp. 272-3.

²¹⁹ Maniet, ‘Cath Belaig Duin Bolc’, pp. 104-5.

²²⁰ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 36-41, §§1-12, 44-51, §§23-37, 54-95, §§43-120 and 52-3, §§38-41. Cf. Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, pp. 208-33, for a discussion on Loegaire mac Néill as well as, Cf. Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death’, pp. 21-27.

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 nGéd* 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 Cumail 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

²²¹ Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, p. 14.

²²² Cf. discussion on *Buile Suibhne* in Chapter 4: Moling.

²²³ Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, p. 15.

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 preceding 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 Dúin 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* preceding *Cath Belaig Duin 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

²²⁴ The argument being regarding the Book of Leinster, that poem *14 Guidim Comdid cumachtach*, precedes the *Bórama*, as well as several anecdotes involving Finn mac Cumhaill and Moling, giving the impression that the texts belong to the ‘immanent cycle’ concept of ‘a whole epic’, within the manuscript.

²²⁵ For a detailed list of the texts contained in Lec cf. ISOS
http://www.isos.dias.ie/master.html?http://www.isos.dias.ie/libraries/RIA/RIA_MS_23_P_2/english/index.html?ref=http://www.isos.dias.ie/libraries/RIA/english/ria_menu.html [accessed 29 April 2012].

²²⁶ Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, p. 21.

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 Dúin 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 Duin 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 Dúin 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.

²²⁸ Dillon, *Cycles*, p. 103. Wiley, ‘Introduction’, p. 16.

²²⁹ Such as poems *A chóicid chóem Chairpri chrúaid* and *Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin* 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 quatrain of the poem, and very seldom more than that. Hence, if the poem is only a single quatrain then it is included. Only on four occasions does Stokes give an entire poem consisting of more than one stanza; 17 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad*, 18 *Dénaid dúin ar cotach*, 19 *Lussán Aeda meic Ainmereich* and 20 *Dénaid dúin bar comairle*.²³¹ On two further occasions Stokes includes more than the first quatrain, 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 Thuathail* 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 *Atchonnarc 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

²³⁰ Stokes, 'The Boroma', p. 32.

²³¹ Ibid, pp. 72-77, §76, 96-97, §122. Poem 19 *Lussán Aeda meic Ainmereich* 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 Lling 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.

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 Tecthmar's two daughters, Fithir and Dáirine as well as the imposing of the *bórama*: *01 Fithir is Dáirine*, *02 Tuathal Tecthmar 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 '*rannaigeacht bec*, called *rannaigeacht 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 Tecthmar 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.

²³⁶ *LL* ll. 37638-38310. Stokes, 'Boroma', pp. 36-55, §§1-42.

²³⁷ Cf. Goverts, '*Mór in gním*', pp. 25-32, 50-55, where Goverts produced an edition and translation of poems [01] *Fithir is Dáirine* and [09] *Mór in gním daringned sund*.

²³⁸ *LL* ll. 37678-37701. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, pp. 38, 53, 62. Goverts, '*Mór in gním*', p. 11.

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.

*D'oenlámnad ructhasom
Da ingin Tuathail trétaig
At tréna na tuicthena
In n-úair aile la hécaib.*²³⁹

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

The second poem, *02 Tuathal Tecthmar techta in talman*, is twenty-two verses and is in the *sétnad mór* metre.²⁴¹ This poem occurs straight after the recitation of the amount of the *éraic* 'compensation' the Leinstermen are made to pay for the deaths of Fithir and Dáirine.²⁴² The first two verses are in praise of Tuathal Tecthmar 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 Tecthmar led a campaign against the Leinstermen and how he *ruc héraic a ingenn ass*.²⁴³

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

*O ré Thuathail dóib cá tobach
Co ré Fínnachta na forc.
Da fichet rí do chlaind Tuathail
Ros ben a bruachaib Bríg Molt.*²⁴⁴

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

²³⁹ *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.'

²⁴⁰ Goverts, '*Mór in gním*', pp. 50-55. *Lec* ff. 295^{rb} l. 31-295^{va} 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.

²⁴¹ Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 49.

²⁴² *LL* ll. 37731-37818.

²⁴³ *LL* l. 37786. 'he took the fine of his girls from it [the province].'

²⁴⁴ *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.'

²⁴⁵ *Lec* f. 297^{va} 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*.²⁴⁶ This poem occurs when Finn mac Cumail 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 Cumail is called to Leinster. Poem 09 *Mor in gním daringned sund* is thirty-one stanzas long and is in the *deibide scaílte fota* metre.²⁴⁷ 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 Lág in ina ndail.
Fo chomrepind fo chombáig.*²⁴⁸

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 tromslúaig;
Iar marbad in fichet rí.
Ruc leis éraic cen imsním.*²⁴⁹

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.*²⁵⁰

Apart from the tale of the fate of the two sisters, Finn mac Cumail 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 Cumail's presence in the text.

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^{ra} l. 12-301^{rb} 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 dúin bar comairli* and *04 A Find in n-érgi ri báig* occur just before Finn mac Cumail makes his appearance in the text. *03 Dénaid dúin 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*.²⁵¹ The poem is seven stanzas in the *aí freisligi* metre.²⁵² This poem is a battle cry: *fiss úait co Find inn ága* and *do tora Find Almaine / armslaide ár sain dena*.²⁵³ 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.’²⁵⁴ Buttimer equates this poem as a ‘characteristic feature of the counsel device’ with the *dénaid comairle* ‘give counsel’ form.²⁵⁵ This form will appear on at least three occasions in total in the *Bórama*, this being the first.²⁵⁶

Poem *04 A Find in n-érgi ri báig* is six stanzas and is in the *deibide scaílte fota* metre.²⁵⁷ Bressal Bélach himself utters this poem as he implores Finn mac Cumail to come and aid the Leinstermen in their strife against the men of Tara, *ma thici, erig, fer chath / ra primthuathaib na Temrach*.²⁵⁸ This poem gives a much clearer view that Finn mac Cumail 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 fían Find*.²⁵⁹ 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 Cumail has reached Broccross along with Moling Lúath ‘the Swift’, who is here as a precursor to

²⁵¹ LL II. 37837-37864. It is also found in Lec f. 299^{vb} l. 32, 7qq.

²⁵² Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 62.

²⁵³ LL I. 37856. ‘send word to Finn of the battle,’ and ‘If Finn of Allen may come / let you do conflict of arms.’

²⁵⁴ Buttimer, ‘The *Bórama*’, p. 175.

²⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 165.

²⁵⁶ The other two are poems *18 Dénaid dúin ar cotach* and *20 Dénaid dúin bar comairle*.

²⁵⁷ LL II. 37874-37897. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 65. Also found in Lec f. 300^{ra} l. 10, 6qq.

²⁵⁸ LL II. 37876-37877. ‘If you come, arise, give battle / against the chief peoples of Tara.’

²⁵⁹ LL II. 37896-37897. ‘Take your weapons with intent / and arise, oh band of Finn.’

the appearance of Moling Lúachra, the saint, in the *Bórama*.²⁶⁰ Moling Lúath is one of Finn mac Cumail's *fián* warriors however he does not appear in any other *fiánaigecht* material aside from AS which here draws on the *Bórama*.²⁶¹ The poem in the *Bórama* is five stanzas in the *rannaigecht dialtach scaílte* metre.²⁶² 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*.²⁶³ 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*.²⁶⁴ 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*.²⁶⁵

'Ingnad linn', ar Finn mac Faebair, 'uisce in baili-sin in ard & a t-shruth ina all, & foírid in t- uisce-sin cach eslainti re m-benann.'
*'INdeossat-sa duit adbur in ratha-sin', ar Cailte. Is é-sin ét-uisce ro bennachadur aingil Dé a n-Eirinn, & is sé uisce déidinach béos bendeochar inti, & áeidu ainm na h-abhann, ar se.*²⁶⁶

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 sírechtach semide ina mbuidnib súas docum nime 7 anuas.
'Cia slúag sút?' bar in fian.
*'Angil sin', bar Find, 'i. teglach Ríg nime 7 talman. Ocus talcind ticfat ifus aít i failet na hangil út.*²⁶⁷

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^{ra} l. 36, 5qq.

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 Fábarderg, '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 Fábarderg?' 'I do not,' said Finn. 'Then I shall tell you the cause of that grace,' said Cailte. 'This is the first water in Ireland that the angels of God blessed and the last water in Ireland still to be blessed. *Taídiu* 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 lLettraig 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 Cumail’s *fián*-band, although they do not seem to appear in any other *fiánaigecht* 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^{rb} 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^a.

²⁷² Buttimer, ‘The *Bórama*’, pp. 189-192.

²⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 190.

...the text *Rot fiasu i mBroccross* is a compilation original to the *Bórama*. This is also likely to be true of *Énán na huarboithe*'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 *Ros mBrocc indiu is conair chúain* is in the *rannaigeacht dialtach scaílte* 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 cé n áem
doria don ráen co Ross mBrocc
.lx. bliadan cethri chét
*co torset in port.*²⁷⁸

This early emphasis on saints will become more important as this thesis progresses. Poem 08 *Ros mBruicc bale buredach* is an *ochtfoclach* 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 Cumail who recites the poem

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. 300^{va} 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. 300^{vb} l. 30, 6qq.

but one of his companions Énan *na húarbothi* ‘of the Chilly Booth’.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;

Atchonnarc im súan

...

...

*Mo Lling lúam na fírinne
cid fota daría.*

...

*Cromcind ataconnacsa
cona crannaib cromcenna.
Atchonnac na Talcenna
taidbsiu na náeb.*²⁸¹

This poem gives a veiled reference to the legend of Suibne geilt; *doraga fer foluamnach / atúaid a mMaig Rath*.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 *Bórama* in this section.’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 *Bórama* (i.e. Moling) and that reason will be explored further in relation to the third section of the tale.²⁸⁴ There is also a mention of Doomsday and how he, Énan (and possibly the entire province of Leinster) is under Moling’s protection; *misse fora chomairge / co bráth o’ndiu immach*.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

²⁸⁰ Stokes, ‘*Acallamh*’, pp. 48-9.

²⁸¹ *LL* ll. 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 staffs / I saw the adze-heads / the apparition of the saints.’

²⁸² *LL* ll. 38118-38119. ‘a fluttering man will come / from the north out of Mag Rath.’

²⁸³ Buttimer, ‘The *Bórama*’, p. 193.

²⁸⁴ Cf. in particular Chapter 4: Moling.

²⁸⁵ *LL* ll. 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 scaílte* metre.²⁸⁶ 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*.²⁸⁷

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 Tecthmar 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 tobach / co ré Fínnachta na forc*’ and the third with ‘*is and berair in chain mór*’.²⁸⁸ 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 Cumail 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.

²⁸⁷ Cf. Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death’, pp. 22-3.

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.’

Bórama text, especially in relation to poems 17 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad* and 18 *Dénaid dúin ar cotach*, which occur in section two of the text. It is not certain whether Finn mac Cumail 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 Cumail 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 aisceda rí*, 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 Ainmirech 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 aisceda rí*: 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

²⁸⁹ *LL* ll. 38311-38743. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 54-99, §§43-124.

²⁹⁰ *LL* ll. 38333-38368. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 65. Cf. Appendix B. This poem is also found in Lec f. 306^{ra} l. 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

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.²⁹³ 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 Faillet sund aisceda rí* 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*.²⁹⁴

Poem (14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach* is similarly interesting in terms of tales concerned with Brandub mac Echach.²⁹⁵ 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*.²⁹⁶ 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.²⁹⁷

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^a followed by a text concerning Brandub mac Echach, *Bémmend Branduib for Brega*.²⁹⁸ 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

Gabran', *Medieval studies in memory of Gertrude Schoepperle Loomis*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1927), pp. 381-390. Cf. K. Meyer, ed. and trans., 'Gein Branduib Maic Echach ocus Aedán Maic Gabráin inso sí', *ZCP* 2 (1899), pp. 134-137. Also surviving in manuscript Rawlinson B. 502 is a poem relating this same tale, cf. M. A. O'Brien, 'A middle-Irish poem on the Birth of Aedán mac Gabráin and Brandub mac Echach', *Ériu* 16 (1952), pp. 157-170.

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).'

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 lánscailte* 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 Dúin Bolg* in YBL contains was illustrated. In *Cath Belaig Dúin 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 Dúin 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 Dúin Bolg* version has in a way condensed the prose text of *LL* which spans nearly sixty lines of the diplomatic edition into these

²⁹⁹ The texts: *A Chóicid chóem Chairpri chrúaid* and *Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin*. Cf. O’Daly, ‘A chóicid’, pp. 177-197. Cf. Dobbs, ‘Graves’, pp. 139-153.

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

³⁰¹ Ibid, pp. 59-60.

³⁰² Maniet, ‘Cath Belaig Duin Bolc’, pp. 100-103.

³⁰³ Ibid, p. 102.

three verses.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 *LL* version does.³⁰⁵

Poem (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 *rob é dígal Chummascaig / guin Aeda meic Ainmirech* and he foresees the battle where Áed mac Ainmerech will fall, *atchiu bróen dar sárslegaib / atchiu Aed i n-úarilaid*.³⁰⁶ As it happens, envoys were sent to Áed mac Ainmerech at the behest of Bishop Aedán when he utters poem 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 *dían midseng* metre.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 16 *Itchíusa na merggi*, which is in the *rinnard dá n-ard* metre and is nine verses long.³⁰⁸ Similar to poem (14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach*, poem 16 *Itchíusa 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 17 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad* occurs in the text. It is five verses and is in the *sétnad ngairit* metre.³⁰⁹ This poem is

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

³⁰⁵ Cf. Chapter 1: The *Bórama*.

³⁰⁶ *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.'

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

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

³⁰⁹ *LL* ll. 38549-38558. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 50. This poem is also found in Lec on f. 307^{ra} 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 Cumail episode earlier, prophesising the coming of Christianity (and indirectly Moling as well);

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

*Atchonnaccus dabaich nglaine
Co néim n-óir;*

....
*Trían aile ba fín forclid
ingnad lemm;
daíne cromcenna ros timchell
dar Muir Mend.*

*Atchondairc iarum Conchobar 7 in n-aslingthe sin. Ocus is amlaid
atchonnaic Lagen 7 Ulaid 'mán dabaig ica 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 dún 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-ingnad* and 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach*) bring together the pre-Christian era with the Christian present, similar to the Finn mac Cumail 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 Ainmereich*, 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 Ainmereich* 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^{ra} 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 Aed mac Aimirech ...”
 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 Ainmirech
 faicebthair ic Laignib in liagmaire.
 Béraid fiach cíar ara úlind
 co Cill Culind siaramain.*

*Tuitfid ónd fiach é for faidche Chille Culind. & dogenat macrad Cilli
 Culind liathróit de. co cend .uii. mbliadan. Doroi set scol Cille Dara 7
 gétaid fer díb in liathróitsin. Dogenaside sprédaire de 7 biaid aice co
 cend .uii. mbliadan aile. Doroi set scol Cluana mór M'Aedóc co Cill
 Dara 7 getaid fer dibside in sprédaire sin & ní faccime a dí o sein
 immach. In slíabso im i ndernad. in cotach. bud Sliab in Chotaig a
 ainm 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 Ainmirech is mentioned in the beginning but does not feature in

³¹⁴ LL 1. 38585. ‘And he made this quatrain / stave.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, p. 79, §81.

³¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 78-9, §81.

³¹⁶ O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, vol. 2, p. 414.

³¹⁷ LL 11. 38586-38596. ‘Aed’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 [aspergil] of it, and he shall have it to the end of another seven years. The school of Cluain mór 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.

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 Cumail, aside from poems 17 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad* and 18 *Dénaid dúin ar cotach*. In terms of content the two poems which start

³¹⁸ LL II. 38726-38737. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 62. This poem is in Lec on f. 308^{va}, 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 dúin 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 dúin 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 Failte sund aisceda rí* and *13 M'aél trébend torcbálach* 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 Failte sund aisceda rí* 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 Cumail 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;

*Ní scér rissín n-árusa
Naco tí lathe brátha.*³²³

³²⁰ Cf. Davies, 'Kings and Clerics', pp. 45-66.

³²¹ *LL* ll. 38744-39321. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 98-117, §§125-161.

³²² *LL* ll. 38755-38770. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 62. Found in *Lec* on f. 308^{va}, 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;

turchan duin a Thuathail
maic Ailella uathmair ³²⁶

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

³²⁴ *LL* ll. 38773-38788. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 69. Found in *Lec* on f. 308^{vb} 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'.

³²⁷ Cf. Buttimer, 'The Bórama', pp. 299-301.

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-anmm na Trinóiti*, 26 *Fínnachta a Huib 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-anmm 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:

Leis commus ar mbethaigthe
Ra comsid na cland.
Leis commus ar marbthane
*In tan tic in t-amm.*³³²

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^{ra}, 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.³³³ It occurs in the text after Moling has brought Donnigilla, 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.'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.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 chenglaid 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 *rannaigeacht 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.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:

*Mo Lling lúamnech
Lúam na fírbreth
Feidm tend tréorach
Ic deilb fírbreth.*³³⁷

³³³ LL ll. 38988-39015. Cf. Appendix B. This poem does not ascribe to any specific metre. In Lec on f. 309ra, 7 qq.

³³⁴ LL ll. 38844-38845, 38989-38991.

³³⁵ LL ll. 37825-37830.

³³⁶ LL ll. 39018-39029. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 58. This poem is also found in Lec, f. 309th l. 20, 6qq.

³³⁷ LL ll. 39024-39025. 'Fluttering Moling / steersman of just judgement / strong energetic undertaking / by the figure of the just judgement.'

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.

*Messe imbáarach
co muir mílach.
d’Ess Rúaid rámach
iar n-úaim trílech.*³⁴⁰

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 *lethrannaigeacht 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 *luán* ‘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 Fínnachta. It is thirteen stanzas in the *rannaigeacht fota recomarach* metre.³⁴³ Compared with poem 26 *Fínnachta a Huib 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:

*Cach rí nach maithend a chís
Is fata bít a scéla
Mairg dorat in dáil dorat
Intí is lac is dó is méla.*³⁴⁴

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. 309th, 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. 309vb, 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 Huíb 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 Huíb 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 *ciar 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 bruachaib Bríg 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 descendants of Tuathal Tecthmar took the *bórama*:

.x. ruc i mboroma
dá .xx. fíngarta.
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 mbórramai
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.'

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.³⁵¹ 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 *rannaigeacht fhotá recomarcach* metre.³⁵² 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;

*Cip é bess for greiss Colaim
Ní bía a choland fo chúana.*³⁵³

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 rí Temra, for Fínnachta* 'my curse and the curse of the heavenly king / on Tara's king, on Fínnachta'.³⁵⁴ 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, 7 mallacht Ríg nime*, 'my curse on Fínnachta and the curse of the King of the Heavens'.³⁵⁵ 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

³⁵⁰ LL ll. 39173-39176. 'I took the *bórama* / for Leinster which endures / from Uí Néill without difficult strenght / oh my mighty Lord.'

³⁵¹ LL ll. 39180-39183. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, pp. 53-4.

³⁵² LL ll. 398186-39197. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 53.

³⁵³ LL ll. 39186-39187. 'whosoever be under Columba's protection / his body will not be attacked by wolves.'

³⁵⁴ LL ll. 39159-39160.

³⁵⁵ LL ll. 39190-39191.

the poem correspond with a *dúnad* ‘conclusion’; *suidem sund suide n-ága* and *is let cech suide suidim*.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 06 *Rot fiasu i mBroccross* suggested by Buttimer and also poem 13 *M’aél trébend torcbálach* which seems like it could have been composed for the benefit of the text, to tie in better poem 12 *Faillet sund aisceda rí*g with the prose.

The final poem, poem 33 *A Brigit bennach ar sét* is among the lengthiest poems of the text, consisting of twenty eight verses in the *rannaigeacht dialtach* metre.³⁵⁷ It is a very interesting poem, where thirty-one saints appear in the text.³⁵⁸ Again it is Moling who speaks, mainly addressing Brigit of Kildare, asking for her blessing and protection on his run from Fínnachta 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 *LL* as the presence of Moling is to the text of the *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 *LL* manuscript. Moling’s presence in the *Bórama* provides the same cohesive link to the text of the *Bórama* as it does to the surrounding material in *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 *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 *LL* manuscript).

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

³⁵⁷ *LL* ll. 39210-39321. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 52.

³⁵⁸ Cf discussion on the saints in Chapter 3: The saints in the *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 Dúin Bolg* episode. However, two particular poems stand out in this regard, poem 12 *Faillet sund aisceda rí* and poem 18 *Dénaid dúin ar cotach*, which do not appear in the YBL text. It is possible to say that poem 12 *Faillet sund aisceda rí* 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 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad* 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 *Faillet sund aisceda rí*. 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 Cumail, 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 Dúin Bolg* tale in the *Bórama* is drastically different from the *Cath Belaig Dúin 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 Dúin 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 Dúin 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 Dúin 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 dúin 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

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 Dúin Bolg* episode was seemingly incorporated into the *Bórama* as a hitherto unconnected text. Thus the Brandub mac Echach material earlier in *LL* (poem (14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach* and *Bémmend 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 scaílte* where four poems fall under these metres, followed by *deibide scaílte 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.

³⁶³ B. Frykenberg, ‘The Wild Man in Celtic Ecclesiastical Legend and Literary Tradition’, unpublished Ph.D., (Edinburgh, 1984), p. 24.

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.

³⁶⁶ Cf. Chapter 2: The Poetry.

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.

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 Riain'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

³⁶⁷ *LL* ll. 48966-50495. *Martyrology of Tallaght*, eds. R.I. Best and H.J. Lawlor, (London, 1931).

³⁶⁸ *The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee*, ed. W. Stokes, (London, 1984). *Martyrology of Gorman*, W. Stokes ed., (London, 1895). *Martyrology of Donegal*, J.H. Todd and W. Reeves eds., (Dublin, 1864). Ó Riain, 'The Tallaght Martyrologies, Redated', pp. 21-38. Dumville, 'Félire', pp. 19-48. Ó Riain, *Feastdays*.

³⁶⁹ *FÓ*. MG. MD. Ó Riain, 'The Tallaght Martyrologies, Redated', pp. 21-38. Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*. Dumville, 'Félire', pp. 19-48. Ó Riain, *Feastdays*.

³⁷⁰ Ó Riain, *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*.³⁷¹ 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 Cumail*³⁷²

The first and only poem in section one to contain a reference to a saint other than Moling is poem 05 *Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil*.³⁷³ In the third stanza of the poem the names of two saints occur;

*Brénaind Birra, Brénaind fáid
níba tláith ticfait in ross.*³⁷⁴

The first saint mentioned is Brendan of Birr (†565 or 572 AU) while the second is Brendan of Clonfert (†577 or 583 AU).³⁷⁵ Brendan of Birr, otherwise known as Brendan mac Nemain, was abbot at Birra (Birr, Co. Offaly) in Leinster.³⁷⁶ 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.³⁷⁷ 9 May does not occur in any of the other martyrologies, while they all mention him in the entries for 29 November.³⁷⁸ Brendan of Clonfert has visible ties with both Brendan of Birr and Moling; these ties are highlighted in

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

³⁷² *LL* ll. 37638-38310. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 36-55, §§1-42.

³⁷³ Cf. Appendix B, and discussion on poem in Chapter 2: The Poetry of the *Bórama*.

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.

³⁷⁶ *Onomasticon Goedelicum*, E. Hogan ed., (Dublin, 1910), pp. 115-116.

³⁷⁷ MT, pp. 41, 234.

³⁷⁸ *FÓ*, pp. 124, 132-3. MG, p. 99. MD, pp. 128-131.

somewhat later sources than *LL. Liber Flavus Fergusiorum*, 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.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.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.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.'³⁸²

Neither MT nor *FÓ* refer to the voyage legend in relation to Brendan of Clonfert, and nor does VC.³⁸³ Furthermore, the earliest manuscript of the Brendan legend, the *Navigatio Brendani*, dates from around the tenth century.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

³⁷⁹ J.F. Kenney, *The sources for the early history of Ireland*, (Ann Arbor, 1929, reprint 1966), pp. 416-417. Cf. G.S. Burgess and C. Stribosch, *The Legend of St. Brendan: A Critical Bibliography*, (Dublin, 2000). R. Thurneysen, 'Eine variante der Brendan-legende' *ZCP* 10 (1915), pp. 408-420.

³⁸⁰ *DIS*, pp. 114-115. *VSH*, vol 1, pp. 98-153. *VSHH*, pp. 56-77, 324-331.

³⁸¹ *DIS*, p. 114. R. Sharpe ed., and trans., *Adomnán: Life of St. Columba*, (London, 1995), pp. 207-8 §3, 219 §17, 235.

³⁸² *DIS*, p. 114.

³⁸³ MT, pp. 42-3. *FÓ*, pp. 124, 132-3.

³⁸⁴ W.R.J. Barron and G.S. Burgess, *The Voyage of Saint Brendan*, (Exeter, 2002, reprint 2005), p. 13. J. Wooding, 'The date of *Nauigatio S. Brendani abbatis*', *SH* 37 (2011), pp. 9-26.

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’.³⁸⁵ It is most likely that the *drum* is a reference to *Drum Dubglass* (Drum Dubghlais) mentioned earlier in the poem, rather than another Brendan altogether.³⁸⁶ 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.³⁸⁷ 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.’³⁸⁸

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.³⁸⁹

Birr was also a very strategic location as it lies on the boundaries of north and south Ireland.³⁹⁰ 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 1. 37924.

³⁸⁶ LL 1. 37910.

³⁸⁷ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 84-95, §§94-119.

³⁸⁸ Sharpe, *Adomnán: Life of St. Columba*, p. 207, §3.

³⁸⁹ M. Ní Dhonnchadha, ‘Birr and the Law of the Innocents’, in *Adomnán at Birr, AD 697*, ed. T. O’Loughlin, (Dublin, 2001), pp. 13-32; 14.

³⁹⁰ Ní Dhonnchadha, ‘Birr’, p. 14.

guarantors present at Birr when they passed the law. This is quite significant I would argue.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 Dúin Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)³⁹²

Section two contains two poems which refer to saints, poems *12 Faillet sund aisceda rí*g and *18 Dénaid dúin ar cotach*. Poem *12 Faillet sund aisceda rí*g 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 Faillet sund aisceda rí*g there are five saints mentioned, in the following order: Conlaed, Brigit, Dubthach, Fíac and Máedóc Uí Dúnlainge.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.’³⁹⁴ Her feastday is 1 February, and the annals place her floruit ca 452 – 526.³⁹⁵ *Bethu Brigte*, the Irish version of her life, is contained in Rawlinson B. 512 a fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century manuscript.³⁹⁶ It contains a short account of a man called Dubthach moccu Lugair who had come to woo Brigit.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.³⁹⁸ Fíac was chosen by Patrick to become bishop after Dubthach suggested to Patrick that Fíac

³⁹¹ Ní Dhonnchadha, ‘Birr’, p. 57. M. Ní Dhonnchadha, ‘The Guarantor List of *Cáin Adomnáin*, 697’, *Peritia* 1 (1982), pp. 178-215; 180.

³⁹² *LL* II. 38311-38743. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 54-99, §§43-124.

³⁹³ Cf. Appendix B.

³⁹⁴ *DIS*, p. 123. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 356-363.

³⁹⁵ *MT*, p. 14, *FÓ*, pp. 58, 64-67, *MG*, pp. 28-9, *MD*, pp. 34-5. Cf. Appendix C.

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. 31^{ra}1) and the Tripartite Life of Patrick (f. 5^{ra}1), as well as *Cáin Adomnáin* (f. 48^{ra}1) and *FÓ* (f. 53^{ra}1). A Latin life of Brigit is also found in *Codex Salmanticensis. VSHH*, pp. 1-37.

³⁹⁷ Ó hAodha, *Bethu Brigte*, §14. There are seven Latin lives of Brigit and three in the vernacular Irish, cf. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 356-363. *DIS*, pp. 123-125.

³⁹⁸ W. Stokes, ed., and trans., *The Tripartite Life of Patrick*, (London, 1887), pp. 52-3, 188-191. *DIS*, pp. 275-6, 315.

was the one he was looking to fill the role of bishop.³⁹⁹ Fíac is also anachronistically accredited with a hymn in honour of Patrick.⁴⁰⁰ 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.⁴⁰¹ Conlaed on the other hand was closely associated with Brigit as her bishop at Kildare.⁴⁰² His feastday is 3 May and, like Dubthach and Fíac, he was a contemporary of Brigit.⁴⁰³ He is also recognised as being one of the chief artisans (*cearda*) in Ireland.⁴⁰⁴ 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.⁴⁰⁵ According to the genealogy, he is also related to Moling himself, as well as many other prominent Leinster saints.⁴⁰⁶ Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge also appears in the poem *Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin* found in LL f. 43^b;

*Is cluain immar naem-relic
inmain inad essergi*

*Aeda Find beib adfeidem
i fil martra naem nhErend.*

*Noe fichit cruimthirech
ac Moédóc hua nDunlainge*

*coic mili mórdá ferta
atat a ferta.⁴⁰⁷*

³⁹⁹ VT, pp. 188-91. *DIS*, p. 315. Kenney, *Sources*, p. 340.

⁴⁰⁰ *DIS*, pp. 256, 315. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 339-340.

⁴⁰¹ MD, pp. 268-9. *DIS*, pp. 275-6. MD associates Dubthach of poem 22 *Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair* 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 tríar a Christ grind glúair* further on in this chapter.

⁴⁰² Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 356, 360. *DIS*, p. 223.

⁴⁰³ MT, p. 39, *FÓ*, pp. 122, 128-9, MG, pp. 88-9, MD, pp. 118-119. *Annals of Ulster*, W. M. Hennessy and B. MacCarthy, eds. and trans., (Dublin, 1887). *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)*, S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill eds., (Dublin, 1983). *The Annals of Innisfallen*, S. Mac Airt, ed. and trans., (Dublin, 1951). 'The Annals of Tigernach', W. Stokes ed., *RC* 16 – 18 (1895 – 97). *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters*, J. O'Donovan, ed. and trans., (1848 – 51, repr. 1990). *Fragmentary Annals of Ireland*, J. Radner, ed. and trans., (Dublin, 1978). AU 520.1, AI 519.2, AT 516.1.

⁴⁰⁴ LL II. 46971-46972. Ó Riain, *CGSH*, §82.2. D. Mac Lean, 'The status of the sculptor in Old-Irish law and the evidence of the crosses', *Peritia* 9 (1995), pp. 125-155.

⁴⁰⁵ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 50-1, §37. Ó Cuív, 'Comram na Cloenfherta'.

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. Appendix C.

⁴⁰⁷ LL II. 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 Dúnlang.' Dobbs, 'Graves', pp. 144, 148.

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.⁴⁰⁸ 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.⁴⁰⁹

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.⁴¹⁰ The main content of poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda ríge*, 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.⁴¹¹ 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*.⁴¹² 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.

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 617. Dúnlang is the main protagonist in the *CnC* episode. Cf. Ó Cuív, 'Comram na Cloenfherta'.

⁴¹⁰ VT, pp. 52-3, 188-191. DIS, pp. 275-6, 315. K. McCone, 'Brigit in the Seventh Century: A Saint with Three Lives?', *Peritia* 1 (1982), pp. 107-145; 126-7.

⁴¹¹ Cf. Appendix B.

⁴¹² Cf discussion on poem 17 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad* in Chapter 2: The Poetry.

do represent five saints from each of the two provinces: *Dessetar naím Lagen 7 Ulad 'sin tsléib iar sain. & doniat a cotach cen taithmech tria bithu.*⁴¹³

The first five saints of the poem are Brigit, Máedóc from Dún Inne, Moling, Abbán and Cóemgen of Glenn Dá Locha (Glendalough, Co. Wicklow). Brigit and Moling 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 Moling, 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 The earliest

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.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 385.

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.

⁴¹⁷ *DIS*, pp. 432, 435. *VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 141 §3, 295 §3, 157-8 §43. W. Stokes, ed., *Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore*, (Oxford, 1890), p. 208. Doherty, 'The transmission of the Cult of St. Máedhóg', p. 268.

⁴¹⁸ *DIS*, pp. 432-436. Máedóc of Ferns also features in a text in the Book of Leinster, following six anecdotes on Moling. *LL* f. 285b. *VSH*, vol. 2, pp. 141-163. *VSHH*, pp. 234-247. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 448-9.

⁴¹⁹ *DIS*, p. 432.

manuscript containing the Life of Máedóc of Ferns seems to possibly date from around the beginning of the twelfth century.⁴²⁰

Brandub mac Echach, king of Leinster, and Áed mac Ainmerech, king of Tara also feature frequently in the Latin Life of Máedóc.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 *Bórama* as an exemplar.⁴²² This is similar to the way in which Moling was prophesied in the *Bórama* tract by Finn mac Cumail. Máedóc of Ferns is also linked to Moling, through Moling’s *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.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 Cóemgen of Glendalough.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.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, Cóemgen of Glendalough and Moling.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

⁴²⁰ Ibid. C. Doherty, ‘The transmission of the Cult of St. Máedhóg’, p. 268.

⁴²¹ *VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 149 §24, 161 §55, 309 §54.

⁴²² *DIS*, p. 434. Although this could be a much later development, the text possibly being from as late as the sixteenth century.

⁴²³ Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 22-3. *VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 162 §58, 310 §57.

⁴²⁴ *LL* 1. 48165. *CGSH*, §287.3, *DIS*, p. 51. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 318-9. *VSH*, vol 1, pp. 3-33. *VSHH*, pp. 256-274. P. Ó Riain, ‘St. Abbán: The Genesis of an Irish Saint’s Life’, *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies*, (Oxford, 1986), pp. 159-170.

⁴²⁵ *DIS*, p. 51. *MT*, pp. 24, 84. *FÓ*, pp. 82, 98-99, 219, 228-9. *MG*, pp. 56-7, 204-5. *MD*, pp. 76-79. His name does not appear in the annals.

⁴²⁶ K. Meyer, ‘Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften (Forsetzung), *ZCP* 8 (1912), pp. 102-120, 195-232, 559-565; 110. *VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 3-4 §2. *DIS*, p. 51.

bishop of Ferns from ca. 1186.⁴²⁷ Interestingly Magh Arnaidhe was later displaced by Ferns as the chief monastery of Leinster in the south.⁴²⁸

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*.⁴²⁹ His feastday is celebrated on 3 June, although there are references to him being commemorated on 11 May and 16 October as well.⁴³⁰ 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.⁴³¹ 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.⁴³² 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.⁴³³ 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.⁴³⁴ There may be a possibility to perhaps consider Sineall or Sincheall of Claidhínis (Cleenish, Co. Fermanagh) as a possible candidate, who was 'regarded as one of Ireland's twelve apostles' as being the bishop referred.⁴³⁵ Mo Chalmóc of Caba [Caba(u)s] is also problematic, as there are no references to this

⁴²⁷ Ó Riain, 'St. Abbán', p. 164. *DIS*, p. 52.

⁴²⁸ Kenny, *Sources*, p. 448.

⁴²⁹ AU 618.3, 622.5. *VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 234-257. *VSHH*, pp. 361-365. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 403-4.

⁴³⁰ MT, pp. 47, 42, 80. *FÓ*, pp. 138, 144-5. MG, pp. 108-9, 94-5, 197-8. MD, pp. 142-3, 124-5, 278-9.

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.

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 diminutive *óc* ‘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 Bú / Mo Bhú, who is most likely Bítche 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 Bítche is

⁴³⁶ Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings*, pp. 39, 106-109, 128, 287. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 54, 99, 240. *Place-Names of Northern Ireland*, vol. 6, ed., G. Stockman, (Belfast, 1996), pp. 104-8.

⁴³⁷ P. Russell, ‘Patterns of Hypocorism in Early Irish Hagiography’, *Studies in Irish Hagiography: saints and scholars*, (2001), pp. 237-249.

⁴³⁸ *DIS*, pp. 187-8. M. Herbert. ‘Saint Colmán of Dromore and Inchmahome’, *SGS* 24 (2008), pp. 253-265. R. Butter, ‘Cill-names and saints in Argyll: A way towards understanding the early church in Dál Riata’, vol. 2, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, (Glasgow, 2007), pp. 325-6, 331-2. *CGSH* §99. MT, p. 48. *FÓ*, pp. 139, 144-5. MG, pp. 112-3. MD, pp. 148-9. *VSHH*, pp. 357-360. Kenney, *Sources*, p. 466. P. Ó Riain, ‘Cainnech *alias* Colum Cille, Patron of Ossory’, in *Folia Gadelica*, P. de Brún, S. Ó Coileáin and P. Ó Riain eds., (Cork, 1983), pp. 20-35; 21-23.

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.

⁴⁴² Ibid. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 64-67.

⁴⁴³ *LL* 1. 48640. *DIS*, p. 106.

named among the guarantors of CA.⁴⁴⁴ In the Life of Mochua, there is a passage which possibly contains the story of Mo Bhíu's conception and birth:

*Feact ann tainic ben aimrit dia atach-som dia soerad ar an aimrite. Is ann sin doralá dosum bheith oc cáí iarna bualad dia oidi [Comgall of Bangor], 7 ní thuc freacra fuirri. 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.*⁴⁴⁵

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).⁴⁴⁶ 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.⁴⁴⁷ Each of the fathers of these three saints was said to 'have swallowed a tear caused by his cheek being touched by Patrick.'⁴⁴⁸ These three saints, Columba, Finnian and Comgall, feature also in 'a fragment of Old Irish prose touching on the rule attributed to Comgall.'⁴⁴⁹ The Life of Comgall, which dates from no earlier than around the late twelfth century features some Leinster connections.⁴⁵⁰ Here we are faced with a similar account of conception in relation to Columba and Comgall as for Mo Bhíu, as well as the regional placement of Mo Bhíu 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.⁴⁵¹ Bangor is no exception; there seems to have been significant exchange between the monastery of Bangor in Ulster, and other Leinster

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid. G. Márkus, *Adomnán's 'Law of the Innocents'*, (Glasgow, 1997), p. 13 §22.

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.

⁴⁴⁶ *DIS*, p. 219. *VSH*, vol. 2, pp. 3-21. *VSHH*, pp. 332-334. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 395-397. Cf. Appendix C.

⁴⁴⁷ VT, p. 58-9. *DIS*, p. 218.

⁴⁴⁸ *DIS*, p. 218. VT, p. 58-9.

⁴⁴⁹ *DIS*, p. 218. O.J. Bergin, 'A fragment of Old Irish', *Ériu* 2, (1905), pp. 221-226; 222.

⁴⁵⁰ *DIS*, pp. 218-9. *VSH*, vol 2, pp. 3-21. *Irish Texts*, eds. J. Fraser, P. Grosjean and J.G. O'Keefe, vol. IV, (1934), pp. 68-98. *VSHH*, pp. 332-334.

⁴⁵¹ 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.⁴⁵²

Colmán Elo is the final saint of the poem *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.⁴⁵³ Lynally is in Leinster while another church associated with Colmán Elo is at Muckamore in Antrim in Ulster.⁴⁵⁴ His Latin Life survives in the fourteenth-century *Codex Salmanticensis*, although the text may be as early as eighth century, and there are also Irish Lives of Colmán Elo which have survived.⁴⁵⁵ Colmán Elo brings to a close the discussion on poem *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/Sinceall 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 *Bórama* emphasises this with repeating: *dessetar náim Lagen 7 Ulad 'sin tsléib, ocus doníat a cotach cen taithmech tria bithu*.⁴⁵⁶ 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 *12 Failet sund aisceda rí*g, 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 *Bórama*, poem *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

⁴⁵² Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*, pp. 13, 122-4.

⁴⁵³ *DIS*, p. 203. *VSH*, vol.1, pp. 258-273. *VSHH*, pp. 209-224. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 399-400.

⁴⁵⁴ *DIS*, p. 204.

⁴⁵⁵ *DIS*, pp. 203-4. *VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 162-273, lv – lvi.

⁴⁵⁶ '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.

relationship the ecclesiastical sites of Leinster and Ulster demonstrate, particularly in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁴⁵⁷ This will be demonstrated further throughout this chapter.

Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama⁴⁵⁸

The final section of the *Bórama* contains three poems, 22 *Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair*, 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail* and 33 *A Brigit bennach ar sét*, which all feature a large number of saints' names.⁴⁵⁹ The main feature of these poems is that they illustrate the purpose of both the poem within the *Bórama* and the saints which are portrayed within them. In terms of identifying the saints, poem 22 *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 *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 *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 *Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair* contains the names of fifteen saints, said in the text to be Moling's *muntir* 'community', who accompanied him on his journey to Leinster after being summoned by the king, Bran mac Conaill.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.⁴⁶¹ He was also among the guarantors for CA in 697.⁴⁶² 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

⁴⁵⁷ Cf. Mac Shamhráin, *Church and polity*, chapters 5 and 6 in particular.

⁴⁵⁸ LL II. 38744-39321. Mac Shamhráin, *Church and polity*, pp. 98-117, §§125-161.

⁴⁵⁹ Cf. Appendix B.

⁴⁶⁰ LL I. 38771. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 100-1, §127.

⁴⁶¹ AU 698.5, AT 698.3, AI 697.1, FA 698.

⁴⁶² Márkus, *Adomnán's 'Law of the Innocents'*, p. 13 §22. Ní Dhonnchadha, 'The Guarantor List', pp. 180, 188.

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 Cumminé 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 Cumminé 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 Cumminé 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 rí*) to represent this saint.⁴⁶⁸ Dubán is most likely Dubán who was at Ros Glass, on the bank of the Barrow at Monsterevin

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.

⁴⁶⁵ *DIS*, pp. 243-5. A short text on Cumminé Fota is contained in the Book of Leinster. *LL* II. 36990-36997. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 420-1. Ó Riain, ‘Cainnech *alias* Colum Cille’, p. 24. Cf. T.O. Clancy, ‘Saint and Fool: The Image and Function of Cumminé Fota and Comgán Mac Da Cherda in Early Irish Literature’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, (Edinburgh, 1991), though he does not associate Cumminé Fota with Colmán of Cluain Credail.

⁴⁶⁶ *DIS*, p. 244. *FÓ*, pp. 242-3. In *LL* II. 36990-36997, there is a short account of Cumminé Fota’s birth, although the text is incomplete due to lacuna in the manuscript.

⁴⁶⁷ Clancy, ‘Saint and Fool’. *DIS*, p. 244. Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*, pp. 51-7, 58, 206.

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.

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 *Turchan 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’; Álgénach, 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 Álgénach, 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* 1. 38781.

⁴⁷⁶ *DIS*, p. 356, AT 760.3, AFM 755.6.

Menóc or Menóc being a mutated form of Énna and Milóc could be Sillán, Silóc or Sillén. 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. There

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.

⁴⁸¹ MT, p. 2. MG, pp. 248-9. MD, pp. 350-1.

⁴⁸² MT, p. 58.

⁴⁸³ *DIS*, p. 335.

⁴⁸⁴ MT, p. 53. *FÓ*, pp. 160, 166-7. MG, pp. 130-1. MD, pp. 186-7.

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 Sárnatan. She is either Sárnat daughter of Aed Gabalfata, who, though not a Leinster saint but a Connacht saint, shares affinity with Moling.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).’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 Bairnig (Barragh, Co. Carlow), who through family connection is tied to Kildare and Brigit.⁴⁸⁹ Although MD suggests that the Sárnatan 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.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*.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁷ *DIS*, pp. 548-9.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 549.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid*.

⁴⁹⁰ *MD*, pp. 118-9.

⁴⁹¹ *LL* ll. 38787, 39205, 39321. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, p. 114-5, § 159. Cf. Appendix C.

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.⁴⁹² 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.⁴⁹³ Aside from Forannán, who is mentioned first and was possibly associated with Moling early on because of *Cáin 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 *Cuce 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

⁴⁹² Work underway by Desirée Goverts, Ph.D. candidate of Cambridge University, 'A Linguistic and Stylistic Analysis of the *Bórama*'.

⁴⁹³ Cf. Stokes, *The Birth and Life. VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 190-205.

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 Uí 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

⁴⁹⁴ Cf. Appendix C and Chapter 4: Moling.

⁴⁹⁵ Cf. for Brigit, discussion on poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda rí*g earlier in this chapter.

⁴⁹⁶ MT, pp. 82, 121-3.

⁴⁹⁷ *DIS*, pp. 505-507. *OG*, pp. 625-6. *VSH*, vol. 2, pp. 226-239. *VSHH*, pp. 247-256. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 449-450.

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. R. Butter, ‘St. Munnu in Ireland and Scotland: an exploration of his cult’, *The Cult of Saints and the Virgin Mary in Medieval Scotland*, S. Boardman and E. Williamson eds., (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 21-42.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. Butter, ‘St. Munnu’, p. 25.

⁵⁰⁰ Cf. *Ibid*, p. 23. Sharpe, *Adomnán: Life of St. Columba*, pp. 112-115. *DIS*, p. 505.

⁵⁰¹ Cf. Butter, ‘St. Munnu’, p. 24. *DIS*, p. 505-6.

⁵⁰² *VSH*, vol. 2, pp. 96-107. Cf. Butter, ‘St. Munnu’, p. 30.

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 rí*g, 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 Lemdruim (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, Lachtán, Fíac 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

⁵⁰³ Márkus, 'Adomnán's 'Law of the Innocents'', p. 13 §22.

⁵⁰⁴ Cf. Discussion on poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda rí*g.

⁵⁰⁵ *DIS*, p. 431.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 486-7. *OG*, p. 485. He also features in a text in *LL* on ff. 285b-286a. *VSH*, vol. 2, pp. 131-140. *VSHH*, pp. 340-343. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 450-1.

⁵⁰⁸ *VSHH*, pp. 340-3.

⁵⁰⁹ *MT*, p. 255.

⁵¹⁰ *DIS*, p. 486.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 487.

⁵¹² Cf. Discussion on Fíac of Sletty in relation to poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda rí*g.

said place. There are numerous place-names bearing the name of Gabra, Hogan mentions at least two possible locations in Leinster.⁵¹³ 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.⁵¹⁴

Cainnech is probably Cainnech of Achadh Bó (Aghaboe, Co. Laois), whose Latin Life, as in the case of Molasse, is preserved in *Codex Salmanticensis*.⁵¹⁵ He is normally associated with a number of saints, including Fintan/Munnu of Taghmon, Colmán of Lynally and Cóemgen of Glendalough.⁵¹⁶ 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.⁵¹⁷

Tigernach is most likely Tigernach of Cluain Eois (Clones, Co. Monaghan) of Ulster.⁵¹⁸ 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.⁵¹⁹ 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*.⁵²⁰

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).⁵²¹ He belonged to the Dál Messin Corb in Leinster who were mainly associated with Wicklow and with Glendalough. He is also related

⁵¹³ *OG*, p. 433.

⁵¹⁴ Cf. Appendix C.

⁵¹⁵ *DIS*, p. 138. *VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 152-169. *VSHH*, pp. 182-198. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 394-5.

⁵¹⁶ *DIS*, p. 139.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 387-8. Cf. *VSH*, vol. 2, pp. 152-169.

⁵¹⁸ *DIS*, p. 572. *VSH*, vol. 2, pp. 262-269. *VSHH*, pp. 107-111. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 386-7.

⁵¹⁹ *DIS*, pp. 572-3. *VSH*, vol. 2, pp. 262-269, especially pp. 262 §1-2, 267 §14.

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.⁵²² Bishop Eogan is seemingly Eogan of Ard Sratha (Ardstraw, Co. Tyrone) in Ulster, a site associated with Glendalough.⁵²³ 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*.⁵²⁴ He also comes in contact with Tigernach of Cluain Eois in his Life.⁵²⁵ 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.⁵²⁶ 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 Rossmínogue.⁵²⁷ 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 detail again. Within the next verse to be discussed there are the names of four saints; Mo Chua of Clúain Dolcáin, Colum of Terryglass, Baethín and Máedóc of Ferns (who has already been discussed and will not feature here).⁵²⁸ Mo Chua of Clúain Dolcáin (Clondalkin, Co. Dublin) was a Leinster saint.⁵²⁹ Clúain Dolcáin was among the many sites to share close connection with Glendalough.⁵³⁰ 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*.⁵³¹ 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 Luggedon’ taken in AD 790 according to *AU*.⁵³² Following Mo Chua is Colum Tíre of Tír dá Glas (Terryglass, Co. Tipperary).⁵³³ Terryglass was considered to be affiliated with Glendalough.⁵³⁴ Mo Chua is descendant of the Uí Chrimthainn of Leinster and through his mother related to Cóemgen of Glendalough.⁵³⁵ Ó Riain has argued that there are strong indications that Colum of Terryglass is a localization of Colum Cille.⁵³⁶ 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.⁵³⁷ 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*.⁵³⁸ 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.⁵³⁹ Both Colum of Terryglass and Baethín were commemorated on 13 December; sadly the entry for this date is missing from MT.⁵⁴⁰ 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.⁵⁴¹

⁵³¹ *VSH*, vol. 1, p. 234 §1. Mac Shamráin, *Church and Polity*, pp. 174-5. *LL* f. 373b.

⁵³² *AU* 790.5, *DIS*, p. 233.

⁵³³ *OG*, pp. 635-6. *DIS*, pp. 209-211. *VSHH*, pp. 225-233. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 385-6.

⁵³⁴ Mac Shamráin, *Church and Polity*, p. 180.

⁵³⁵ *DIS*, p. 209.

⁵³⁶ P. Ó Riain, ‘Towards a methodology in early Irish hagiography’, *Peritia* 1 (1982), pp. 146-159; 150-1. *DIS*, pp. 209-210.

⁵³⁷ *DIS*, p. 201. *VSHH*, pp. 225-233.

⁵³⁸ *DIS*, p. 85. Mac Shamráin, *Church and Polity*, pp. 126, 175-6, 213.

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.

⁵⁴¹ *LL* II.52183-52192. Mac Shamráin, *Church and Polity*, pp. 174-5.

The following verse contains the names of four saints; Gall, Itharnaisc, a bishop Colmán and Comgán.⁵⁴² Gall of Lilcach (Lullymore, Co. Kildare), died ca. †730.⁵⁴³ 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*.⁵⁴⁴ 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.⁵⁴⁵ Itharnaisc is likewise a Leinster saint, located at Claenad (Clane, Co. Kildare).⁵⁴⁶ 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*.⁵⁴⁷ 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 (Killeslin, Co. Laois).⁵⁴⁸ 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.⁵⁴⁹

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.

⁵⁴⁵ C. Plummer, 'The miracles of Senan', *ZCP* 10 (1914), pp. 1-35; 26-7.

⁵⁴⁶ *OG*, p. 234. *DIS*, p. 384.

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.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid*; *The Irish Sex Aetates Mundi*, Dáibhí Ó Cróinín ed., (Dublin, 1983). Bhreathnach, 'Killeslin', pp. 36, 42-3.

discussion as the subsequent chapter will be devoted to his role within the *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).⁵⁵⁰ 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).⁵⁵¹ 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 CA.⁵⁵² Emín has been identified as possibly being Emín of Ros Glaisi (Monasterevin/Rosglas, Co. Kildare).⁵⁵³ Among traditions that have developed surrounding Emín and his church is his *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 *Bórama* and one of the speakers of the current poem.⁵⁵⁴ The last saint of the poem to receive due attention is Mo Chua mac Lonáin, of Tech Mochua (Timahoe, Co. Laois).⁵⁵⁵ 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.’⁵⁵⁶ His name is a hypocoristic form of the name Crónán (but also of Cuán) and his date is commemorated on 24 December.⁵⁵⁷

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

⁵⁵⁰ *DIS*, pp. 97-8, 457.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.* AU 545.1, AT 540.1, AI 544.1.

⁵⁵² *DIS*, p. 458. Márkus, *Adomnán's 'Law of the Innocents'*, p. 13 §22.

⁵⁵³ *OG*, p. 586. *DIS*, p. 291.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.* C. Plummer, ‘Cáin Eimíne Báin’, *Ériu* 4 (1910), pp. 39-46. E. Poppe, ‘A new edition of *Cáin Éimíne Báin*’, *Celtica* 18 (1986), pp. 35-52. E. Poppe, ‘The list of sureties in *Cáin Éimíne*’, *Celtica* 21 (1990), pp. 588-592. LL 1. 50466 (cf. note 2). Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 459-460.

⁵⁵⁵ *DIS*, p. 468. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 455-6.

⁵⁵⁶ *DIS*, pp. 468-9.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 467. MT, p. 89. *FÓ*, pp. 254, 262-3. MG, pp. 246-7. MD, pp. 346-7.

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 Killeleshin, 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

⁵⁵⁸ Cf. Appendix C, for easier reference of saints.

⁵⁵⁹ *VT*, pp. 186-7. *DIS*, pp. 423-4.

⁵⁶⁰ K. Mulchrone, *Bethu Phátraic: The tripartite life of Patrick*, (Dublin, London, 1939), p. 147.

⁵⁶¹ Cf. Appendix B. This poem is uttered by Moling on his escape from Fínnachta’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.⁵⁶² 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.⁵⁶³ 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.⁵⁶⁴ 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 (*Félire Óengusso Céli Dé*), in both of which Máel Ruain is commemorated.⁵⁶⁵ Little is known about him, although he is frequently mentioned in texts which are associated with Tallaght.⁵⁶⁶ 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 árchangil úaig* ‘oh perfect archangel Michael’ and Máel Ruain had according to *FÓ* special devotion for the archangel.⁵⁶⁷

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.⁵⁶⁸ 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 Faillet sund aisceda rí*, 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.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶² Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*, p. 148.

⁵⁶³ *DIS*, pp. 445-6. AU 792.1. AI 792.1. A text on him is also contained in Book of Leinster, LL f. 286b. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 469-472, 726.

⁵⁶⁴ C. Haggart, ‘Feidlimid mac Crimthainn and the “Óentu Maíl Ruain”’, *SH* 33 (2004 – 5), pp. 29-59. W. Follett, *Céli Dé in Ireland*, (Woodbridge, 2006). C. Haggart, ‘The céli Dé and the early medieval Irish church: reassessment’, *SH* 34 (2006 – 7), pp. 17-62.

⁵⁶⁵ MT, pp. 54, 62. *FÓ*, pp. 161, 166-7.

⁵⁶⁶ *DIS*, p. 446. Follett, *Céli Dé*, pp. 100-170.

⁵⁶⁷ Kenney, *Sources*, p. 726. *FÓ*, p. 12-13.

⁵⁶⁸ *DIS*, p. 582. AU 439.1, AI 439.1. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 169-170, 260.

⁵⁶⁹ Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*, p. 198.

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 rí*.⁵⁷⁰ 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.⁵⁷¹ Baethín of Inis Baithín (Ennisboyne, Co. Wicklow), is next on the list, and is suggested by Ó Riain in *DIS* as the saint referred to in this poem.⁵⁷² 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 Ennisboyne gets the honour of representing the saint of this poem.⁵⁷³ 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.⁵⁷⁴ 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.⁵⁷⁵

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.⁵⁷⁶ 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, Cáilbe and Nem.⁵⁷⁷ His descent is of the Osraige, which places him among the Leinster saints.⁵⁷⁸ Mothareán is the brother of Itharnaisc of poem 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail*.⁵⁷⁹ He was situated at Tulach Foirtchirn (Tullow, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.⁵⁸⁰ He may also be the saint who is mentioned in the *Bórama*, as coming to

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. discussion on poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda rí*.

⁵⁷¹ Cf. Appendix C.

⁵⁷² *DIS*, p. 88. Ennisboyne was also considered to be part of the Glendalough *paruchia*. Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*, p. 134.

⁵⁷³ Cf. Appendix C.

⁵⁷⁴ *DIS*, p. 383. VT, p. 198.

⁵⁷⁵ MG, pp. 136-7. MD, pp. 194-5.

⁵⁷⁶ *DIS*, p. 237. MG, pp. 204-5. MD, pp. 284-5.

⁵⁷⁷ *DIS*, p. 532. *CGSH* § 379.3. Cf. Appendix C.

⁵⁷⁸ *DIS*, p. 532. *CGSH* § 379.3.

⁵⁷⁹ *CGSH* § 209. T.O. Clancy, 'Deer and the early church in North-Eastern Scotland, in *Studies on the Book of Deer*, K. Forsyth ed., (Dublin, 2008), p. 383.

⁵⁸⁰ *DIS*, p. 501.

Moling's assistance when he is fleeing from Fínnachta.⁵⁸¹ Crón ingen Sétna is slightly problematic, since aside from her name appearing in the listing of the saints of Ireland in *LL*, nothing is known about her.⁵⁸² Ó Riain suggests she may be a double for Crón of Cell ingen nAeda (Ardnahue, Co. Carlow), although that is uncertain.⁵⁸³ Within the same verse there is a mention of a *caillech ón Cetharlocht* 'a nun from Cetharlocht'.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 *VT*, who was left with Fíac of Sletty in Leinster.⁵⁸⁵ He was most likely commemorated on 9 September in the later martyrologies of *MG* and *MD*.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'.⁵⁸⁷ Various church sites in Leinster are dedicated to either him or a saint of the same name.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.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.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.⁵⁹¹ In the first line of verse twenty-two the name *M'Aedóc mín* is given, which refers to

⁵⁸¹ *LL* II. 39198-39201. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 114-5, §158.

⁵⁸² *LL* I. 51383.

⁵⁸³ *DIS*, p. 232. *OG*, p. 195.

⁵⁸⁴ *LL* I. 39278, cf. Appendix B, verse eighteen. *OG*, p. 230.

⁵⁸⁵ *VT*, pp. 190-1.

⁵⁸⁶ *MG*, pp. 172-3. *MD*, pp. 242-3.

⁵⁸⁷ *DIS*, p. 569.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 198. *MT*, pp. 68, 73. *FÓ*, pp. 193, 202-3. *MG*, pp. 170-1, 182-3. *MD*, pp. 238-9, 254-5.

⁵⁹⁰ *OG*, p. 271. *DIS*, p. 208.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 162-3. Bergin et al., *Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts*, vol. 2, (Dublin, 1908), p. 30.

Máedóc of Fems.⁵⁹² Colum Cille of Iona in Scotland is the next saint to appear in the numeration.⁵⁹³ His loyalties lay mainly with the Uí Néill and especially with Áed mac Ainmerech, king of the Uí Néill.⁵⁹⁴ His interference in the *Bórama* text, on behalf of Áed mac Ainmerech though, is hindered because of his connection with Leinster through his mother's side.⁵⁹⁵ It is undoubtedly this bond which earns him a place among the Leinster saints listed here. Athracha demonstrates very little in terms of any connection with Leinster.⁵⁹⁶ She seems to be an early Connaught saint, mentioned in the *VT* by Tírechán.⁵⁹⁷ 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.⁵⁹⁸ Patrick of Armagh makes an appearance in the poem quite near the end.⁵⁹⁹ 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.

⁵⁹³ *DIS*, pp. 211-214. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 428-442.

⁵⁹⁴ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 84-89, §§94-105. *DIS*, p. 211.

⁵⁹⁵ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 88-9, §104. *DIS*, p. 211. *CGHS* §397.

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.

⁵⁹⁹ *DIS*, pp. 526-531. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 319-350.

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.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 Fínnachta's men. It is also possible that she is the saint Colmnatan, who was named in poem 22 *Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair* as part of Moling's retinue.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 reflexion 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 *Dénaid dún ar cotach*, does not detract from this statement. Their inclusion is quite clearly stated as being Ulster saints and there for a

⁶⁰⁰ MT, p. 4. MG, pp. 8-9, MD, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁰¹ LL ll. 39205-39206. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 114-5, §159. Cf. Appendix C.

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 Ainmerech, 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 Ainmerech through the cowl he once presented him with and which Áed mac Ainmerech 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 Uí Néill, seem only to have one saint who is on their side, through the entire tale, that being Adomnán.⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰² Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 60 -3, §56.

⁶⁰³ Ibid, pp. 60-95, §§56-119.

⁶⁰⁴ *DIS*, pp. 53-55.

Adomnán does not show the same conflict of loyalty between the Uí Néill and Leinster.⁶⁰⁵ 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.⁶⁰⁶ 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*.⁶⁰⁷

Fínnachta and Adomnán are inextricably linked through various anecdotes, found in the anecdotes of FA and the *Mionannála*, which detail their relationship.⁶⁰⁸ 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 697.⁶⁰⁹ 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.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid. Kenney, *Sources*, pp. 443-445.

⁶⁰⁶ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 110-111 §151.

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.

⁶⁰⁹ AU 697.3, AI 696.1, FA 697. Márkus, *Adomnán's 'Law of the Innocents'*, p. 13 §22, 28.

⁶¹⁰ Ní Dhonnchadha, 'Birr', p. 15.

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.⁶¹¹ 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.⁶¹² 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*.⁶¹³ 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.⁶¹⁴ 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*

⁶¹¹ *LL* ll. 39090-39091. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 84-89, §94-105. Maniet, 'Cath Belaig Duin Bolc', pp. 106-109.

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 Dúin 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.⁶¹⁵ This seems to be a divergence between versions of *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* that may demonstrate to some extent ecclesiastical or secular political reasons. There is also cause to suggest that the *Cath Belaig Dúin 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 Dúin Bolg* and Cóemgen of Glendalough, particularly as the *Cath Belaig Dúin 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*.⁶¹⁶ Third is the purpose these saints have in the poems as demonstration of the might of the Leinster saints.

⁶¹⁵ *VSH*, vol. 1, pp. 234-257. C. Plummer, *Bethada Náem nÉirenn*, vol. 2, pp. 125-167, (1922, republished 1968, electronically 1996, 2010), cf. CELT, <<http://www.ucc.ie/celt/published/G201000/index.html>> [accessed 14 March 2012].

⁶¹⁶ Also demonstrated when Colum Cille does not participate because of his allegiance to Leinster through his mother's side.

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.⁶¹⁷ 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 294^b, while situated shortly before the *Bórama*, on folios 283^b – 285^b, are six anecdotes featuring Moling.⁶¹⁸ 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.

⁶¹⁷ Stokes, *The Birth and Life. VSH*, vol 1, pp. 190-205, see also Introduction to the Lives, p. lxxxi – lxxxiii.

⁶¹⁸ *LL* ll. 36674-36873 (p. 1236-1242). *Fechtas dósum oc ernaigthi 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, Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác, Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna.*

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 Cumail*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 Cumail of the *ǫ́ian*-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 Cumail and Conchobar mac Nessa in previous

⁶¹⁹ LL II. 36674-36873. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’. Stokes, *The Birth and Life. VSH*, vol. 1 and 2. Bergin et al., *Anecdota*.

⁶²⁰ LL II. 37638-38310. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 36-55, §§1-42.

⁶²¹ LL II. 37908-37927. Cf. discussion Chapter 2: The Poetry, Chapter 3: The saints in the *Bórama* and Appendix B.

chapters.⁶²² 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*.⁶²³ 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.⁶²⁴

Poem 05 *Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil* along with poems 07 *Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain* and 08 *Ross mBruicc 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.⁶²⁵ 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*.⁶²⁶

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 *fíán*-band will receive once they arrive there and the second is Moling Lúath encouraging Finn mac Cumail to summon his men to aid the Leinstermen.⁶²⁷ There are a few issues which concern this poem that are worth exploring further.

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

⁶²³ *LL* ll. 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* ll. 37918-37919. 'He will come after them to the valley / the prophet Moling, with hundreds of crosses.'

⁶²⁷ Cf. Appendix B.

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.⁶²⁸ Second, the many names enumerated in the poem that are supposed to represent the *fián*-band of Finn, seem not to correspond to the men he is traditionally associated with in later sources.⁶²⁹ 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 chúain* follows on nicely from the previous poem.⁶³⁰ 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 Cumail's companion, Énna na húarbothi '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*.⁶³¹ The start of verse four catches the eye as well; *atchuala na haiffrenna / atchondarc na saltracha*.⁶³² 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

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.

⁶²⁹ *Duanire Finn*, vol 3, ed. G. Murphy (1953), cf. index pp. 342-392. Nor in the anecdotes found in *LL*. *LL* ll. 28620-29430.

⁶³⁰ Cf. previous discussion on poem 07 *Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain* 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 fírinne
Fáid 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.⁶³³*

Along with the reference to the pre-Christian period, is the subtle reference to Suibne and the battle of Mag Rath (Moirá, Co. Down) which occurred in 637[AU], *doraga fer foluamnach / atúaid a mMaig Rath*.⁶³⁴ 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.⁶³⁵ 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.⁶³⁶ 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.'⁶³⁷ 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

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* ll. 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.

⁶³⁶ Cf. J. Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History*, (Dublin, 1955), p. 133. The reference of Moling and Suibne in the *Codex St. Pauli* would bear witness to this development.

⁶³⁷ Buttimer, 'The *Bórama*', p. 193.

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 Cumail 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 tsléib 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

⁶³⁸ LL ll. 38311-38743. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 54-99, §§43-124.

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*.

⁶⁴¹ LL ll. 38537-38575. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 72-77, §§75-80.

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 is 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. 307^{ra}.

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 bórama⁶⁴⁵

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 Cumail, 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*.⁶⁴⁶ After receiving the message it is reported that he assembled his

⁶⁴⁵ *LL* ll. 38744-39321. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 98-117, §§125-161.

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*;

*cía náem don dreim dagfer
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;

*Retlu bruicc búada
atchlunim atchúala
béras úain in cís.*⁶⁵¹

It is here that Moling's purpose is again emphasised in the text. These three poems (21 *Cuce 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*:

*Derggfaide, bar rind
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.

*bid áigsech bar n-ord;
Fínnachta ro fáeth
mar ra thuitt Aed
i mBelaig Dúin Bolg.*⁶⁵³

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 Cumail 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*.⁶⁵⁴ 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.⁶⁵⁵ 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 nœm dogebad in Boroma ar athchungid, 7 is cian roim Moling rotairrngairead sin.*⁶⁵⁶ Similarly, in Moling’s Irish Life, *GMB*, a prophecy tells of a saint that will come and succeed in having the *bórama* lifted.⁶⁵⁷ 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

⁶⁵³ *LL* ll. 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.’

⁶⁵⁴ *LL* ll. 38797-38885. Cf. Appendix B.

⁶⁵⁵ *OG*, p. 262.

⁶⁵⁶ ‘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.

⁶⁵⁷ Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 46-7.

béras úain in cís.⁶⁵⁸ 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*".⁶⁵⁹ This is followed with the statement: *ro gabsat rempo iarum co teg Fínnachta. Mar rancatar ro gab in fer dána dúain Mo Lling, 7 atbert iss é doringne*.⁶⁶⁰ 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.⁶⁶¹ 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.⁶⁶²

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 Lathrach Ua Muireadaich, on the border of Leinster and Meath, where a group of young men from

⁶⁵⁸ *LL* I. 38855. 'who will lift the tax from us'

⁶⁵⁹ *LL* II. 38957-38958. 'we grudge thy belonging to a mere cleric's company'. O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, vol. 2, p. 420. 'It seems to us paltry [...] for thee to be in a cleric's retinue.' Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 102-3, §132.

⁶⁶⁰ *LL* II. 38959-38960. 'So they fared forward to Fínnachta's house. When they arrived the man of poetry repeated Moling's eulogy and said that he, Tollchenn, had composed it.' Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 102-3, §132.

⁶⁶¹ *LL* I. 38960. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 102-3, §132.

⁶⁶² *Ibid*, pp. 106-7, §142.

the household of Fínnachta were.⁶⁶³ 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; & ní fúair (*coimerigi and.*) and 7 ba nár leis. (*can comergi d'[f]agbail*).⁶⁶⁴ 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; 7 rot fia a lóg.⁶⁶⁵ 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 lúan 'Monday'.⁶⁶⁶ This Fínnachta agrees to do, not realising that the lúan 'Monday' that Moling is asking for is in fact Doomsday and thus meaning forever. Moling recites a panegyric poem for Fínnachta, poem 26 *Fínnachta a Huib Néill*, where he extols his many virtues, effectively saying that Fínnachta is a greater king than those that came before him.⁶⁶⁷

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: *mas é doringne, éirged 7 geibed a dúain* and when Tollchenn makes to recite the poem accredited to him, nothing comes out of him except a nonsense poem, poem 27 *Dríbor drábor*.⁶⁶⁸ Thus after being found out Tollchenn flees until he eventually ends up drowning himself as a result.⁶⁶⁹ 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.⁶⁷⁰ Moling prays to God that Fínnachta's son be restored and he is then

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.

⁶⁶⁶ *LL* ll. 38982-38981. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 106-7, §137.

⁶⁶⁷ *LL* ll. 38988-39015. Cf. Appendix B.

⁶⁶⁸ *LL* ll. 39017-39018. 'If he composed it, let him arise and recite his poem.' Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 106-7, §140.

⁶⁶⁹ *LL* ll. 39030-39031. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 106-7, §142.

⁶⁷⁰ *LL* ll. 39032-39034. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 106-7, §143.

successfully revived. With Fínnachta's pledge in place and the boy restored, Moling returns to Leinster.⁶⁷¹ 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.⁶⁷² 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.⁶⁷³ 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*.⁶⁷⁴

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'.⁶⁷⁵ 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*.⁶⁷⁶ 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'.⁶⁷⁷ Instead of Moling tricking Fínnachta with the request of remission till *luán* 'Monday/Doomsday' it is *fria lá 7 aidhche* 'for a day and night' as *úair ni ffuil 'san aimsir acht ló 7 aidhche* 'there is nothing in time but day and night', hence forever.⁶⁷⁸ 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*

⁶⁷¹ *LL* ll. 39056-39057. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 106-9, §§144-5.

⁶⁷² *LL* ll. 39057-39094. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 108-113, §§145-152.

⁶⁷³ *LL* ll. 39199-39203. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 114-115, §158.

⁶⁷⁴ Cf. Appendix B.

⁶⁷⁵ *FA*, p. xi. Cf. also this same section in Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 108-113, §§145-154.

⁶⁷⁶ *FA*, p. 23.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 25.

⁶⁷⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 26-7.

Neill or poem 26 *Fínnachta a Huíb 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

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid. Cf. Appendix B.

⁶⁸⁰ This episode is also found in the *Bórama*, cf. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 108-113, §§145-154.

⁶⁸¹ FA, pp. 30-3. Cf. Appendix B.

⁶⁸² Ibid, pp. 32-3.

⁶⁸³ Ibid, p. xix.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid, pp. 26-29.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid, pp. 22-29.

⁶⁸⁶ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 110-111, §151.

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 *luán* ‘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 Tóidin* 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. Tollchenn’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 *luán* 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

⁶⁸⁷ Clancy, ‘Saint and Fool’. A. Harrison, *The Irish Trickster* (Sheffield, 1989). J.G. O’Keeffe ed. and trans., ‘Mac Dá Cherda and Cummaine Foda’, *Éigse* 5, (1911), pp. 18-44.

⁶⁸⁸ Cf further discussion on these texts further on in this chapter.

⁶⁸⁹ Buttimer, ‘The *Bórama*’, p. 307.

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. 283^b – 285^b, and at least one poem ascribed to him is found on f. 149^a, with the initial line beginning, *Rochuala*, edited and translated by K. Meyer in 1917.⁶⁹² 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.'⁶⁹³ 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.⁶⁹⁴ 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.⁶⁹⁵

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.⁶⁹⁶ These texts have been edited and translated

⁶⁹² *LL* ll. 2924-2947, 19058-19086. Meyer. *Miscellanea Hibernica*, pp. 17-18.

⁶⁹³ Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, p. 192.

⁶⁹⁴ *FÓ*, pp. 150-157.

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-acca Mael Doborchon, Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác, Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna, Fechtas dósom oc ernaighthi ina eclais, Caillech dorat a mac do M'Ling, Fechtas aile do M'Ling is Tóidin.*

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.⁶⁹⁷ In *Fechtas dósum oc ernaighi ina eclais* the devil tries to trick Moling into thinking that Christ has come to him by wearing a disguise of purple garments.⁶⁹⁸ Moling recognizes the devil for what he is and challenges him to reveal why he has come to him.⁶⁹⁹ 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.⁷⁰⁰ 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 *Fínnachta a Huib Néill*.⁷⁰¹ The text of *Fechtas dósum oc ernaighi ina eclais* is represented nearly verbatim in the notes to *FÓ*.⁷⁰² 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).⁷⁰³ 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.⁷⁰⁴ 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.⁷⁰⁵ 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

⁶⁹⁷ Meyer, 'Anecdotes', pp. 188-194. Hull, 'Two anecdotes', pp. 90-99. *FÓ*, pp. 150-157. Stokes, *Goidelica*, pp. 179-182.

⁶⁹⁸ *LL* II. 36741-36800. Cf. *FÓ*, p. 154-5. Stokes, *Goidelica*, pp. 179-182. The first two quatrains of the poem in this text, although their arrangement is reversed, are found in the Codex S. Pauli. Cf. Stokes and Strachan, eds., *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, vol. 2, (Cambridge, 1903), p. 294.

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 7 naclam*, 'the sick and the lepers'. Stokes, *Goidelica*, p. 179-180.

⁷⁰⁰ *LL* I. 36768. Initial line of the verse is: *Is ór glan is nem im gréin*. Cf. *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, vol. 2, p. 294.

⁷⁰¹ Cf. Appendix B.

⁷⁰² *FÓ*, p.155-6. Aside from one phrase *do thecosc* 'to teach', being added to the last sentence spoken by Moling, there is barely any difference to the text, save for the orthography.

⁷⁰³ *LL* 36674-36696. Meyer, 'Anecdotes', p. 188-190. *FÓ*, p.152-3. J.F. Nagy, *Conversing with Angels and Ancients*, (Ithaca, New York, 1997), pp. 278-281.

⁷⁰⁴ Cf. Meyer, 'Anecdotes', p. 190. Cf. *FÓ*, p.152-3.

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 ernaighthi 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-accai nónbur dona dibergachaib cuci*, whereas in *GMB* it is related that Moling meets up with: *.i. Fūath angeda féin 7 a ben ocus a ghilla 7 a chú*

⁷⁰⁶ Clancy, 'Saint and Fool', p. 58.

⁷⁰⁷ *LL* II. 36801-36833.

⁷⁰⁸ Hull, 'Two anecdotes', pp. 95-6.

⁷⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-99.

⁷¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹¹ *LL* II. 36834-36873. Meyer, 'Anecdotes', p. 190-193.

⁷¹² Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 106-7, §138. Cf. Appendix B, poem 26 *Fínnachta a Huib Néill*.

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

[S:] *Dobērsa in gae-sae trit tōebhsa iarna innsmu.*

[T:] *Dar lāim m'aiti gēbatsa in mbachaill in cenn-su.*

[S:] *Is asa lemsu do comland. inā feoil bruite.*

[T:] *Dar slūagh sātthe ragas do gruac for a cute.*⁷¹⁴

Moling's dealings with the brigands in the anecdote of *Fechtas aile do M'ling is Tóidin* gives similar references:

*Cia th'ainmseó. Mael Geuraige [Gengraige]. Molad damsa 7 dom' gai. Cia ainm do gai. Etenchar, 7 maith le tornech eten na mbachlach oca truastad.*⁷¹⁵

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 *GMB*.

The two remaining anecdotes are; *Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác* and *Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna*.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; *Dobert triana memmor co rraguib in lestar fris anís*.⁷¹⁷ The question here is how to treat *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' (*triana*; *tre* + poss. adj. pl).⁷¹⁸ It is a rather crucial point in the text to understand this because it is otherwise easy to

⁷¹³ 'he saw nine brigands coming towards him.' Meyer, 'Anecdotes', pp. 190-192. 'Namely, the Evil Spectre himself and his wife, his gillie, his hound, and his nine followers.' Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, p. 14-15. The underlining is my work.

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, *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.

⁷¹⁵ *LL* ll. 36837-36839. 'What is thy name? Mael 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.

⁷¹⁶ *LL* ll. 36697-36725, 36726-36740. Hull, 'Two anecdotes', pp. 91-94. *FÓ*, pp. 152-155.

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', *ZCP* 55 (2007), pp. 69-107; 93.

⁷¹⁸ Hull, 'Two anecdotes', p. 93, fn. 4. *DIL* see *tre*.

misunderstand what is happening in the text. This text of Moling's dealing with the wife of Grácc 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.⁷¹⁹ 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.⁷²⁰ His outline of the anecdote goes as follows: Grácc'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. Grácc tells Crón to take the child to Moling to be raised by him, indicating that the child was his. Grácc is then slain, by Moling's kinsmen, the Uí Dega of Ossory, seemingly as punishment for his accusation against Moling.⁷²¹ 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.'⁷²² 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.⁷²³ 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.⁷²⁴ 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.⁷²⁵ Carney supports this argument and draws on the fact that this tale resembles a story

⁷¹⁹ Davies 'Kings and Clerics', p. 46. Edel, "'Bodily matters'", pp. 92-3, 102.

⁷²⁰ Carney, *Studies*, p. 139.

⁷²¹ Ibid, p. 138.

⁷²² Ibid, p. 139.

⁷²³ Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 34-39.

⁷²⁴ See in particular chapter 5 in James Carney, *Studies*.

⁷²⁵ Carney, *Studies*, p. 141. On motifs see D.A. Bray, 'Heroic tradition in the lives of the early Irish saints: a study in hagio-biographical patterning', in *Proceedings of the First North American Congress of Celtic Studies*, (Ottawa, 1988), pp. 261-271. Cf. also D.A. Bray, 'A list of motifs in the Lives of the Early Irish Saints', *FF Communications: Edited for the Folklore Fellows*, vol. 109, (Helsinki, 1992).

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 Mánuis O'Donnell.⁷²⁶ 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.⁷²⁷ 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.⁷²⁸

*Mo chobais or seseom is sám 7 is bind limsa in tan domberar in tilach darsin Gairb aníar. Nom geib gráin in tan berair taris síari. Ba mór n-innid rod mbaí oc cluidi na Toedini.*⁷²⁹

This same text is found in *FÓ* and was edited and translated by Stokes.⁷³⁰ In Stokes' translation he struggles with the word *tilach* (*tulach*), which means 'hill(ock)' or 'mound' or quite possibly in this case 'waves'.⁷³¹ Because of the uncertain term the word *tilach* in this instance pertains to the understanding of the anecdote has been somewhat hindered.⁷³²

B. Frykenberg discussed in depth the relationships between Suibne and Moling on one hand and between Suibne and water (*taíden* 'watercourse' or 'mill-stream' and the *Garb*, the river 'Barrow's tidal waters below Ros Bruic'⁷³³) on the other.⁷³⁴ 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 Suibne drowns in at his monastery.⁷³⁵ There are at least two other such instances described in the Latin life of Moling,

⁷²⁶ This story is found in the later *Life of St. Columba*, compiled by Mánuis O'Donnell in the sixteenth century. Mánuis O'Donnell, *Beatha Colaim Chille*, ed. and trans. Andrew O'Kelleher, Gertrude Schoepperle and Richard Henebry (Urbana, 1918), pp. 371-381, § 353.

⁷²⁷ *LL* ll. 36726-36740.

⁷²⁸ *VSH*, vol 2, p. 193 §vii. *FÓ*, pp. 152-3.

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.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 152-155.

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

⁷³² *Ibid*, p. 153.

⁷³³ B. Frykenberg, 'Suibhne, Lailoken, and the *Taídiu*', *PHCC* 4 (1984), pp. 105-120; 105.

⁷³⁴ Cf. Frykenberg, 'Suibhne'. Cf. Frykenberg, 'The Wild Man'.

⁷³⁵ J.F. Nagy, 'The Wisdom of the Geilt', *Éigse* 19 (1982 – 3), pp. 44-60; 54-56.

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*.’⁷³⁶ In fact, there are numerous occasions when liquid plays a part in the exploits of Moling.⁷³⁷ It is also possible to infer from these circumstances two of the anecdotes found in *LL*; *Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon* and *Caillech dorat a mac do M’Ling*. In the first anecdote Moling is said to be in the *taídiu* ‘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.⁷³⁸

Moling cecinit: Rochuala

In *LL* on f. 149a, there is a short poem, seven verses in length, beginning with the word *Rochuala*.⁷³⁹ It was edited and translated by Meyer, and published in *Miscellanea Hibernica* in 1917.⁷⁴⁰ 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.’⁷⁴¹ It sits among numerous other advisory and panegyric poems and tracts.⁷⁴² It corresponds quite well with the surrounding material and also with the type of material concerned with Moling.

*Diambad rim contuased rí,
ropad ní a chland dia éis.*⁷⁴³

There may be some resonance found within this poem and the way in which Moling deals with Fínnachta in poem 26 *Fínnachta a Huíb Néill*.⁷⁴⁴ The praise poem

⁷³⁶ Nagy, ‘The Wisdom’, p. 56. *VSH*, vol 2, p. 196, § xiv, xv. O’Leary, *The Ancient Life*, pp. 13-15.

⁷³⁷ *VSH*, vol 2, pp. 191 §iv, 192 §vii, 196 §xiv, xv, 202 §xxvi. O’Leary, *The Ancient Life*, pp. 5-6, 7, 14-15, 25-6.

⁷³⁸ Meyer, ‘Anecdotes’, pp. 188-9. Hull, ‘Two anecdotes’, pp. 95-98. Nagy, *Conversing with Angels and Ancients*, pp. 278-281.

⁷³⁹ *LL* ll. 19058-19086.

⁷⁴⁰ Meyer, *Miscellanea Hibernica*, pp. 17-18.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴² Such as *Diambad messe bad rí réil* or ‘Advice to a Prince’, cf. T. O’Donoghue, *Ériu* 9 (1921), pp. 43-45. *Cert cech rí g co rréil*, cf. T. O’Donoghue, *Miscellany presented to Kuno Meyer*, (1912), pp. 258-277. *Rochuala* is preceded by *Eclais Dé bí*, cf. Stokes, *FÓ*, p. 4-5. Moling’s poem is then followed by such poems as *Níba mé línfes do neoch dara thráth*, cf. Meyer, *Hibernica Minora*, (1894), p. 82-3 and *A Chormaic coisc do maicni*, ‘Oh Cormac, admonish your descendants’, untranslated. *LL* ll. 18667-18810, 18811-19040, 19041-19057, 19058-19086, 19087-19123, 19124-19163.

⁷⁴³ *LL* ll. 19079-19080. ‘If a king would listen to me / his offspring after him would amount to something.’ Meyer. *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.

⁷⁴⁵ *LL* ll. 39057-39090. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 108-11, §§145-151.

⁷⁴⁶ Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, p. 211.

⁷⁴⁷ Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 24-5. This corresponds with Finn mac Cumail’s experience when he reaches Broccross in the first section of the *Bórama*. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 44-5, §§25-6.

⁷⁴⁸ Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings*, p. 292.

Moling in the notes to Féilire 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*.⁷⁴⁹ 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.⁷⁵⁰ *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.*⁷⁵¹

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.⁷⁵² 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.*

⁷⁴⁹ These anecdotes were; *Fechtas dósum oc ernaighi 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.*⁷⁵³ This text demonstrates the same panegyric tone as poem 26 *Fínnachta a Huíb Néill* in the *Bórama*, although Moling is being particularly modest here; *.i. Moling, congreit rig robo brathair dó imaille ri mMoling, 7 airechus do M[o]ling dia reir sein.*⁷⁵⁴

Collectively the texts preserved in the notes to 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 *Fechtas do M'ling is Tóidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon* demonstrates folly, and the tales *Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna* and *Fechtas dósum oc ernaighi 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 *taídiu* (and the Garb) at his monastery of Tech Moling.

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

GMB is found in two manuscripts, Dublin RIA MS. 23 O 48^a commonly referred to as *Liber Flavus Fergusiorum* (Part I, ff. 13^a – 15^a), dating from mid-fifteenth century and the other is the Brussels MS. 4190 – 4200 (ff. 43^a – 65^b) written by Mícheál Ó Cléirigh 1628 – 1629.⁷⁵⁵ These two manuscripts were utilised by Stokes in his edition of 'The Birth and Life of St. Moling' in *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.'⁷⁵⁶ 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

⁷⁵³ 'A high champion of the king, strong, i.e., besides being a champion of the (heavenly) King he is a strong brother of ours'. *FÓ*, pp. 152-3.

⁷⁵⁴ '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 *FÓ*, but is again referred to on 17 June in MG as well as in MD.

⁷⁵⁵ Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, p. 3. Van Hamel Wiki, <http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Dublin,_Royal_Irish_Academy,_MS_23_O_48a>, [accessed 3 April 2012].

⁷⁵⁶ Stokes, *The Birth and Life of St. Moling*, p. 3.

few instances.⁷⁵⁷ The Irish life is among the central texts to the present discussion, as the *bórama* episode is the longest episode represented there.⁷⁵⁸ 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*.⁷⁵⁹ 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. 70^{va} – 76^{va}) 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.⁷⁶⁰ The Latin life of Moling was translated in 1887 by P. O'Leary from the *Codex Kilkenniensis* manuscript.⁷⁶¹

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.⁷⁶² 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.⁷⁶³ 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.

⁷⁶⁰ *Codex Salmanticensis*, Van Hamel Wiki, <http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Codex_Salmanticensis>, [accessed 3 April 2012]. *Codex Kilkenniensis*, ISOS, <<http://www.isos.dias.ie/english/index.html>>, [accessed 3 April 2012]. C. Plummer, *Miscellanea Hagiographica Hibernica*, (Brussels, 1925), pp. 173-177, 251.

⁷⁶¹ O'Leary, *The Ancient Life*.

⁷⁶² Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 46-7.

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.⁷⁶⁴ 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*.⁷⁶⁵ 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.⁷⁶⁶ 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 Uí 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*.⁷⁶⁷ 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.⁷⁶⁸

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 Uí 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 Uí Néill, rather than only by the king of the province; *is deimin, ar cách, is é*

⁷⁶⁴ Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 46-7.

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*.

*Molling ro marb in mac, ⁊ tabhar a rīar fēin dó ar a thodūscadh.*⁷⁶⁹ 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 remission 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*

⁷⁶⁹ “‘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.

⁷⁷¹ *VSH*, vol 2, pp. 197-199. P. O’Leary, *The Ancient Life*, pp. 17-20.

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.

⁷⁷³ *VSH*, vol 2, p. 198 §xix. O’Leary, *The Ancient Life*, p. 17

*Christi honore inducias usque ad diem lune.*⁷⁷⁴ After having succeeded in having the tax remitted Moling returns to his home. *Sancti magi* ‘wise men’ approach Fínnachta, when they heard what Fínnachta had done, they advice him to bring back Moling as captive and rescind the promise to him, otherwise he will never levy neither this particular debt nor any other until he dies.⁷⁷⁵ Moling hears of the impending seizure and flees with his company, and it is here that he is stated to have recited a poem, *primo faciens mencionem beatissime uirginis Brigide, et memoriam genitricis Marie in postremo*, which appears to be a reference to poem 33 *A Brigit bennach ar sét.*⁷⁷⁶ After Moling recited this poem, a mist came over them to shield Moling and his companions from those pursuing them.⁷⁷⁷ The tale of the tax then concludes with the fate of Fínnachta, king of the Uí Néill.⁷⁷⁸

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.⁷⁷⁹ Also, here, just as in *GMB* the men of the Uí 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*.⁷⁸⁰ 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*.⁷⁸¹

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.

⁷⁷⁵ *VSH*, vol 2, pp. 198-9 §xix. O’Leary, *The Ancient Life*, p. 19. O’Leary translates *sancti magi* as ‘magicians’, more appropriate would possibly be ‘astrologers’ or ‘wise men’.

⁷⁷⁶ ‘first making mention of the most blessed Virgin Brigit, and at last remembering Mary who gave birth.’ *VSH*, vol 2, p. 199 §xix. O’Leary, *The Ancient Life*, p. 19. Cf. Appendix B.

⁷⁷⁷ *VSH*, vol 2, p. 199 §xix. O’Leary, *The Ancient Life*, pp. 19-20.

⁷⁷⁸ *VSH*, vol 2, p. 199 §xix. O’Leary, *The Ancient Life*, p. 20.

⁷⁷⁹ *VSH*, vol 2, p. 198 §xix.

⁷⁸⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 197-199, §xix.

⁷⁸¹ *VSH*, vol 1, pp. lxxi-lxxii.

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* 'folly', is first associated with him, '*mo trī cēmend ailithre do lēcen damh ar ammus Rīg nime ocus talman, ocus mo trī cēmenna bāisi béus 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

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.

This image of Moling displaying the qualities usually associated with the hero, such as Cú Chulainn, Brandub mac Each and Cormac mac Airt, is not that unlikely.⁷⁸⁵ 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 recognise 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 ráinic Moling in inadh sin,
ocus fuair tellach mBrénaind annsin.*⁷⁸⁶

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 mbáatar eter laech 7 clerech co hAlind. Ni
tháinic dano Mo Ling leo. & tiagair ara chend Mo Ling uadaib. 7 iss*

⁷⁸⁵ M.T. Davies. 'The Somewhat Heroic Biography of Brandub Mac Echach', in *Essays on the early Irish king tales*, (Dublin, 2008), pp. 170-212. T. Ó Cathasaigh, *The Heroic biography of Cormac mac Airt*, (Dublin, 1977). Bray, 'Heroic tradition'. Cf. also Bray, 'A list of motifs', pp. 261 - 271.

⁷⁸⁶ 'and he looked southward, and beheld a service of angels at the Point of Ross Bruicc above the stream-pools of the Barrow. And Moling came to that place, and found Brénainn's hearth therein.' Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 26-7.

*and boí Mo Ling in tansain ac Ross Bruicc risi n-abbar Teg Mo Ling
in tanso.*⁷⁸⁷

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

*Cum esset ciuitas sancti Aedani, qui vulgo Moedhog uocatur, post obitum episcopi sui sine pastore, miserunt ciues illius cum rege Laginensium ex consilio principum provincie ad sanctum Molyng, ut ipsum ad episcopatum supradicte ciuitatis, siue uellet siue nollet, cuderent. Et adductus sanctus Molyng ad predictam ciuitatem, constitutus est ipse archiepiscopus in sede et in cathedra sancti Moedhog.*⁷⁸⁸

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 *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 *Bórama* was incorporated from somewhere else. This hypothesis is mainly based on the inclusion of poem 21 *Cuce seo ro dalus* as it seems to be able to convey several different meanings.

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 1937.⁷⁸⁹ This short text corresponds to chapter XII in the *GMB*; although not verbatim the content is the same and it is also found in his Latin *Vita*.⁷⁹⁰ The story tells of the gruesome episode where Moling meets up with a leper who asks him to blow his nose.⁷⁹¹ When Moling has rendered

⁷⁸⁷ *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.

⁷⁸⁸ *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, *The Ancient Life*, p. 8.

⁷⁸⁹ Grosjean, 'Textes', pp. 269-303.

⁷⁹⁰ Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 30-33. *VSH*, vol 2, pp. 203-4, §xxix.

⁷⁹¹ Grosjean, 'Textes', pp. 286-288.

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 Muirghíasa 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

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.

⁷⁹⁴ E.G. Quin, ‘The early Irish poem *Ísucán*’, CMCS 1 (1981), pp. 39-52. M. Herbert and P. Ó Riain eds. and trans., *Betha Adamnáin*, (1988), pp. 58-9. T. O. Clancy, *The Triumph Tree*, (Edinburgh, 1998), pp. 136-138, see particularly the *Miracula Nynie Episcopae*. J. Carey, ‘Varieties of supernatural contact in the Life of Adamnán’ in *Saints and scholars*, (Dublin, 2001), pp. 54-5.

⁷⁹⁵ O’Keeffe, *Buile Suibhne*, p. xiii.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid, pp. xiii-xiv.

manuscript.⁷⁹⁸ The third manuscript used by O’Keeffe in his translation is Bibliothèque Royal, Brussels 3410, ff. 59^a – 61^b.⁷⁹⁹

Although there has been little done in terms of overall study on the material concerned with Moling there has been great deal written on the scholarship on the legend of Moling and ‘the fluttering man from the north’. From what has been described above it is possible to assume that Moling inspired a great deal of literary creation and his fame was long reaching, through time and space. The multitude of themes scholars have focused on through the years in terms of *BS*, increases rather than diminishes with time, ranging from Indo-European and Eastern European motifs, the motif of the three-fold death, the three sins of the warrior and the wild man of the woods; Christianity and its aspects, presented through hagiography, ‘the heathen old’ as discussed by N. Chadwick, hermitry, saint (holy fool), prophet and shaman; along with the poetry, to the etymology of the *geilt* and *buile*, the stages of madness (the causes of) and the status of the mad and also Suibhne, the king, the relationship with women, similarities and affinities with other early Irish sagas (such as *Fled Dún na nGedh* and *Cath Magh Rath*, as well as the Moling tradition), to its provenance and historicity.⁸⁰⁰ Due to the vastness of the research which has gone into these themes, the limited scope of this thesis will only allow cursory remarks on some of these themes and sadly some will be left out of the discussion as they are of limited value to the discussion at hand, while being immensely interesting in their own right.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid, p. xiv.

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid, pp. xiii-xiv.

⁸⁰⁰ Cf. O’Keeffe, *Buile Suibhne*. K. Jackson, ‘The Motive of the Threefold Death in the Story of Suibhne’, in *Féil-Sgríbhinn Eóin Mhic Néill*, (Dublin, 1940), pp. 535-550. Chadwick, ‘Geilt’, *SGS* 5 (1942), pp. 106-153. K. Jackson, ‘A further note on Suibhne Geilt and Merlin’, *Éigse* 7 (1953 – 5), pp. 112-116. Carney, *Studies*. P. Mac Cana, ‘Aspects of the Theme of King and Goddess in Irish Literature’, *ÉC* 7 (1955 – 56), pp. 76-114, 356-413; *ÉC* 8 (1958 – 59), pp. 59-65. G. Mac Eoin, ‘Gleann Bolcáin agus Gleann na nGealt’ *Béaloideas* 30, (1962), pp. 105-120. P. Ó Riain, ‘A study of the Irish legend of the wild man,’ *Éigse* 14 (1971 – 2), pp. 179-206. Ó Riain, ‘The Materials and Provenance’. D.J. Cohen, ‘Suibhne Geilt,’ *Celtica* 12 (1977), 113-124. Frykenberg, ‘Suibhne’, pp 105-120. Frykenberg, ‘The wild-man’. Nagy, ‘The Wisdom’, pp. 44-60. J.F. Nagy, *A New Introduction to Buile Suibhne*, (Dublin, 1996). S.S. Sailer, ‘Leaps, curses and flight’, *ÉC* 33 (1997), pp. 191-208. S.S. Sailer, ‘Suibhne Geilt: puzzles, problems, and paradoxes’, *CJIS* 24, nr. 1 (1998), pp. 115-131. A. Bergholm, ‘Folly for Christ’s sake in early Irish literature: the case of Suibhne Geilt reconsidered’, *SCF* 4 (2007), pp. 7-14. A. Bergholm, ‘The saintly madman: a study of the scholarly reception history of *Buile Suibhne*’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, (Helsinki, 2009).

The texts, *Fled Dún na nGedh*, *Cath Magh Rath* and *Buile Suibhne* correspond well with E. Poppe’s idea of the ‘immanent cycle’ as they relate to each other in content and character. Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, p. 14-15.

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.⁸⁰¹ 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,'⁸⁰² 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.⁸⁰³ 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.'⁸⁰⁴ 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.⁸⁰⁵

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).⁸⁰⁶ 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.'⁸⁰⁷ 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 Riain remarked that Carney and

⁸⁰¹ Jackson, 'The Motif', p. 541-2.

⁸⁰² Carney, *Studies*, p. 136.

⁸⁰³ *VSH*, vol 2, pp. 190-205.

⁸⁰⁴ Carney, *Studies*, p. 133.

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 136.

⁸⁰⁶ Further discussion on the *Codex S. Pauli* and the 'Anecdota pomes' will follow on later in this chapter.

⁸⁰⁷ Jackson, 'A further note', pp. 112-116.

Jackson, ‘engaged in a lively and fruitful debate regarding the origin and literary association of the theme *geltacht*.’⁸⁰⁸ 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 Suibne.⁸⁰⁹ Mac Cana ‘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*.’⁸¹⁰ The discussion was then taken up again by Ó Riain, in various articles, and to some extent by Frykenberg as well in his article, ‘Suibhne, Lailoken and the Taídiu’ and in his thesis *The Wild-Man in Celtic Ecclesiastical Legend and literary Tradition*, both published in 1984.⁸¹¹ 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’.⁸¹² Cohen’s approach *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].’⁸¹³ Cohen identifies that the episodes involving Rónán’s cursing of Suibne, his flight from battle and the Moling episode of the swineherd’s jealousy which causes Suibne’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.⁸¹⁴ Although he notes that the third sin is the ‘most equivocal of the three’, as Suibne 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.⁸¹⁵ However, he does seem to have reconciled himself to the

⁸⁰⁸ Ó Riain, ‘A Study’, p. 179. Carney’s article “‘Suibhne Geilt’ and the “The children of Lir””, was first published in *Éigse* 6 (1948/52), part 2 (1950), pp. 83-110, later published in his book *Studies in Irish Literature and History*, (Dublin, 1955).

⁸⁰⁹ Ó Riain, ‘A Study’, p. 179. Chadwick, ‘Geilt’, pp. 106-153.

⁸¹⁰ Ó Riain, ‘A Study’, p. 179.

⁸¹¹ See in particular Ó Riain, ‘A Study’, and Ó Riain, ‘The Materials and Provenance’, also Frykenberg, ‘Suibhne, Lailoken, and the *Taídiu*’. Cf. Frykenberg, ‘The Wild Man’.

⁸¹² Cohen, ‘Suibhne Geilt’, pp. 113-124.

⁸¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

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.⁸¹⁶

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’.⁸¹⁷ Cohen also manages to draw parallels between the ‘three sins’ motif with an episode described in the *Bórama*, when Áed mac Ainmerech in conversation with Colum Cille asking if any Irish kings had attained heaven.⁸¹⁸ 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.⁸¹⁹ 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.⁸²⁰

⁸¹⁶ Ibid, p. 119.

⁸¹⁷ Ibid, p. 120.

⁸¹⁸ Cf. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 84-89, §§95-104.

⁸¹⁹ Cohen, ‘Suibhne Geilt’, p. 122.

⁸²⁰ Ó Riain, ‘A Study’, p. 182-184, quote see p. 184.

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 Cummine 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.’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 by 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.’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 Cummine 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

⁸²² J. Saward, *Perfect fools: folly for Christ’s sake in Catholic and orthodox spirituality*, (Oxford, 1980), pp. 34-47.

⁸²³ Bergholm, ‘Folly for Christ’s’, p. 7.

⁸²⁴ Ibid.

⁸²⁵ Frykenberg, ‘The Wild Man’, p. 249.

⁸²⁶ Cf. Nagy, ‘The Wisdom’, pp. 58-60 particularly.

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 Suibne 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 Suibne, 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 Tóidin 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 Suibne.'⁸³⁶

⁸²⁷ Nagy, *A new introduction*, p. 25.

⁸²⁸ Mac Cana, 'Aspects', pp. 76-114.

⁸²⁹ Meyer, 'Anecdotes', pp. 188-190. Hull, 'Two anecdotes', pp. 95-99.

⁸³⁰ O'Keeffe, *Buile Suibhne*, p. 143.

⁸³¹ Ibid.

⁸³² Ibid.

⁸³³ Ibid, pp. 143-145.

⁸³⁴ Ibid, p. 147.

⁸³⁵ Ibid, p. 159.

⁸³⁶ T.O. Clancy. 'Fools and Adultery in Some Early Irish Texts', *Ériu* 44, (1993), pp. 105-124; 114.

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.⁸³⁷ 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. Grácc 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.⁸³⁸ 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.⁸³⁹ 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.⁸⁴⁰ 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 Molling and arose out of an early effort to explain his unusual and unintelligible name.’⁸⁴¹ 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.⁸⁴² 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*

⁸³⁷ 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.

⁸³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 161.

⁸³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 140.

⁸⁴⁰ Cf. Carney, *Studies*, p. 143.

⁸⁴¹ *Ibid*.

⁸⁴² *Ibid*, p. 144. O’Keeffe, *Buile Suibhne*, pp. 60 – 63. Cf. also Nagy, *New Introduction*, p. 19-25, 28-9.

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.⁸⁴³

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.⁸⁴⁴

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.'⁸⁴⁵ 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 *techt gacha hespurtan chugum-sa go rosgriobhthar do sgéla lium*.⁸⁴⁶ Therefore in this respect the text is somewhat atypical for his material, while at the same time corresponding with the texts of *Fechtas do M'ling is Tóidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon* and *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 *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.

⁸⁴³ Carney, *Studies*, p. 141.

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁵ 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'.

⁸⁴⁶ 'You will come to me each evening so that I may write your history'. O'Keeffe, *Buile Suibhne*, p. 142-3.

Carney demonstrates that the three anecdotes found in *LL*; *Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác*, *Fechtas aile do M'Ling is Tóidin* 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 Tóidin* 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

⁸⁴⁷ Carney, *Studies*, pp. 134-147.

⁸⁴⁸ Sailer, 'Suibne Geilt', p. 120.

⁸⁴⁹ Jackson, 'The Motif'. Jackson, 'A further note'. Carney, *Studies*. Chadwick, 'Geilt'. Cohen, 'Suibhne Geilt', pp. 113-124. Sailer, 'Suibne Geilt', pp. 122-3. Frykenberg, 'The Wild Man'.

⁸⁵⁰ Frykenberg, 'The Wild Man', p. 27.

have intended to condemn Rónán's Christianity, subordinating it to that of Moling.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 *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.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 *LL* seem to show strong indication of.⁸⁵³ The *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 *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 *BS* and the *Bórama*; however there are definite signs that show that *BS* is caught up in the tradition surrounding Moling. Thankfully the *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 *BS* compared with the *Bórama*. While Moling is unarguably the central character of the *Bórama*, he is relegated to a secondary character in the *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.

⁸⁵¹ Frykenberg, 'The Wild Man', p. 27, see footnote.

⁸⁵² Cf. Ó Riain, 'Towards a methodology', pp. 146-159. Ó Riain, 'The Tallaght Martyrologies, redated'. A.S. Mac Shamhráin, 'Prosopographica Glindalachensis: The monastic church of Glendalough and its community, sixth to thirteenth centuries', *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 119 (1989), pp. 79-97. A.S. Mac Shamhráin, 'The Uí Muiredaig and the Abbey of Glendalough in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries', *CMCS* 25 (1993), pp. 55-75. Mac Shamhráin, *Church and polity*.

⁸⁵³ Buttimer, 'The Bórama'.

*Codex S. Pauli and the 'Anecdota poems'*⁸⁵⁴

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.⁸⁵⁵ 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.'⁸⁵⁶ The poem titled either *Barr edin* or *Tuaim Inbir* 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.⁸⁵⁷ 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.⁸⁵⁸ 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'.⁸⁵⁹ 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

⁸⁵⁴ The *Codex S. Pauli* is now referred to as the *Reichenau Primer*. *Reichenau Primer* <<http://web.archive.org/web/20071119004340/http://www.rz.uni-potsdam.de/u/lingtri/schulheft/>>, [accessed 12 April 2012].

⁸⁵⁵ Cf. Stokes and Strachan, *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, vol. 2, pp. 293-295 and Bergin et al., *Anecdota*, pp. 20-41.

⁸⁵⁶ Carney, *Studies*, p. 134.

⁸⁵⁷ Cf. K. Jackson, 'Studies in early Celtic nature poetry', (1935, reprint 1995), pp. 34-36. Carney, *Studies*. Ó Riain, 'The Materials and Provenance', pp. 185, 187. Nagy, *A new introduction*, pp. 16, 29-30. Murphy, 'The origins of Irish nature poetry', pp. 87-102. G. Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics*, (Oxford, 1956), pp. 223-225. Ó Corráin, 'Early Irish Hermit Poetry?' in *Sages, saints and storytellers*, D. Ó Corráin, L. Breathnach, K. McCone eds., (Maynooth, 1989), pp. 252, 263-4. R. Lehmann, 'A Study of the Buile Shuibhne' *ÉC* 7 (1955 – 6), p. 134-138.

⁸⁵⁸ Cf. Murphy, 'The origins of Irish nature poetry' *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 20.77 (1931), pp. 87-102.

⁸⁵⁹ Jackson, 'Studies' Carney, *Studies*, pp. 134-5. Ó Corráin, 'Early Irish Hermit Poetry?', pp. 263-4.

early ninth centuries, and only very little about the mentality of the early Irish churchmen.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’.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 Shuibhne*:

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.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 dósum oc ernaighi ina eclais*, where it is the devil who recites this praise poem to Moling; the order they appear in has also been altered.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*.

⁸⁶⁰ Ó Corráin, ‘Early Irish Hermit Poetry?’, p. 264.

⁸⁶¹ Jackson, ‘A further note’, p. 115. Carney, *Studies*, pp. 134-136.

⁸⁶² Lehmann, ‘A Study of the Buile Shuibhne’, p. 134.

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 alaínd 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.⁸⁶⁴ 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*.⁸⁶⁵ Murphy notes that the language of the poem indicates ‘the middle of the twelfth-century’.⁸⁶⁶ 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.’⁸⁶⁷ 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’.⁸⁶⁸

*Gáir na Gairbe glaídbinne
glaídes re tosach tuinne;
rátha aidble aibinne
d’íasc co irsnám ‘na bruinne!*⁸⁶⁹

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 mBroccross* and 08 *Ross mBruicc bale buredach* as well.⁸⁷⁰ 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 Cumail 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.

⁸⁶⁴ Bergin et al., *Anecdota*, pp. 20-41. Brussels MS 5100-4
<http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Brussels,Biblioth%C3%A8que_Royale_de_Belgique,_MS_5100-5104> [accessed 11 April 2012].

⁸⁶⁵ K.H. Jackson, *A Celtic Miscellany*, pp. 78-9. Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics*, pp. 112-117, 225-227.

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 227.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁸ Cf. Appendix B. Ibid, p. 226.

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.’⁸⁷¹ 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’.⁸⁷² 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 Suibne, not least one that takes a closer look at the Moling side of the Suibne 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 ernaighthi ina eclais*, when the devil approaches him in purple garments.⁸⁷³ 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.⁸⁷⁴ Within that text there is also mention of fellow *céli Dé* cleric, Máel Ruain, the founder of the 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.⁸⁷⁵ D. Schlüter makes a convincing argument for the ecclesiastical background of the manuscript, stating that:

⁸⁷¹ Ó Riain, ‘The Materials and Provenance’, p. 185.

⁸⁷² Ibid.

⁸⁷³ *LL* 1. 36745. *FÓ*, p. 154-5. Stokes, *Goidelica*, pp. 179-180.

⁸⁷⁴ *LL* 1. 52498. P. O’Dwyer, *Céli Cé: spiritual reform in Ireland 750 – 900*, (Dublin, 1981), pp. 47-49. Haggart, ‘Feidlimid mac Crimthainn’, pp. 29-59. Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, p. 211.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid, pp. 211-213.

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 *Céli Dé* movement indicates that the manuscript was written in a church closely related to it, such as Terryglass or Clonenagh. ... But the *Céli 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 Cummine 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 Finnachta, 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 Fínnachta 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.⁸⁷⁹ 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 attach 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.*

⁸⁷⁹ C. Doherty, 'The transmission of the cult of St. Máedhóg', p. 271. Bhreathnach, 'Killeslin', p. 39.

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 Suibne 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

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.

⁸⁸² Cf. Chapter 1: The *Bórama*. *LL* ll. 24920-24922. Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, p. 33, 41.

early Irish literature view the idea and purpose of what the question of classification entails. As has been demonstrated in the introduction to this thesis the *Bórama* evades neat classification. The closest scholars have come to term it has been among the kingship-tale cycle although no one has been able to demonstrate a convincing argument for placing it here besides the fact that it contains references to a great number of kings. The work undertaken by this thesis, however, has demonstrated that it should also be seriously considered as belonging among the hagiographical literature of the early Irish period, perhaps more so than as a secular text (to the extent that those are valid categories themselves).

As I hope to have shown in the preceeding 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*.⁸⁸³ The poetry of the *Bórama* has yielded the names of sixty-eight saints that are spread throughout seven of the thirty-three

⁸⁸³ For the context of cultural memory, see Schlüter.

poems. A number of the monastic sites the saints are affiliated with demonstrate (then and in later period) strong connection with the *paruchia* 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.⁸⁸⁴ 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 *Bórama* was created.⁸⁸⁵

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 Fíac (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.⁸⁸⁶ 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 *Bórama* must have existed in its current form before its inclusion in *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.⁸⁸⁷ 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.⁸⁸⁸

While the poetry is the thread that runs through the fabric of the *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 *Bórama* together and how they reflect Moling, it becomes apparent how they illustrate how central he is to the *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

⁸⁸⁴ Mac Shamhráin. *Church and Polity*, pp. 135-6, 138.

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 111-215.

⁸⁸⁶ The exceptions being the name of Moling in poem 18 *Dénaid dúin ar cotach* and Máel Rúain in poem 33 *A Brigit bennach ar sét*.

⁸⁸⁷ Doherty, 'The transmission of the cult of St. Máedhóg', p. 271.

⁸⁸⁸ These instances may include Máel Rúain of Tallaght and possibly Comgán of Killeslin (date not certain). In the case of Comgán of Killeslin, see Bhreathnach, 'Killeslin', pp. 36-7.

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 dún 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. 301^{ra}. '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 Cumail⁸⁹⁰

Poems	Metre	Metre description	Murphy ‘key’
01 <i>Fithir is Dáirine</i>	<i>Aí freisligi</i>	$7^3 7^2 7^3 7^2$	54
02 <i>Tuathal Tecthmar techta in talman</i>	<i>Sétnad mór</i>	$8^2 7^1 8^2 7^1$	6
03 <i>Dénaid dún bar comairli</i>	<i>Aí freisligi</i>	$7^3 7^2 7^3 7^2$	54
04 <i>A Find in n-érgi ri báig</i>	<i>Deibide scaílte fota</i>	$7^x 7^{x+1} \text{ or } 2 \quad 7^x 7^{x+1} \text{ or } 2$	63
05 <i>Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil</i>	<i>Rannaigeacht dialtach scaílte</i>	$7^1 7^1 7^1 7^1$	15
06 <i>Rot fiasu i mBroccross</i>	<i>Rinnard bec</i>	$5^2 5^2 5^2 5^2$	34 and 61
07 <i>Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain</i>	<i>Rannaigeacht dialtach scaílte</i>	$7^1 7^1 7^1 7^1$	15
08 <i>Ross mBruicc bale buredach</i>	<i>Cúicsrethaid</i>	$6^3 6^3 6^3 5^1, 6^3 6^3 6^3 4^1$	80
09 <i>Mor in gním daringned sund</i>	<i>Deibide scaílte fota</i>	$7^x 7^{x+1} \text{ or } 2 \quad 7^x 7^{x+1} \text{ or } 2$	63
10 <i>In cath ac Cnámros ni chelam</i>	<i>Dechnad cummaisc</i>	$8^2 4^2 8^2 4^2$	12
11 <i>Atbath Loegaire mac Neil</i>	<i>Rannaigeacht dialtach scaílte</i>	$7^1 7^1 7^1 7^1$	15

⁸⁹⁰ LL II. 37638-38310. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 36-55, §§1-42.

*Section two: the ‘Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)*⁸⁹¹

Poems	Metre	Metre description	Murphy ‘key’
<i>12 Failet sund aisceda rí</i>	<i>Deibide scaílte fota</i>	$7^x 7^{x+1} \text{ or } 2^x 7^{x+1} \text{ or } 2$	63
<i>13 M’aél trébend torcbálach</i>		$7^3 7^3 7^3 7^3 7^4 7^3$	
<i>(14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach</i>	<i>Casbairdne</i>	$7^3 7^3 7^3 7^3$	42
<i>15 Tiagat techta úain co hAilech</i>	<i>Dían midseng</i>	$8^2 7^3 8^2 7^3$	1
<i>16 Itchíusa na merggi</i>	<i>Rinnard dá n-ard</i>	$6^2 6^2 6^2 6^2$	58
<i>17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad</i>	<i>Sétnaid n-gairit</i>	$8^2 3^1 8^2 3^1$	10
<i>18 Dénaid dúin ar cotach</i>	<i>Rinnard ailech</i>	$6^2 6^2 6^2 6^2$	58
<i>19 Lussán Aeda meic Ainmereich</i>		$8^3 9^4 8^3 6^3$	
<i>20 Dénaid dúin bar comairle</i>	<i>Aí freisligi</i>	$7^3 7^2 7^3 7^2$	54

*Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama*⁸⁹²

Poems	Metre	Metre description	Murphy ‘key’
<i>21 Cuce seo ro dalus</i>	<i>Aí freisligi</i>	$7^3 7^2 7^3 7^2$	54
<i>22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i>	<i>Deibide n-imrinn fota</i>	$7^1 7^2 7^1 7^2$	73
<i>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail</i>		$6^2 6^2 6^2 5^1 (?)$	
<i>24 Érig a Mo Lling</i>		$5^1/6^1 - 5^1/6^1 - 6^1/6^1 \times 2$	
<i>25 In-anmum na Trinóiti</i>	<i>Cró cummaisc etir casbairdni ocus lethrannaigeacht [móir]</i>	$6^2 5^1 6^2 5^1$	62
<i>26 Fínnachta a Huib Néill</i>		Meter completely irregular	

⁸⁹¹ LL II. 38311-38743. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 54-99, §§43-124.

⁸⁹² LL II. 38744-39321. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 98-117, §§125-161.

Poems	Metre	Metre description	Murphy ‘key’
<i>27 Dríbor drábor</i>	<i>Rannaigeacht bec bec</i>	$4^2 4^2 4^2 4^2$	38
<i>28 Crist conic mo chrí</i>	<i>Lethrannaigeacht mór</i>	$5^1 5^1 5^1 5^1$	33
<i>29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca</i>	<i>Rannaigeacht fota recomarcach</i>	$7^2 7^2 7^2 7^2$	16
<i>30 A mo Chomdiu cumachtach</i>	<i>Casbairdne</i>	$7^3 7^3 7^3 7^3$	42
<i>31 Corbar cairrge ar dairge donna</i>	<i>Forduan</i>	$7^2 7^3 7^2 7^3$	19
<i>32 Suidem sund suide n-ága</i>	<i>Rannaigeacht fota recomarcach</i>	$7^2 7^2 7^2 7^2$	16
<i>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</i>	<i>Rannaigeacht dialtach scaílte</i>	$7^1 7^1 7^1 7^1$	15

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 Cumail*⁸⁹³

05 Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil

LL ll. 37908 – 37927

Rannaigecht dialtach (commonly called *rannaigecht mór*) (7¹ - 7¹ - 7¹ - 7¹)

Finn mac Cumail meets up with his companions, the three sons of Fiacha son of Conga; Moling the Swift, Cellach the Bald and Braen.⁸⁹⁴ It foretells of Moling at Broccross and Tech Moling, Finn speaks:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Mo Lling Lúath, Cellach Bróen bil,
tri meic Fiacha cosin neim.
Druim nDubglaisse i failet airm,
níba úadib ainm fair sein.</i> | 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. <i>Doragat sunda dá n-éis,
bid glan a séis immon ross,
bo chichlet⁸⁹⁵ angil ó DÍA,
níba lía dulli for doss.</i> | 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. |
| 3. <i>Brénaínd Birra, Brenaind fáid,
níba tláith ticfait in ross.
Daraga na ndíaid don glind,
Mo Lling fáid, co cétaib cros.</i> | 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. <i>Dia dom dítin, Dia dom fis,
Dia dom chomét d'iplib doss.
Co ragba ra hanmain Find
tairngires Mo Lling sin ross.</i> | 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. <i>Tellach Brenaind sin Druim,
in tellachsa, tellach Find.
In tres tellach, as dech lem,
tellach as ferr Teg Mo Lling. M.</i> | 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. |

⁸⁹³ *LL* ll. 37638-38310. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 36-55, §1-42.

⁸⁹⁴ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 44-5, §45.

⁸⁹⁵ Cf. *DIL*, p. 315 for *fo-clich*.

⁸⁹⁶ Possibly a reference to Drum Dubglass in the first verse.

08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach

LL ll. 38083 – 38125

Ochtfhoclach ($7^3 - 7^3 - 7^3 - 6^2 - 7^3 - 7^3 - 6^2$)

Énán na huarboithe ‘of the Chilly Booth’, a companion of Find mac Cumail has a vision regarding the *Bórama*, recites this poem.⁸⁹⁷

1. *Ross mBruicc, bale buredach
os tuind Berba bánglaine.
Talcind ina tromdámaib,
contrefbat re thaib;
bid é in t-inad ardúasal,
bid cend uide ailithrech,
i n-amsir na náem.*

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 Brénaind borrfadach,
atchonnarc im súan.
Gáir na Gairbe gainmige
ra tul tunne tulgurme,
glend ailenach úar.*

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 camlitech.
Ba hur cairrggi cráebglassi.
doroset sund sochaide
da himthecht ar Día.
Da cét náem co nárglaine
munter Comded cumachtaig.
Mo Lling lúam na fírinne
cid fota, daría.*

The Taídiu 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 haiffrenna,
atchondarc na saltracha,
na sreith táeb ra táeb.
Cromcind ataconnacsa
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.

⁸⁹⁷ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 48-9, §33.

5. *Mo Lling luam na fírinne,
fáid 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.*

Moling steersman of justice,
the prophet of the son of Mary, of mighty deeds
I am under his protection⁸⁹⁸
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 & comnarta,
filet sund innocht.
Epscuip & ancharait,
uasail. & ailethraig,
dá n-éis 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 Dúin Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)⁸⁹⁹

12 Failet sund aisceda rí

LL II. 38333 – 38368

Deibide scaílte fota (7¹ - 7² - 7¹ - 7²)

When Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge visits Brandub mac Echach and presents him with gifts, a flesh-fork, a cauldron, a shield and a sword.⁹⁰⁰ He then recites this poem;

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Failet sund aisceda rí,
a meic Echach, cen imsním:
aél co mbennaib braine,
sciath is chlaidem is chaire.</i> | 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. |
| 2. <i>In t-aél a llus⁹⁰¹ in bíd.
Iss ed as chubaid ra hardríg.
In coire do bruith na n-om,
ra orddaig, Crist in comgor.</i> | 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. |
| 3. <i>In sciath ra hucht in chatha,
i n-agid na n-anflatha.
In claideb do chlód na cath,
bíd acut, a meic Echach.</i> | The shield before the breast in battle,
against the tyrants.
The sword for subduing of battles,
it will be yours, oh son of Echach. |
| 4. <i>Conclaíd, cerd Brigti ní chel
is é doringni in n-aél.
Grésach⁹⁰² doringne in caire
do mac Néill do Láegaire.</i> | Conlaed, Brigit's craftsman
who does not conceal
it is he who made the flesh-fork.
Lastingly was made the cauldron
for the son of Néill, for Lóegaire. |
| 5. <i>Claideb Crimthaind sciath Ennai,
is uaimse darogébai.⁹⁰³
Aél meic, ind éicis find,
coire Dubthaig ó Duibhind.</i> | The sword of Crimthann, the sheild of Énna,
it is from me ...
The flesh-fork of a son, of a bright poet,
cauldron of Dubthach from Dublin. |
| 6. <i>Dorat Laegaire na lend
do Dubthach, d'ollom Herend.
Dorat Dubthach, dían a gal,
d'Fíac, do mac a sethar.</i> | 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. |

⁸⁹⁹ LL II. 38311-38743. Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 54-99, §43-124.

⁹⁰⁰ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 56-7, §45.

⁹⁰¹ Cf. *DIL*, p. 441, 1. *los* IIa.

⁹⁰² Buttimer suggests that Grésach is the name of Lóegaire's craftsman. Buttimer, 'The Bórama', pp. 221-2.

⁹⁰³ Uncertain meaning.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>7. <i>Tuc Fíac do Dunlang, don reimm,
dorat Dunlang é do Ailill.
Dorat Ailill damsa iar sain,
dosbiurtsa duitsiu, a Branduib.</i></p> | <p>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.</p> |
| <p>8. <i>Mathi na cruid beri latt,
aél is chore comnart;
claideb Crimthaind arnat chuir
scíath Ennai, is comderg ra fuil.</i>⁹⁰⁴</p> | <p>Good the items ofwealth 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.</p> |
| <p>9. <i>Is messi, M'Aedóc na mmed,
tussu, Brandub, rí Lagen;
missi ac crábud, 's a(c) comaid,
tussu ic éirge ra folaid. F.</i></p> | <p>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.</p> |

⁹⁰⁴ This quatrain is missing from Lec version.

17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad

LL II. 38549 – 38558

Sétnad ngairit ($8^2 - 3^1 - 8^2 - 3^1$)

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. <i>Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad
da mbá im súan.
In fítir nech úaib a fídrad⁹⁰⁶
issin tslúag.</i> | I saw a strange vision
when I was asleep.
Does anyone of you, know its significance
in the host |
| 2. <i>Atchonnaccus dabaich nglaine
co néim n-óir;
acum ar certlár mo thaige
ic Brega ic Bóinn.</i> | 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. <i>Trían na dabcha d'fuilib dóene,
ingnad dál;
ní rabi acht oentrian do
lemnacht ara lár.</i> | 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. <i>Tríán aile ba fín forclid,
ingnad lemm;
daíne cromcenna ros timchell
dar Muir Mend.</i> | The other third was noble wine,
strange to me;
men with bowed heads going around it
across the Irish sea. |
| 5. <i>Lagin uile, ciarsat ile,
línib glond;
tucussa dóib serc mo chride
& mo chond. At.</i> | All Leinster, though they be many,
great their deeds;
I give in to them love of my heart
and my good sense. |

⁹⁰⁵ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 72-5, §76.

⁹⁰⁶ Taking *fídrad* as *fígrad* here, as this seems more probable.

18 Dénaid dún ar cotach

LL II. 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. <i>Dénaid dún ar cotach,
rop cotach tri bithu,
risna fedaib fína,
risna rígu a lLifíu.</i> | Make for us our covenant,
may it be a covenant forever,
with the trees of wine,
with the kings from the Liffey. |
| 2. <i>Brigit aca chomét,
M'Aedóc o Dún Inne,⁹⁰⁸
Mo Lling,⁹⁰⁹ thes na Táeden,
Abbán, Caemgen Glinne.</i> | Brigit guarding it,
Máedóc from Dún Inne,
Moling, south of the Taídiu,
Abbán, Caemgen of Glendalough. |
| 3. <i>Epscop Sinchean sochla,
Mo Chalmóc on Chaba;
is Mo Biu na rográd,
Comgall, Colman Ela.</i> | Famous bishop Sinchean,
Mo Chalmóc from/of Caba[(u)s]/Coba; ⁹¹⁰
and Mo Biu of the great love,
Comgall and Colmán Elo. |
| 4. <i>A lucht na da chóiced
clothaige in bar scélaib,
narap dál bas sía
ra taíb día denaid. D.</i> | Oh, people of the two provinces,
famous in your tales,
let there be no agreement more lasting
aside from the one that you make. |

⁹⁰⁷ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 74-7, §77.

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 *Bórama* and Appendix C for Mo Chalmóc.

*Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama*⁹¹¹

21 Cuce seo ro dalus⁹¹²

LL ll. 38755 – 38770

Aí freisligi ($7^3 - 7^2 - 7^3 - 7^2$)

Moling, when a messenger is sent to him about the tribute to bring him to the assembly of the king of Leinster.⁹¹³

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>Cuce seo ro dalus</i>
<i>is and dogén mo thrátha;</i>
<i>ní scér rissín n-árusa,</i>
<i>naco tí lathe brátha.</i> | 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. <i>Is andso bías m'accarda,</i>
<i>mo thaídiu úasin tuile;</i>
<i>ní mór mo sáith cotulta,</i>
<i>cot attach, a Meic Muire.</i> | 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. <i>Ross nEidnech na habnaire</i> ⁹¹⁴
<i>Ross nDubglassi co ndremna;</i>
<i>Druim nDaíle, Druim nDamgaire,</i>
<i>Ross Bruic ar brú na Berba.</i> | Ross Eidnech of ...,
Ross Dubglass with raging madness;
Drum Daile, Druim Damgaire,
Broccross on the bank of the Barrow. |
| 4. <i>Me Mo Lling na firinne,</i>
<i>Teg Mo Lling bías ar m árus;</i>
<i>do déoin rig na dilynne,</i>
<i>is cucoseo ra dálás. Cuce.</i> | 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. |

⁹¹¹ LL ll. 38744-39321. Stokes, 'Boroma', pp. 98-117, §125-161.

⁹¹² Lec has an extra quatrain for this poem, comes after the last quatrain.

⁹¹³ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 98-9, §126.

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 II. 38773 – 38788

Deibide n-imrinn fota ($7^1 - 7^2 - 7^1 - 7^2$)

A description of Moling's community, he recites this poem as he prepares to go to the king of Leinster.⁹¹⁵

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Inmain tríar, a Christ grind glúair,
ragas lemsa ar cend in búair;
Forannán, Aed mac Senaig
is Colmán ó Chluain Chredail.</i> | Dear the trio, oh Christ pleasant and bright,
who will go with me for the sake of the cattle;
Forannán, Aed son of Senach
and Colmán from Killeedy. |
| 2. <i>Inmain tríar na tarraill cess
doragat lemsa rom less;
Dubthach, Dubán díchlís brón
& Cuán o Chluain Mór.</i> | 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. <i>Inmain cóiciur comol nath,
Álgenach is Fulartach;
Mo Menóc, Miloc na mind
& Findbarr fíal forfind.</i> | Dear the quintet of poetic agreement,
Álgenach and Fulartach;
Mo Menóc, Miloc of the insignia
and noble fair Findbarr. |
| 4. <i>Inmain cethror, comol n-án,
Elchomach & Aedán;
Sárnatan, Colmnatan cain,
noco limsa nach inmain. In.</i> | Dear the quartet, a splendid agreement,
Elchomach and Aedán;
Sárnatán, Colmnatán fair,
there is not anyone who is not dear to me. |

⁹¹⁵ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 160-1, §127. Cf. Chapter 3: The saints in the *Bórama* and Appendix C for discussion on the saints.

23 Turchan duin a Thuathail⁹¹⁶

LL II. 38797 – 38885

Tuathal son of Ailill, king of Uí Muredaig suggests that they send Moling to ask the men of Tara to stop demanding the tribute.⁹¹⁷

[Bran speaks:]

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Turchan duin, a Thuathail,
maic Ailella uathmair,
cia gebas Laigniu a lLuathmaig,
tacair rind tria baig?
Cia do náemaib Lagen,
fedaib, maigib maigen;
cia náem don dreim dagfer
dingbas dind in plaig?</i> | Prophecy 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. <i>Inn í Brigit buadach,
l inn e Fintan sluagmar,
l inn é M'Aedoc ruarach,</i> ⁹¹⁸
<i>l Mo Lasse stuagmar,
l inn é [...]</i> ⁹¹⁹ | 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. <i>Inn é Brenaind Gabra,
l inn e Cainnach amra,
l inn é Lachtáin láingel,
dingbas ní assar cind?
No inn é Fiac Temrach,
l Tigernach trednach,
l inn é Fiachra find?</i> | 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 Fiac of Tara,
or fasting Tigernach,
or is it handsome Fiachra? |
| 4. <i>Cia, don chóiciur chéolach,
a hoentelluch thréorach;
Dagán, epscop Eogain,
& Abbán aínigel,
& Caimgen cóir.</i> | Who, from the musical quintet,
from the single powerful household;
Dagán, bishop Eogan,
and Abbán the angel,
and just Caemgen? |

⁹¹⁶ Lec only has the first verse of this poem.

⁹¹⁷ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 100-3, §129. Buttimer also supports this division between speakers, cf. Buttimer, 'The Bórama', pp. 299-301.

⁹¹⁸ *DIL*, p. 513.

⁹¹⁹ MS illegible.

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,
febda 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, epscop 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 Emin cen fodáil,
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,*
l inn aiged ra dodraing,
ra Fínnachta in tsluaig?
No inn é crúas ar catha,
'ma tuitfet meic flatha,
béras anfir úaínd?

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-airer,
dogena less cáich.
Is é in torc dar trétaib,
is e in barr úas gécaib,
mac Failleain in faid.

Moling a blaze of fire,
a wave that fills the shores,
he will do the benefit of each one.
He is the boar over herds,
he is the treetop over the branches,
son of Fáelán, the prophet.

10. *Is é in sról dar slúagaib,*
is é in long ar lúamain,
is e in kalaind mís.
Retlu Bruicc búada,
atchlunim atchúala,
béras úain in cís.

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.*
Is é Daniel Gaedel,
is é lúam na Taiden,
hua Dega na ndám.

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.

⁹²⁰ Possibly *buada* 'victories'.

⁹²¹ *Uapar* is *úabar* 'pride'.

[Bran speaks:]

12. *Ech cacha rí g ruirech,
screpol cacha cuiled,
uam do mMo Lling.
Unge d'ar cach aiccme
..... in n-acme⁹²²
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 ar⁹²³
eter tair is tíar.
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,
corop 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,⁹²⁴
nocho nfaigíub caemna,
ic iarraid bar cruid.
Ragatsa bar conair,
corop 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.

24 Érig a Mo Lling

LL ll. 38887 – 38934

After the suggestion of sending Moling to Finnahcta, Bran recites this poem (and possibly Moling as well).⁹²⁵

[Bran says:]

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Érig, a Mo Lling,
co mbúaid chrábuid grind;
dena ní is less lind
& eirgg fathúaid;
narap grían tria thech,
narap dál ma sech,
corop sochor sluaig.</i> | 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. <i>Corop rathmar ciúin,
narap é in lá liúin,
narap dígair dúairc,
nira trágbas cess,
nirap fes na cúairt.</i> | 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. <i>M'echsa is m' erriud gnáth,
béra úaim re cách,
co tí bráth bid búaid.
Rot fía Ros Cain,
is rot fía Dún mBrain,
rat fía Gaísit Glúair.</i> | 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. ⁹²⁶ |

[Moling says:]

- | | |
|--|--|
| 4. <i>Dot mac is dott ua,
ríge dóib dorua,
ní chelīm ar cách;
ina tardais dam,
bid móte do blad,
nóco tora in bráth.</i> | 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. <i>Borrama bar mbúair,
noco berthar úaib,
a Brain Ardchind áin;
céin bersa for nim,
nís bérat na fir
do chlannaib Néill náir.</i> | The cattle-tribute of your cattle,
Will not be taken from you,
oh splendid Bran Ardchenn;
as long as I carry in heaven,
the men of the descendants of noble Níall
will not carry it. |

⁹²⁵ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 102-3, §130.

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 keenness⁹²⁷
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 *faid* possibly. *Derg* as an intensifier 'fierce cry'.

26 Fínnachta a Huíb Néill

LL II. 38988 – 39015

Moling speaks this pangyric after Fínnachta remitted to him the tribute till Doomsday.⁹²⁸

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Fínnachta a Huíb Néill,
amal gréin atrácht.
Is í in bárc úasin tuind,
is í in tond úas tracht.</i> | Fínnachta of the Ui Néill,
Rose like the sun.
He is the ship above the wave,
he is the wave over the shore. |
| 2. <i>Is é in cath ar tír
arná lamat rí a ngress;
is é rí Temra ca tíath⁹²⁹
iss é in tríath da tic a lles.</i> | 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. <i>Is é tuile glond ri gail,
is é in tond immaig 's amach;
is é rí na Temrach túaid,
is é int íarn cruaid resin cath.</i> | 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. <i>Is é cride cerna Cuind,
bile Temra, tind i tind.
Is é in Fínnachta nach fand,
is é in crand fíngarta find.</i> | 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. <i>Atchuala ra senaib sund,
ferr molad na cech mod,
ná fitir Fínnachta fíal,
connach⁹³⁰ cían maras in crod.</i> | 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. <i>Téit in crod a seilb cach aín,
ac síl nÁdaim im garuair.
Báegul cach nech, fo ním nár,
téit 'ma sech in saegul suail.</i> | 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. <i>Corpre is Cormac is Art,
Cond ra riced rígleptha.
Ciar gabsat Temair co tend,
dar lem, is ferr Fínnachta. F.</i> | Coirpre and Cormac and Art,
Conn who reached the royal beds.
Although they took Tara strongly,
according to me, Fínnachta is better. |

⁹²⁸ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 106-7, §138.

⁹²⁹ Uncertain meaning.

⁹³⁰ Lit. *connach* is *co* + *nach* 'that ... not'.

28 Crist conic mo chrí

LL II. 39038 – 39055

*Lethrannaigeacht mór*⁹³¹ (5¹ - 5¹ - 5¹ - 5¹)

The poem Mo Lling recites to bring back the son of Fínnachta.⁹³²

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Crist conic mo chrí,
nachum thair tríst tré
corop glan mo gléo
céin beo for bith ché</i> | 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. <i>Dondgilla co tí,
a rí, 'ca tá in réo,
mad cet ra Mac nDé,
corop é in mac béo.</i> | 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. <i>Corop é in mac béo,
mac Fínnachtaí in tslúaig,
mad béo, mac in mail,
ar dáil co dia lúain.</i> | May he be the living son,
son of Finachta of the army,
if he is alive, the son of the prince,
our agreement is till Monday (Doomsday). |
| 4. <i>Cían garit co bráth,
bud é in guth gnáth grind,
in lúansa ra lúad,
bid é lúan Mo Lling.</i> | A short period till Doomsday,
this was the well-known pleasant sound,
the Monday has moved,
it will be the Monday of Moling. |
| 5. <i>Bid dál fota hí,
niba dál dar aiss,
ní lúan tratha foiss,
acht lúan bratha braiss.</i> | 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. <i>Erig suas co héim,
do réir Chomded cáid,
a Dondgillai déin,
narap léim sech láim.</i> | Rise up promptly,
to the will of the holy Lord,
oh swift Dondgilla,
let it not be a false leap. |
| 7. <i>Ar Dia dogní in síd,
narap díl iar scís,
is teg atá in pháis,
conna dig darís.</i> 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. <i>Oenmac Muire is mó
uas cach cuire itchí,
Comde nimi nuí,
mo chomge is mo chri. C.</i> | 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.

⁹³² Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 108-9, §144.

⁹³³ This quatrain is missing from Lec.

29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca

LL ll. 39098 – 39149

Rannaigeacht fota recomarach ($7^2 - 7^2 - 7^2 - 7^2$)

Adomnán speaks a satirical poem about Fínnachta and how he remitted a tribute he had no right to do.⁹³⁴

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca,
in rí crínliath cen déta.
In dál ro maith do Mo Lling,
deithfir don ching, nis n-éta.</i> | 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. <i>Damad messe, Fínnachta,
flaith Temra,
co bráth nocho tibéraind,
nocho dingenaínd na nderna.</i> | If it were me, Fínnachta,
who was the ruler of Tara,
never would I give it,
I would not do what he did. |
| 3. <i>Cach rí nach maithend a chís,
is fata bít a scéla,
maírg dorat in dáil dorat,
intí is lac is dó is méla.</i> | 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. <i>Doarnactar do gáesa,
is ar baesa co mbine,
maírg rig ro maith in císa,
a Ísu nemda nime.</i> | 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. <i>Sochla cach nech ó threbas,
is maírg lenas do líathu,
is fata in dálsa, ma cate,
bid fate comma,⁹³⁵ fíachu.⁹³⁶</i> | 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. <i>Damsam rísea ruadas chrú,
ro thairnfind mo bidbadú,
ra thócebaind mo dindgna,
ropsat imda m'airgalú.</i> | 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. <i>Roptaís imda m'airgala,
mo bretha niptis gúacha;
roptís fíra mo dála,
roptís lána, mo thuatha.</i> | 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. |

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.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>8. <i>Roptis imfaicsi m'airde,
roptís daingne mo daingne,
in dálsa, cia ma tecmaing,
noco lecfaind re Laigne.</i></p> <p>9. <i>Guidimse itgi for Dia,
nachom tháir bás l baegul;
coro thérna indiu Mo Lling,
ní thaeth do rind l d'faebur.</i></p> <p>10. <i>Mac Faelleáin fer dar múru,
ní claífidar for cúlu,
ra fítir rúna Meic Dé,
rofitir Mac Dé a rúnu.</i></p> <p>11. <i>Tri .l. salm cach día,
iss ed geibes ar Dia;
tri .l. bocht séol sairthe⁹³⁷,
iss ed biathas cach n-aidche.</i></p> <p>12. <i>In bile búada bissig,
in fissid cosna fessaib;
long lerda fofúair fáilte,
tond Berba barce Bresail.</i></p> <p>13. <i>In long d'ór is án inne,
in clár d'ór osna clanna,
écne Dubglaisse duinne,
fúaim tuinne fri halla. A.</i></p> | <p>Visible would be my qualities,
solid would be my fortress,
the covenant, though it should happen,
I would not leave Leinster.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>350 psalms each day,
that is what he gives before God;
350 poor men ...,
are what he nourishes each night.</p> <p>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</p> <p>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.</p> |
|---|--|

⁹³⁷ Uncertain meaning.

32 Suidem sund suide n-ága

LL II. 39186 - 39197

Rannaigeacht 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. <i>Suidem sund, suide n-ága,
éirgem ra bága búada,
cip é bess for greiss Colaim,
ní bía a choland fo chúana.</i> | 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. <i>Mo mallacht ar Finnacht,
& mallacht Ríg nime;
ro impá form Fínnachta,
niba airdite, a fine.</i> | My curse on Fínnachta,
and curse of the King of Heaven;
Fínnachta has turned against me,
it will not be higher, his kindred. |
| 3. <i>A Brigit Chillí Dara,
a Meic Thail ó Chill Chuilind,
& a Meic Muire,
is let cech suide suidim. S.</i> | Oh, Brigit of Kildare,
Oh, Mac Táil of Kilcullen,
and oh, son of Mary,
it is yours, every sitting which I sit .S. |

⁹³⁸ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 114-115, §157.

33 A Brigit bennach ar sét

LL ll. 39210 – 39321

Rannaigecht dialtach ($7^1 - 7^1 - 7^1 - 7^1$)⁹³⁹

Moling speaks this when he reaches Kildare on his escape from Fínnachta.⁹⁴⁰

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>A Brigit, bennach ar sét,
nachar táir bét arar cúairt;
a challech, a lLifí lán,
co rísem slán ar tech úait.</i> | 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. <i>A Brigit, bennach ar sét,
bí féin 'car n-imchomet,
cid cian cid garit ar techt,
da spirut nar comaitecht.</i> | Oh Brigit, bless our way,
be yourself at our guarding,
though it be long or short our journey,
your holy spirit escorting us. |
| 3. <i>A Brigit bennach, rédig mu rót,
a challech óg émid út;
tair dar cobair cu ba chét,⁹⁴¹
corop soraid ar sét cú.</i> | Oh blessed Brigit, smooth my path,
oh young nun swift yonder;
come to our assistance ...,
that our path be smooth with you yonder. |
| 4. <i>Bladfocul,
a Christ tair dom anaccul.
A Brigit scar ósmo chind,
do bratt find dom anacul.</i> | A famous phrase,
oh Christ come to my protection.
Oh Brigit, unfold above my head,
your white cloak for my protection. |
| 5. <i>A Meic Tháil,
a chlerig urddinti áin.
A Brigit i lLifí Luirc,
meic uilc ní thiset nar ndáil.</i> | Oh Mac Táil,
oh noble ordained cleric.
Oh Brigit in Liffey of Lurc,
let the sons of evil not meet us. |
| 6. <i>A Mael Ruain,
a Míchil árchangil úaig.
Nírbar lobair, corbar tréin,
corop éim ar cobair úaib.</i> | 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. <i>Itge thend
Mo Chua Cluana Dolcáin lem;
ma tá Uxaille na chill
táet co gluc bind arar cend.</i> | 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.

⁹⁴⁰ Stokes, 'The Boroma', pp. 116-117, §161.

⁹⁴¹ Uncertain meaning.

8. *Béo mo rí,
marid, méraid, Mac Dé Bi.
Ar cach rámut ar bith che,
ría slúag namat conar ti.*⁹⁴²
- 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,
arná ragbaiter ar n-ell,
a Chaimgin cháid, ma taí it glind,
ra 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 ngléo,
Mu Lassi cu cétaib náem,
& 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 techt '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 mac Cairpri chain,
do mathib domain in fer,*⁹⁴³
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 ngort,
na hágumar olc na hág.*
- Venerable the company,
Dagán and white Baethín,
to protect us on each field,
let us not fear evil nor battle.
14. *Epscop Ith,
Cruad & Elcho cen chleith;
guidet in Comdid fo leith,
dar mbreith sech coibdin 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. *Epscop Ith Atha Fadat,
sechna sluagu nar sagat,
immaínd acaínd ar cach ngléo,
epscof 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, Mothaireán,
a chommairge is robalc,
rom ainse, cach trátha,
epscof Atha Fadat.*
- I pray, Mothaireán,
his protection it is very great,
sustain me, each period of time,
Bishop of Aghade,
17. *Ar cach n-olc itágursa,
bágursa mac nOengussa,
álim Mothaireán an bréo,
tabrad céo darm chaímusa.*
- Against each evil I fear,
I invoke the son of Oengus,
I request Mothareán, 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 callech sonaide,
a Crón ingen Setnai,
bennach sét mo chonaire.*

Oh nun from the Cetharlocht,
oh, fortress of happy nuns,
oh Crón daughter of Sétna,
bless the way of my path.

19. *A Thacain, ailithir áin,
fail i tír Hua Crimthannáin;
ní thiset námaít nar ndáil,
ní rabat 'car n-íngabáil.*

Oh Tacán, noble pilgrim,
who is in the land of Uí Crimthannain;
may enemies not come to meet us,
let them not be evading us.

20. *Cluin ar núal,
a M'Enoc Ruis Muchnig múaid,
a Choluim meic Cathbaid áin,
a Choluim cháid o Chlúain Úail.*

Hear our loud noise,
oh noble Moenóc of Rosminogue,
oh bright Colum mac Cathbaid,
oh noble Colum of Clúan Úail.

21. *In buarsa thucus atúaid,
slán rom faícfe, slán rom fúair,
a Chelláin, a chell for sléib,
tair fo béim in bennáin búain.*

The cattle I bring from the north,
healthy he will see me, whole he will find me,
oh Cellán, oh church on the mountain,
come under the stroke of breaking points.

22. *M'Aedóc mín,
ticed dar cech saebrót sáer,
Colum Cilli, Comgall cáid,
Mo Lling, na ndáil mas hí chóir.*

Small Maedóc,
May he come across each free crooked path,
Colum Cille, holy Comgall,
Moling of the agreement, if it is proper.

23. *A Mundu, rédig mu rót,
a Abbáin, cáímaig ar sét;
a M'Aedóc dar toraib túath,
na hágam úath na héc.*

Oh Munnu, clear my path,
oh Abbán, make smooth our way;
oh Maedóc over the heroes of the territory,
let us not fear horror or death.

24. *Cross Dé bí,
ra bruinne cach uilc fo thrí,
úair nat ágammar Mac nDé,
cia bé ní ágammar ní.*

The cross of the living God,
before each evil doer's bosom thrice,
because we do not fear the son of God,
whatever it be, we do not fear anything.

25. *Atrácht ummum as cach aird,
Atrácht d'imdegail mo luirg,
ingen Taláin ard a grád,
Atracht do lár Maigi Luirg.*

Atráchta around me from every height,
Atráchta to defend my path,
daughter of Talán, high our affection,
She rose from the middle of Mag Lurg.

26. *A Cholmain Sléibe in Messa,⁹⁴⁴
atát i péin mo cho (ssa),
a epscuip Átha Fadat,
is úair charat innossa.*

Oh Colmán from the Mountain of *Messa*,
My feet are in pain,
oh bishop of Aghade,
it is a time for a friend now.

⁹⁴⁴ Unknown place-name.

27. *A Rí rún,
a náemPatraic, fíl 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.

	Name	Also	Associated places	Genealogy	Notes	Feastday(s)	Obit
1.	Abbán <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18 <i>Dénaid dún ar cotach</i> (v.2, l.4) - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.4, l.4) - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.23, l.2) 						
	Abbán of Killabban and Moyarne	Eibán, Moab(b)a, lat. Abbanus. (DIS)	Cell Abáin (Killabban, Co. Laois) and Magh Arnaidhe (Moyarne, Co. Wexford) in Leinster.	<i>Abban Maige Arnaide</i> 7 <i>Cilli Abbain m. Lagnig m. Cainnig m. Labrada m. Cormaic m. Con Corbb</i> (CGSH §287.1, DIS, pp. 51 – 2)	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)	16 March, 27 October (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	
2.	Adomnán						
	Adomnán of Iona	Adamnán,	Iona, Scotland.	<i>Adamnan m. Ronan m. Tindi m. Aeda m. Coluim m. Setna m. Fergus m. Conaill m. Neill Naegiallaig</i> (CGSH §340, DIS, pp.	Only referred to within the prose text of the <i>Bórama</i> . Wrote <i>Vita Columbae</i> , 7 th century Life of Colum Cille.	23 September (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 704.2, AT 704.3, AI 704.1, AFM 703.2, FA 704

				53 -5)			
3.	Aed mac Senach - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i>						
	Aed mac Senach					22 September (MT, MG, MD)	
4.	Aedán						
	Aedán of Glendalough		Glen dá Locha (Glendalough, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.	<i>Brig ingen Chobtaig m. Crimthaind m. Enna Ceindsealaig mathair ... Easpoic Aedain et Aeda m. Ainmirech rig Eirind (CGSH §380.1) Epscop Aedain m. Mane m. Fergusa Laebdeirg (CGSH §181.13) (DIS, pp. 72 – 73)</i>	Bishop of Glendalough, only present in the prose text of the <i>Bórama</i> . Half brother to Áed mac Ainmirech, king of Ireland, through his mother. Possibly also of Cill Rannairech (Kilranelagh, Co. Wicklow) as indicated by poem <i>Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin</i> .		
5.	Aedán - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.4, l.2)						
					Too many possible candidates.		
6.	Álgenach - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.3, l.2)						
					No one found by this name in the martyrologies or the annals.		
7.	Atrácht ingen Taláin - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.25, l.1-4) – identified as ingen Taláin of Magh Lurg						
	Atracht of Killaraght	Athrachta, Etracta, ingen Táláin	Cell Athrachta (Killaraght, Co. Sligo) in Connaught.	<i>Athracht ingen Thalain m. Dubthaig m. Rossa m. Imchada – sunn chomraigius 7 Comgoll Bennchair – m. Feidlimthe m. Caiss m. Fiachach Araide o taid Dal nAraide (CGSH §398.1, DIS pp. 81 – 2)</i>	Seems to be concentrated in and around Connacht.	11 August (MT, MG, MD)	
8.	Baethín - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.4, l. 6)						

	Baethán of Cloney	Baethán, Baodán, Báeth, Báethanán, Mo baoi,	Cluain an dobor (Cloney, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.	<i>Mobaí dna m. Sinill m. Nadfraich (CGSH §129, DIS pp. 85-6)</i>	Possibly a Leinster localisation for Baethán of Iona. Of the Glendalough <i>paruchia</i> . (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 175 – 6) Cloney ‘would feature among the properties of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 126, 213)	13 December (FÓ, MG, MD)	AT 633.4, AI 634.1
9.	Baethín - 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.13, l. 2)						
	Baethín of Ennisboyne	Baethán, Baodán, Báeth,	Inis Baithín (Ennisboyne, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.	<i>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 ríge Lagen mathair Baithini ... (CGSH §722.65) (DIS, p. 88)</i>	Ennisboyne ‘which appears to have formed part of the <i>Paruchia Glinelachensis</i> . (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 134)	22 May (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	
10.	Berchán - 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.7, l.1)						
	Mobí Cláirenech	Berchán	Glas noeden (Glasnevin, Co. Dublin) in Leinster.	<i>Mobí Chlarinech apstal m. Beónaid m. Bresail m. Ailgil m. Idnai m. Athrai m. Lugnai m. Bregduilb m. Airt Chirp m. Corpre Niad (CGHS §317, DIS pp. 457 – 8)</i>	A guarantor of CA Features in <i>Vita Sancti Coemgeni</i> .	12 October (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 545.1, AT 540.1, AI 544.1
11.	Brendan - 05 Mo Lling Lúath 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, Senbrénainn,	Biorra (Birr, Co. Offaly) in Leinster.	<i>Brenaind Birra m. Nemainn m. Duib</i>	Sometimes confused with his namesake and contemporary Brendan of Clonfert.	29 November, (FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 565.2, 572.6,

		lat. Brendinus Senior (CGSH, DIS)		<i>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)</i>	<i>Navigatio Brendani</i> recension 6 (probl. 14 th 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, <i>tír tairngiri</i> (Kenny) He features in two lives, but not his own.	9 May (MT)	AI 573.2, AFM 553.2, FA 572
12.	Brendan - 05 Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil (v.3, l.1) – referred to as Brendan the prophet						
	Brendan of Clonfert	Brénainn	Cluain ferta (Clonfert, C. Galway) in Connacht.	<i>Brenaind apstal m. Findloga m. Olchon m. Altai m. Ogamain m. Fidchuir m. Delmnai m. Ennae m. Fualascaig m. Astamain m. Mogaed, qui dicitur Ciar, m. Fergusa m. Rosa (CGSH §127.1, DIS pp. 115 – 17)</i>	There is a considerable corpus of texts concerning Brendan of Clonfert.	16 May (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 577.3, 583.5, AT 574.2, AI 578.1, AFM 576.2
13.	Brigit - 12 Failet sund aisceda rí (v.4, l.1) - 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach (v.2, l.1) - 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.2, l.1) - 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v. 1, l.1; v.2, l.1, v.3, l.1; v.4, l.3; v.5, l.3; v.28, l.4)						
	Brigit of Kildare		Cell Dara (Kildare, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.	<i>Brigit ingen Dubthaig m. Demri m. Bresail m. Dein m. Conlaid m. Art Cuirp m. Corpre Niad m. Cormaic m. Oengusa Mind m. Echach Find Fuath Airt m. Feidlimid Rectada m. Tuathail Techtmair etc (CGSH §2, DIS pp. 123 - 5)</i>	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 <i>Battle of Allen</i> , which is considered to be a sequel to the <i>Bórama</i> , Brigit appears as a vision protecting and watching over the Leinstermen.	1 February (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 524.2, 526.1, 528.3, AT 524.1, AI 524.1, AFM 525.2

14.	Cainnech - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.4, 1.2)						
	Cainnech of Aghaboe	Coinneach,	Achadh Bo (Aghaboe, Co. Laois) in Leinster.	<i>Cainnech m. Lugthig m. Lugdach m. Daland m. Ehdach m. Fidchuir 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. Fergusa m. Rosa m. Rudraige</i> (CGSH §123.1, <i>DIS</i> pp. 138 – 40)		11 October (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	AU 599.2, 600.1, AT 598.1, AI 603.2, AFM 598.2
15.	Cellán - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.21, 1.3)						
	Cellán of Cell Daimchinn		Cell Daimchinn (possibly Kildavin, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.	<i>Cellán m. Libráin</i> (Anecdota II) (<i>DIS</i> pp. 162 – 3)	Appears in a poem attributed to Moling. (Anecdota II, p. 30)		
16.	Cóemgen - 18 <i>Dénaid dún ar cotach</i> (v.2, 1.4) – identified as Cóemgen of Glendalough - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.4, 1.5) - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.9, 1.3)						
	Cóemgen of Glendalough	Caemgin,	Glen dá Locha (Glendalough, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.	<i>Coemgen m. Coemloga m. Coemfeda m. Crinfeda m. Cuirbb m. Fergusa Laebdeirg m. Fothaid m. Echach Lamdeirg m. Messin Corbb m. Con Corbb</i> (CGSH §250, <i>DIS</i> pp. 148 – 50.)		3 June (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD), 11 May (MT, MG, MD), 16 October (MT, MG, MD)	AU 618.3, 622.5
17.	Colmán - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.1, 1.4) – identified as Colmán of Cluain Credail						
	Cumíne Fota of Clonfert	Colmán, Colum,	Cluain Credail (Cell Ite, now Killeedy, Co.	<i>Cummini Fota m. Fiachra m. Fiachrach</i>	Bishop of Clonfert, coarb of Brendan of Clonfert. (<i>AI</i>)	12 November (MO, MG, MD)	AU 662.1, AT 660.1,

		Cummie, etc.	Limerick) Cluain Ferta (Clonfert, Co. Galway) Munster, Leinster and Connacht	<i>m. Garrini m. Duach</i> <i>Iarlathi m. Mani m.</i> <i>Corpre m. Cuirc m.</i> <i>Lugdech m. Ailella</i> <i>Flainn Bic (CGSH</i> <i>§232, DIS pp. 243 – 5)</i>			AI 661.1, AFM 661.1, FA 662
18.	Colmán - <i>18 Dénaid dún ar cotach</i> (v.3, l.4)						
	Colmán Elo	Colman Ela	Lann Elo/Ela (Lynally, Co. Offaly) in Leinster.	<i>Colman Elo</i> <i>m.Beodgna m. Moctae</i> <i>m. Cunnida m.</i> <i>Oengusa m. Fiaclae m.</i> <i>Mail m. Carthaig m.</i> <i>Laire m. Lugdach m.</i> <i>Larine (CGSH §311,</i> <i>DIS pp. 203 – 5)</i>		26 September (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD), 3 October (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG)	AU 611.3, AT 609.3, AI 613.1, AFM 610.1
19.	Colmán - <i>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.26, l.1)						
			Slíab Messa (possibly Slíab Mis (possibly Co. Antrim). (<i>OG</i> , p. 610) in Ulster.				
20.	Colmán - <i>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.6, l.3) – only identified as a bishop						
					Too many possible candidates, probably one of the many Leinster saints		
21.	Colmnat - <i>22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> – identified as Colmnatán - <i>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.28, l.4) – identified as Colmnat						
	Colmnat/Colmnatán		Possibly at Kilcullen (Old Kilcullen, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.		Possibly the nun Moling meets when he is on the run from Finnahcta. (Stokes ‘The Borama’, pp. 114 – 5, §159)		
22.	Colum Cille - <i>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.22, l. 3)						
	Columba of Iona	Colum Cille, Crimthand	Iona, Scotland	<i>Colum Cille m.</i> <i>Feidlimid m. Fergusa</i> <i>m. Conaill Gulban m.</i>	Loyalties lay with the Uí Néill, but because of his ties with Leinster through his mother was unable to give aid to Aed	9 June (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	AU 595.1, 601.4, AT 593.1,

				<i>Neil Noigiallaig m. Echach Mugmedoin m. Muredaig Tirig etc (CGSH §8)</i> <i>Crimthan ainm baisdig Choluim Cille et Eithni ingen Dimai m. Nai do Chorbraide Fanud a mathair (CGSH §397, (§651))</i> <i>(DIS pp. 211 – 14)</i>	mac Ainmereich in his battle against the Leinsterment. (<i>Bórama</i>)		AI 597.1, AFM 592.2, FA, 595
23.	Colum mac Cathbad - 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.20, l.3)						
	Colmán of Myshall	Colmán, Colum,	Midísel (Myshall, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.	<i>Fintan m. Echach 7 Colman - .i. Colum Roisc Gil Glandai, fil oc Snam Luthair 7 oc Midísiul – et Nannid Cilli Tommae et Lugaíd Tiri da Chraeb et Muridach Cilli Alaid – .i. nomen fontis – i nUib Amalgada. Cóic meic Echach in sin. (CGSH §160.1, 2)</i> <i>Aglend ingen Léin mathair Fintan 7 Choluim - .i. Cholmain Midísil – 7 Lugada (CGSH §722.31)</i> <i>(DIS, p. 198)</i>		6 September (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) 22 September (MT, MG, MD)	
24.	Colum - 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.20, l.4)						
			Cluain Uail in Leinster? (<i>OG</i> , p. 271)				
25.	Colum - 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.5, l.5) – identified as Colum of Tíre						

	Colum of Terryglass	Colmán, Cuinnid	Tíre or Tír dá Glas (Terryglass, Co. Tipperary) in Munster.	<i>Colum apstal Tiri Da Glas m. Nannida m. Nastir m. Crimthaind Bic m. Echach m. Oengusa m. Crimthannáin Móir m. Cathair Moir (CGSH §241, DIS, pp. 209 – 11)</i>	Possibly a localization of Colum Cille. Terryglass ‘was presumably affiliated to Glendalough’. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 180)	13 December (FÓ, MG, MD)	AI 552.1
26.	Comgall - 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach (v.3, l.4) - 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v. 22, l.3)						
	Comgall of Bangor		Bennchor (Bangor, Co. Down), patron of Dísert Diarmata (Castledermot, Co. Kildare) Ulster and Leinster	<i>Comgall Bennchair m. Setmai m. Echach m. Broen m. Forgo m. Ernaine m. Crimthaind m. Echdach m. Lugdach m. Rosa m. Imchada m. Feidlimid m. Caiss m. Fiachach Araide (CGSH §97, DIS, pp. 217 – 19)</i>	There seems to have been significant exchange between the monastery of Bangor in Ulster, and other Leinster monasteries, particularly Glendalough. Dísert Diarmata was allied with Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , pp. 13, 122 - 4)	10 May (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 602.1, AT 600.1, AI 605.1, AFM 600.1
27.	Comgán - 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.6, l.4) – identified as Comgán of the glen						
	Comgán of Killeshin		Glenn Uissen (Killeshin, Co. Laois) in Leinster.	<i>Comgan Glinne Usen m. Diarmata m. Dega m. Themne m. Fir Chorb m. Moga Corb m. Cormaic Cais m. Ailella Uluim (CGSH §233, DIS, pp. 220 – 21)</i>		27 February (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	
28.	Conlaed - 12 Failet sund aisceda rí (v.4, l.1) – referred to as Brigit’s craftsman						
	Conleth of Kildare	Roncend (MT), Conláed cráibdech	Cell Dara (Kildare, Co. Kildare) and Finnchoire (Fancroft,	<i>Conlaed - .i. cunnail aed - Craibdech m. Cormaic m. Oengusa</i>	Brigit’s bishop and craftsman (CGSH). Reportedly buried under the altar of the church of Kildare, along with Brigit.	3 May (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 520.1, AT 519.2, AI 516.1

		‘pious’, Conláed cerd ‘craftsman’ (<i>CSGSH</i>)	Co. Offaly) in Leinster.	<i>m. Echach m. Setnai m. Deimre m. Echach Lamdeirg m. Messin Corb m. Con Corb</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §252, <i>DIS</i> , pp. 223 – 4)			
29.	Crón ingen Sétna - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.18, ll. 1,3) – possibly identified as <i>caillech ón Chetharlocht</i> ‘nun from Cetharlocht’						
	Crón ingen Sétna,	Cróne, Cróine,	Cetharlocht, possibly in Co. Carlow (<i>OG</i> , p. 230) in Leinster.	<i>Crone ingen Setnae</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §708.53, <i>DIS</i> , p. 232)	Said to be of Cill Cróine, and of the race of Máine, son of Niall in the (MD)		
30.	Cruad - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.14, l.2)						
	Cruad	Cruaid, Cruadh		(<i>DIS</i> , p. 237)		26 October (MG, MD)	
31.	Cuán - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.2, l.4)						
	Cuán of Cluain Mór		Cluain Mór Maedóg (Clonmore, Co. Carlow) (<i>OG</i> , p. 268) in Leinster.		At around the eleventh century or shortly after, Cluain Mór Maedóg, was included among the properties of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , pp. 94, 146 – 8)	(15 October (MG, MD))	
32.	Dagán - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.4, l.3) - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.14, l.2)						
	Dagán of Ennereilly	Daghán, lat. Daganus	Inber Doile (Ennereilly, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.	<i>Dagan Inbir Doeale</i> - .i. <i>nomen amnis</i> - <i>m. Colmadan m. Conaill m. Énain m. Sinill m. Conaill m. Cathair m. Airmora m. Nastair m. Fothaird m. Echach Lamdeirg m. Messin Corb m. Con Corb</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §256, <i>DIS</i> , pp. 251 – 2)	Brother of Menóc of Glenealy and Rosminogue.	13 September (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	AT 642.6, AI 641.1, AFM 639.1
33.	Dilgedach mac Cairpre						

	- 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.12, 1.2)						
					Does not appear in the annals or the martyrologies.		
34.	Dubán - 22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair (v.2, 1.3)						
	Dubán of Monasterevin		Ros Glaisi (Rosglas / Monasterevin, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.	<i>Abban Maige Arnaid 7 Cilli Abbain m. Lagnig m. Cainnig m. Labrada m. Cormaic m. Con Corbb.</i> <i>Et Daman et Miaca fratres eius, .i. i Fid Mor .i. i Cluain Fata et Senach et Lúthgein et Duban et Tomdenach i Russ Glassi, septem fratres sunt.</i> <i>Mella nomen matris eorum, soror Sancti Coemgin (CGSH §287.1 – 3, DIS, p. 275)</i>	He is brother of Abbán an according to the genealogy, nephew of Cóemgen of Glendalough.		
35.	Dubthach - 12 Failet sund aisceda rí (v.5, 1.4; v.6, ll.2-3) - 22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair (v.2, 1.3)						
	Dubthach moccu Lugair	Dubthach of Dublin		<i>... Dubthaig m. Lugair m. Lugdech m. Ruaid m. Rosa m. Marthened m. Congail m. Chlaringnig m. Ailella m. Anglonnaig m. Oengus Umaill (CGSH §305, DIS pp. 275 – 6)</i>	Features in VT along with Fíac of Sletty. A <i>fili</i> . He does not have a feast-day.		ca. 5 th century
36.	Elcho - 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.14, 1.2)						
	Pupa of Inishmore	Aelchú, Aolchú,	Inishmore (Co. Galway) in Connaught.	<i>Aelchu, cui nomen Pupu Airne, m.</i>		14 June (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	ca. 654 (MD)

		Cáilbe, Elcho, Nem, Neamh, Pupa, Pupu		<i>Faelchair m. Edalaig</i> (<i>CGSH</i> § 379.1, <i>DIS</i> , p. 532)			
37.	Elchomach - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.4, 1.2)						
		Aelchumach?, Aelchomach?					
38.	Emín - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.7, 1.2)						
	Emín of Monasterevin (Rosglas)		Ros Glaisi (Rosglas / Monasterevin, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.	<i>Iamnat im. Ingen Sinill</i> <i>mathair Émin Ruis</i> <i>Glais</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §697.2, <i>DIS</i> , pp. 291 – 2)		22 December (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	
39.	Émnat - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.28, 1.3)						
40.	Eogan - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.4, 1.3) identified as Bishop						
	Eogan of Ardstraw	Lat. Eugenius	Ard Sratha (Ardstraw, Co. Tyrone) and Cell na Manach (Kilnamanagh, is in the Dublin parish of Tallaght) Ulster and Leinster	<i>Epscop EoganAird</i> <i>Sratha m. Cainnig m.</i> <i>Epscuip Erc m. Cuirbb</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §251, <i>DIS</i> , pp. 295 – 6)	Cell na Manach was ‘certainly claimed by Glendalough’. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , pp. 180 – 1)	23 August (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	
41.	Fíac - 12 <i>Failet sund aisceda rí</i> (v.6, 1.2; v.7, 1.1) - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.3, 1.5) – identified as Fíac of Tara						
	Fíac of Sletty		Sléibte (Sletty, Co. Laois) in Leinster.	<i>FiacSlehti m. Ercada</i> <i>m. Feic m. Dare</i> <i>Barraig m. Cathair</i> <i>Moir</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §286, <i>DIS</i> , pp. 315 – 6)	Features in VT along with Dubthach.	12 October (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	ca. 5 th century
42.	Fiachra - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.3, 1. 7)						

	Fiachra of Sletty	Fiachna	Sléibte (Sletty, Co. Laois) in Leinster.	Fiachra m. Fiac (cf Fiac of Sletty) (<i>DIS</i> , pp. 316 – 7)	<i>Fiac et Fiachra eius filius cum eo i Sleibti</i> ‘Fiac and Fiachra his son along with him in Sletty’. (MT)	12 October (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	
43.	Fidnat - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.28, l.3)						
					A nun	4 January (MT, MG, MD)	
44.	Findbarr - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.3, l.4)						
	Finnbarr of Killegar		Cell Adair (Killegar, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.	<i>Finnbarr Cilli Adgair m. Aeda m. Connois m. Foramain m. Oescain m. Fothaid</i> (<i>CGHS</i> §255, <i>DIS</i> , p. 335)	The Glendalough diocese ‘apparently extended into part of south-east Co. Dublin around Killegar ...’ (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 212)		
	Finnbarr of Little Island		Inis Doimle (now Little Island, Co. Waterford) (<i>OG</i> , p. 464) in Leinster.	<i>Finbarr Insi Domle m. Aeda m. Dallain m. Liathain m. Briuin m. Eogain m. Airt Chirp m. Corpre Niad</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §6, <i>DIS</i> , p. 335)		4 July (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	
45.	Fintan - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.2, l.2) - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.23, l.1)						
	Munna of Tagmon	Fintan, mac Tulchan, Munnu, Munna	Tech Munna (Taghmon, Co. Wexford) in Leinster.	<i>Munnu m. Tulchain m. Trena m. Dega m. Dubthaig m. Maain m. Cuirc m. Fiacha Riatai</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §155) <i>Mundu m. Tulchain ar slight Fiachach Araidi m. Feidlimid Rechtmair</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §546) (<i>DIS</i> , pp. 505 – 7)	A guarantor of <i>CA</i>	21 October (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	AU 635.5, AFM 685.4
46.	Forannán - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.1, l.3)						

	Forannán of Kildare		Cell Dara (Kildare, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.		Among the guarantors of CA.		AU 698.5, AT 698.3, AI 697.1, FA 698
47.	Fulartach - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.3, l.2)						
	Fulartach of Dysart	Falartach	Dysart (Dísert Fulartaig, Co. Kildare) (OG, p. 345) in Leinster.	<i>Fulartach m. Bricc m. Scandail m. Baetain m. Echach m. Conlai m. Caelbad</i> (CGSH §103, DIS, p. 356)	Mentioned as author of <i>dindshenchas</i> poems	29 March & 21 December (MT, MG, MD)	AT 760.3, AFM 755.6
48.	Gall - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.6, l.1)						
	Gall of Lullymore	Gall cráibdech	Lilcach (Lullymore, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.			2 November (MG, MD)	AU 730.5, AFM 723.2
49.	Ith - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.14, l.1; v.15, ll.1,4; v.16, l.4; v.26, l.3) – identified as bishop of Áth Fadat						
	Ith of Aghade	Fioth, Ioth	Áth Fadat (Aghade, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.	(DIS, p. 360)	Appears in a ninth-century text concerned with Patrician material.	14 July (MG, MD)	
50.	Itharnaisc - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.6, l.2)						
	Itharnaisc of Clane		Claenad (Clane, Co. Kildare) in Leinster .	<i>Secht meic Oengus m. Aeda m. Eirc m. Echach Munremuir m. Oengusa Fír ut ante genealogia Berhcain .i. Mothrianóc Ruscaig, <u>Itharnaisc Cloenta</u>, Eoganan Leccaig, Mochulli Dresnada, Mothairean Tilcha Fortcheirn, Troscan Arda Breccain, Agatan ar ur Ethni</i> (CGHS §209, DIS, p. 384)	Brother of Mothareán	22 December (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	

51.	Lachtán - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.3, l.3)						
	Lachtán of Freshford	Lachtain, Lachtín, Lachtóc, Molachtoc, Lacthnéne, Lachtnain	Achadh Úr (Freshford, Co. Kilkenny) in Leinster.	<i>Lactain Achaid Úir m. Tarbín m. Nuachair m. Carthind m. Cainnig m. Cairpre Músc</i> (CGSH §212, DIS, pp. 387 – 8)		19 March (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AT 629.2, AFM 622.3
52.	Mac Táil - 32 <i>Suidem sund suide n-ága</i> (v.3, l. 2) - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.5, l.1)						
	Mac Táil of Kilcullen	Eogan, Aengus	Kilcullen (Old Kilcullen, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.	<i>Mac Táil Cilli Culind et Caelan Cilli Clethi da mac Echach m. Derggain m. Coluimb m. Cronain m. Oengusa m. Nadfraich m. Cuirc m. Lugdech</i> (CGSH § 238, DIS, pp. 423 – 4)	Cell Cuilinn among other sites ‘feature among the later properties of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 148)	11 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 549.3, AT 550.1, AFM 548.4
53.	Máedóc - 12 <i>Failet sund aisceda rí</i> (v.9, l.1) - 18 <i>Dénaid dún ar cotach</i> (v.2, l.2) Possibly an amalgamation of Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge and Máedóc of Ferns. - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.2, l.3) - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.11, l.2) – identified as Aed mac Eogan of Cluana Móir						
	Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge	Aed mac Eogan of Clonmore	Cluain-mor Maedóc (Clomore, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.	<i>Aed Cluana Mor m. Eogain m. Bruidgi m. Nadbuidb m. Illaind m. Dunlaing m. Ennae Nia</i> (CGSH §285, DIS, pp. 431 – 2)	Was not the subject of a Life, only featured in that of Comgall of Bangor. (VSH II) Oengus the <i>céli Dé</i> , described Maedóc Uí Dunlang, as a ‘martial kinsman’ of Dunlang. (FO). He is descendant of the Dunlang featured in the <i>CnC</i> episode. At around the eleventh century or shortly after, Cluain Mór Maedóg, was included among the properties of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , pp. 94, 146 – 8)	11 April (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	

54.	Máedóc - 18 <i>Dénaid dún ar cotach</i> (v.2, l.2) Possibly an amalgamation of Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge and Máedóc of Ferns. - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.5, l.7) – identified as Maedóc of Ferns - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.22, l.1; v.23, l.3)						
	Máedóc of Ferns	Áed, Eda	Ferna (Ferns, Co. Wexford) in Leinster.	<i>Moedóc Ferna m. Setnai m. Eirc m. Feradaig m. Amalgada m. Muridaig m. Cairthind m. Colla Uais</i> (CGSH §63, DIS, pp. 432 – 6)		31 January (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 625.3, AT 627.8
55.	Máel Rúain - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.6, l.1)						
	Máel Rúain of Tallaght		Tamlacht (Tallaght, Co. Dublin) in Leinster.	<i>Mael Ruain Tamlachta m. Colmain m. Senain m. Agnidi m. Moctai m. Cunnida m. Fiacca m. Mail</i> (CGSH §316, DIS, pp. 445 – 6)		7 July (MT, FÓ, MG, MD), 10 August (MT)	AU 792.1, AI 792.1
56.	Milóc - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.3, l.3)						
	Mosilóc				Fosterling of Moling (MT)	25 July (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	
57.	Mo Biu - 18 <i>Dénaid dún ar cotach</i> (v.3, l.3)						
	Mo Biu of Inch	Bíthe, Dobí, Mobí	Inis Cúscraid (Inch, Co. Down) in Ulster.	<i>Dobiu m. Comgaill m. Eirc m. Araide m. Coluimb m. Cainnig m. Buain</i> (CGSH §152, DIS, p. 106)	A guarantor of CA.	22 July (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) 29 July (MT, MG, MD)	
58.	Mo Chalmóc - 18 <i>Dénaid dún ar cotach</i> (v.3, l.2) – identified as being from Caba(/Cabaus)/Coba						
	Colmán of Dromore	Mo Cholmóc	Drum Mór (Dromore, Co. Down) in Ulster.	<i>Mocholmóc Dromma Moir m. Conrathain m. Corcraín m. Lugdach m. Rosa m. Imchada</i> (CGSH §99, DIS, pp.	Possibly a part of the race of Uí Echach Coba, a branch of Dál nAraide, in Ulster	7 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	

				187 – 9)			
59.	Mo Chua - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.5, l.1) – identified as being of Clondalkin						
	Mo Chua (Crónán) of Clondalkin	Mo Chua, Crónán	Cluain Dolcáin (Clondalkin, Co. Dublin) in Leinster.	<i>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)</i>	Cluain Dolcáin ‘had close connections with Glendalough’. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 36) The relics of Cóemgen and Mo Chua were taken on a circuit together in 790. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 173)	6 August (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AI 573.3
60.	Mo Chua mac Lonán - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.7,l.3) – identified in the poem as mac Lonán						
	Mo Chua mac Lonán of Timahoe	Crónán	Tech Mochua (Timahoe, Co. Laois) in Leinster.	<i>Mo Chua Tigi Mochua m. Lonain m. Senaig m. Oengusa m. Lugna m. Breduilb m. Airt Chirp m. ... (CGSH §5, DIS, pp. 468 – 9)</i>		24 December (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AT 657.3, AFM 657.3
61.	Mo Enóc - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.3, l.3) – identified as Mo Menóc - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.20, l.2) – identified as being of Rossmínogue						
	Menóc of Rossmínogue and Glenealy	Menóc of Ros Muchnaigh (possibly another name for Rossmínogue), Énna, Mó Enóc, M’enóc	Glenn Faidli (Glenealy, Co. Wicklow) and Ros mór menóc (Rossmínogue, Co. Wexford) in Leinster.	<i>Caeltigern ingen Chaemloga siúr 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</i>	Brother of Dagán of Ennereilly, son of Colmnatan. Possible double Énna of Kilnamanagh (Co. Dublin) Identified by Mac Shámhráin as being part of the <i>familia Coemgeni</i> . Glenn Faidli is also part of the monastic possessions of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , pp. 175 – 8, 193).	29 December (MT, MG, MD)	

				(CGSH §722.102) (DIS, p. 452)			
62.	Mo Lasse - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.2, l.4) - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.10, l.3)						
	Mo Lasse of Lethglenn	Laisrén, Lasrán, Leisre, Lasse, lat. Lasrianus	Leth glenn (Leighlin, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.	<i>Molasse Lethglinni m. Cairill Chruaid m. Muredaig m. Forgo</i> (CGSH §143, DIS, pp. 286 – 7)	Latin Live survives in Codex Salmanticensis.	18 April (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	
63.	Moling - Cf chapter on Moling						
	Moling Lúachra	Tairchell	Tech Moling (St. Mullins, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.	<i>MollingLuachra m. Faelain m. Feradaig m. Eirc m. Fiachnai m. Oengusa m. Eogain m. Dega m. Labrada m. Bresail Belaig m. Fiachach Bacceda m. Cathair Moir</i> (CGSH §249, DIS, pp. 487 - 90)	By the tenth century there are evidence of dual abbasies which link Ferns, Tech Mo Ling and Tallaght, ‘not to mention the establishment by the <i>familia MoLing</i> of a new foundation at Timolin [a nunnery] ..., which was probably at this time part of the Glendalough <i>paruchia</i> . (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 138)	17 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	AU 697.9, AT 697.5, AI 696.2, AFM 696.2, FA 697
64.	Mothareán - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.16, l.1; v.17, ll.2,3) – in one instance referred to as <i>mac Oengussa</i>						
	Mothareán of Tullow	Forannán, Mo-Thairen, Palladius, Torannán,	Tulach Foirtchirn (Tullow, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.	<i>Secht meic Oengusa m. Aeda m. Eirc m. Echach Munremuir m. Oengusa Fír ute ante genealogia Berchain .i. Mothrianóc Ruscaig, Itharnaisc Cloenta, Eoganan Leccaig, Mochulli Dresnada, Mothairean Tilcha Fortcheirn, Troscan Arda Breccain, Agatan ar ur Ethni</i> (CGHS	Brother of Itharnaisc. Possibly mentioned in the <i>Bórama</i> , near the end of the text, as one of those that cast a mist to protect Moling on his escape from Fínnachta. (<i>Bórama</i>). Possibly a contemporary of Moling.	14 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)	

				§209, <i>DIS</i> , p. 501)			
65.	Patrick - 33 <i>A Brigit bennach ar sét</i> (v.27, 1.2)						
	Patrick of Armagh	Patrick in Dun (Doun Patrick)	Ard Macha (Armagh) in Ulster.	<i>Patraic m. Calpraind m. Fótaide m. Odisi m. Cornuith m. Leoburid m. Ota m. Muirc m. Oirc m. Leo m. Maxim m. Cencreti m. Philisti m. Ferini m. Britini</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §1, <i>DIS</i> , pp. 526 – 31)		17 March (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD) 5 April (MT, <i>FÓ</i>)	AU 492.1, AT 491.2, AI 496.1, AFM 493.2
66.	Sárnatan - 22 <i>Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</i> (v.4, 1.3)						
	Sárnat ingen Aed Gabalfada			<i>Sarnatt ingen Aeda Gabalfata m Senaig Chind Gamna m. Eogain Aigne m. Eochach Bricc m. Nathi m. Fiachrach</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §385, <i>DIS</i> , pp. 548 – 9)	Shares affinity with Moling and is also represented among saints against (Leth Cuinn) northern Ireland.	15 April (MT) 9 November (MG, MD)	
	Sárnat of Barragh		Berrech (Barragh, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.	<i>Sarnat ingen Echach m Baeth m. Nainnida m. Féic m. Ieir m. Cathbath</i> (<i>CGSH</i> §4, <i>DIS</i> , p. 549)			
67.	Sincheán - 18 <i>Dénaid dúin ar cotach</i> (v.3, 1.1)						
	Sineall of Claidhínis	Sincheall (Sinchean)	Claidhínis Shinill (Cleenish, Co. Fermanagh) in Ulster.	(<i>DIS</i> , p. 565)		12 November (MG, MD)	
68.	Tignach - 23 <i>Turchan duin a Thuathail</i> (v.3, 1.6)						
	Tignach of Clones	Tignán	Cluain Eois (Clones, Co. Monaghan) in Ulster.	<i>Tignach epscop Cluana Eois m. Corpri m. Fernai m. Ennai</i>		4 April (MT, <i>FÓ</i> , MG, MD)	AU 549.2, 550.2, AFM 548.3

				<i>m. Labain .m. Brioin m. Echach m. Dáre Barraig m. Cathair Moir (CGSH § 244, DIS, pp. 572 – 4)</i>			
69.	Tacán - 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.19, l. 1) – identified as being of the Uí Chrimthannán						
	Tacán of Curraclone	Tagán, Teige, Tecce	(Curraclone, Co. Laois) in Leinster.	<i>Techan m. Beraigh m. Senaig m. Nathí m. Daimine m. Cairpre Daim Argit (CGHS §69, DIS, p. 569)</i>	Possibly also identified as Teige (Tecce) in the later martyrologies on 9 September. (MG, MD)	(9 September (MG, MD))	ca. 5 th century
70.	Usaille - 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.7, l.3)						
	Usaille of Killashee	Uxaille, lat. Auxilius	Cell Usaille (Killashee, Co. Kildare) in Leinster. Killossey (Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 114 – 15)	<i>Lupait siur Patraic mathair Macchú Baird; Sechnall, Nectain, Dabonna, Mogornan, Darióc, <u>Ausaille</u>, Crumthir Lugnath (CGSH §722.15, DIS, p. 582)</i>	A companion of Patrick. Cell Usaille belonged among the sites of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, <i>Church and Polity</i> , p. 198)	19 March, 16 September (MT, MG) 27 August (MG, MD)	AU 459.1, AI 460.1, AFM 454.3

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