

A fragment of an early modern tract on grammar and metrics

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INTRODUCTION

THIS CONTRIBUTION presents an edition, with textual notes and translation, of a fragment of a tract which is concerned with the formation of compound words and alliteration. The contents of the text are examined in detail and the relationship in which it stands to the other grammatical and metrical tracts is addressed. A treatment of selected technical terminology and alliteration with the letter *p* is also provided. The fragment has, to the present writer's knowledge, hitherto received no scholarly attention and is published here for the first time.¹

MANUSCRIPT

The text which is the concern of this study is preserved on a single, loose slip of vellum which is stored with UCD-OFM A 4.² That codex is relatively well known as it preserves a copy of *Acallam na Senórach* which was used by Stokes in his edition of that text to supply additional passages not found in other manuscripts.³ By way of contrast, the slip has hitherto been mostly unknown to scholarship. It had been inserted loosely into A 4 before the Franciscan manuscripts were transferred to UCD Archives and is now preserved in a separate pouch. At an earlier stage, the slip formed part of a miscellaneous

¹I am grateful to Pádraig A. Breatnach and Caoimhín Breatnach for reading a draft of this essay. All translations are by the present writer unless otherwise indicated.

²See Dillon, Mooney and de Brún (1969: 10–12).

³Stokes (1900: x–xii).

assortment of fragments numbered A 31 in the same collection.⁴ It is described as follows in the *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Franciscan Library Killiney* where it is tentatively dated to the sixteenth century:

A slip of vellum folded into two leaves has been inserted loosely into MS. The leaves measure 23.5 cms (approx.) in width and 8.5 cms (tapering to 4 cms at fold) in height. Contents: (1) Grammatical material in Irish. Beg. *chóir ní beith da comfhocol aigi*. Foll. by “ag so leabhar Uuilliam I C(h)uilemh[ain]” (?), twice, in different inks. The grammatical material is continued on the verso. (2) Ossianic poem. *Cidh be ait ambem anocht*. c. 15 qq., with continuation (illegible) on verso.⁵

It may be observed that item (2), which is not recognised by the cataloguers, represents an acephalous copy of the poem beginning *Anocht fíordheireadh na fflían* edited from UCD-OFM A 20 (b) by Eoin MacNeill in *Duanaire Finn*.⁶ The owner who wrote his name on the slip was a member of the Leinster medical family of Ó Cuileamhain.⁷ An ‘Uilliam Ó Cuilleamhan’ is recorded as scribe of a short portion of NLI G 8, a medical manuscript written primarily by Éumann Ó Bolgaoi in 1548 with the assistance of a number of collaborators.⁸ However, his signature in G 8, in as far as this may be compared with the partially faded signature in our fragment, displays a number of differences in letter forms, most notably in the letters *a* and *u*. The medical connection may nonetheless be of significance as the script of the fragment bears certain general stylistic similarities to the small neat hands of the fifteenth-century scribe Donnchadh Ó Bolgaidhe, who wrote most of

⁴See Dillon, Mooney and de Brún (1969: xxii n. 58, 65–8).

⁵Ibid. 11; for the date (‘16th (?) cent.’), see *ibid.* 10.

⁶MacNeill (1908: no. 19). The copy in the slip begins at q. 8.

⁷For some remarks on the family, see Ní Shéaghda (1967: 42, 94) where it is noted that they had connections with the medical schools of the Ó Bolgaidhe and Ó Conchobhair families. For an account of the latter school, see Nic Dhonnchadha (2006). For references to other members of the Ó Cuileamhain family, see *ibid.* 16 n. 18, Ní Shéaghda (1967: 67), *eadem* (1987: 36, 37) and the genealogy in RIA I v 1 (F) (no. 745), 13v; cf. also O’Curry (1861: 488 n. 54).

⁸See Ní Shéaghda (1967: 41). His signature will be found on p. 141. The formal variation -a(i)n might suggest that the surname ends in a long vowel -á(i)n, cf. *IGT* II §35. However, the name is sometimes spelt with -uin (Ní Shéaghda (1987: 36); cf. -ain, *ibid.* 37; Aoibheann Nic Dhonnchadha has also kindly drawn my attention to the spelling ‘o cuilamhuin’ in NLI G 11, 250 (upper margin), *pace* Ní Shéaghda (1967: 67) and the name is Anglicised as Culloon or Culhoun (MacLysaght 1957: 102). On the various forms of the name Ó Bolgaidhe, see Ní Shéaghda (1967: 41–2).

NLI G 11, and of the scribe of a fragment of a medical text preserved in RIA B iv 1 b (no. 1269, IB). While the resemblances might perhaps be tentatively put down to associated families or schools, they may simply be representative of a more general contemporary style, the upper limits of which have yet to be established.⁹

Some scribal features which may be registered include: (i) the spelling *ae* as opposed to *ao*;¹⁰ (ii) the writing of an epenthetic vowel in ‘ailim’ and, possibly also, in ‘eirighi’ (§§1, 5); (iii) the item ‘eirighi’, just adverted to, may, however, be more likely to indicate vocalisation of the historical velar fricative *gh* and represent a scribal pronunciation of ‘-ighi’ as a long vowel -í;¹¹ (iv) the use of a suspension stroke to represent a final vowel in ‘a-tā’ (§§1–3, 7);¹² (v) the radical consonant of a nasalised or lenited word is not always written by the scribe in §§5–7, e.g. ‘ar gloch’ (*ar gcloch*) and ‘mo hadhb’ (*mo Shadhbh*). This is conditioned by the context and is intended to be illustrative of the teaching imparted. Thus, it is consistently employed in examples of alliterating words, e.g. bean *agus* ar mean (§5), with one additional instance (*ar geann*, §5);¹³ (vi) the orthography of compound words in §3 fluctuates, now representing each of the individual elements clearly, now reflecting pronunciation, e.g. -*dearg* in *fíndearg* and *geillearg*.¹⁴ The latter procedure is recommended in the case of compounds in which the first element is a prefix (termed *greim comhfhocuil*) in IGT I, but such orthographical fluctuation is not confined to the present text and is, in fact, advised against in *GGBM*;¹⁵ (vii) attention may, lastly, be drawn to the imperative form *Tobair* which

⁹The scribe of the fifteenth-century manuscript RIA 23 B 3 (965), Diarmaid Ó Conaill, might also be included here. Compare Ní Shéaghda (1967: 13) for remarks on similarities of certain fourteenth-century scribes of the Ó Cianáin family; cf. also Carney (1969: 127 and 122 n. 2).

¹⁰The spelling *ao* is not found before the fifteenth century according to *SNG* IV §2.7; see also Mackinnon (1904: 4) and Ó Riain (2013: 71–6).

¹¹See also note on *sgoilleinbh* (§3) below. The epenthetic vowel and vocalisation of *gh* are attested by the thirteenth century, see *SNG* IV §§2.9, 2.11 and references cited there; see also Breatnach (1952: 53, 54 n. 3, 58, 59 n. 4), Ó Maolalaigh (2006) and idem (2008: 214–18).

¹²Other instances will be found, for example, in the fifteenth-century manuscript *Liber Flavus Fergusiorum*, RIA 23 O 48 (no. 476), see Breatnach (2011: 103 §2e).

¹³For comparable instances, see *GGBM* 112–13, 114, 137–8 and TCD D 4. 35 (no. 1431), 174, where words are also spelt without the radical letter to indicate the pronunciation of the mutated initial, a practice which is contrary to the teaching of *GGBM* 208–13 and IGT I §102 and is clearly employed as an expedient to teaching. For the earlier orthographical practice of omitting the radical of a nasalised word, see *SNG* III §4.10 and *GOI* §236 (2).

¹⁴See also note on *doin[n]dian* at p. 168 below.

¹⁵For comments on the spelling of compound words, see IGT I §§2, 3, 29, 31, 33, 40, 41, 49, 101, 102 and compare *GGBM* 176–9, 208–13, 488–94, 528–31, 2341–4, 3347–9, 3357–9, 3952–4.

occurs alongside *Tabair* in §6 (both written twice).¹⁶ This form is given as a variant of *tabhair* in a seventeenth-century grammatical tract which contains a number of non-classical forms and is apparently of Scottish provenance.¹⁷

CONTENTS

The fragment begins and ends in mid-sentence and the surviving text deals with matters pertaining to the formation of compounds and alliteration. The teaching may be divided into sections in accordance with the specific issues treated of. A brief account of each section followed by a more detailed discussion of selected features will give an indication of the nature of the text and will also allow for the identification of topics which are the concern of other tracts.

The specific issues dealt with are:

(§1) Compounding of nouns which end in a vowel in the nominative singular and are identical in form in the plural (with the exception of the dative). The vast majority of nouns belonging to this class are *io-* and *iā-*stems which may be inflected as vocalic or as dental stems in Classical Irish. When used as the first element in a compound, the nominative singular or genitive plural may be adopted as the compositional form.¹⁸ The example employed to illustrate this teaching is *boghadhonn* ‘bow-brown’, formed from nominative singular *bogha* and *donn*. The commentary discloses that these elements may also be compounded as *boghadonn*, formed from genitive plural *boghadh* with dental inflection and *donn*, with delentition of the final *dh* of *boghadh* in contact with the initial *d* of *donn*.¹⁹ Compounding of this class of noun is also dealt

¹⁶The form *tobhair* is first found in fifteenth century manuscripts according to O’Rahilly (1932: 178) where it is discussed and identified as a feature of Ulster Irish also found in this verb in Connacht. An example can, however, be adduced from the fourteenth-century Book of Ui Mhaine, f. 62vb22 (*tobair*); while this spelling is noteworthy, it should be observed that the form *tabhair* is required in this instance for rhyme with *bladhaibh*. For examples of the verbal noun with *-o-* from RIA D iv 2 (no. 1223), see *LSN* pp. xlvii, lvi, and note also the form *do thobairt* alongside *do tabairt* in NLI G 11, 119b.7, 8. These manuscripts were compiled in Leinster, see *LSN* p. xxxiii, *RIA Cat.* Fasc. 26: 3297–307 and Ní Shéaghda (1967: 65–93), but D iv 2 has Connacht connections, see Ó Concheanainn (1997: 454 n. 7).

¹⁷Black (1990: 10); see *ibid.* 3 and McManus (1996: 180 §5.4) on non-classical forms in the text. The form *tobhair* is not cited in *IGT* III §14.

¹⁸This is the case for most nouns, cf. *IGT* I §§93, 118. Some restrictions on the use of the genitive plural with certain types of noun are discussed in *IGT* I §§93, 148 and *GGBM* 479–87; see further *SNG* IV §6.3 (b).

¹⁹For further discussion of assimilation in the fragment and of the example *boghadhonn* which is shared with *IGT* I, see respectively pp. 135 and 140–1 below.

with in *IGT I* and the seventeenth-century grammar attributed to Tadhg Óg (son of Tadhg Dall) Ó hUiginn which was edited by Mac Aogáin in *Graiméir Ghaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr*.²⁰

(§2) Items which should not form the first element in a compound.²¹ These are listed as: nouns in the plural (excluding the genitive plural as is clear from §1, although not stated);²² verbs; the adjectives *maith* and *olc* which have the compositional forms *d(é)agh-* and *droch-*, and the comparative forms of the adjectives *beag* and *mór*.²³ Similar, but more extensive, lists of such prohibited items are found in *BST*, *IGT I* and *GGBM*, while certain specific aspects of compounding are faulted in *IGT V*.²⁴

(§3) Retrogressive palatalisation in compounds. The final consonant of the first element in a compound word is palatalised if the first vowel in the second element is palatal. Assimilation of quality, including retrogressive velarisation, is also treated of in *IGT I* and *GGBM*.²⁵

(§§4–7) Alliteration. (§4) A consonant can alliterate only with another instance of the same consonant, while a vowel may alliterate with any other vowel.²⁶ It is pointed out that alliteration takes place between radicals and is not affected by nasalisation. This leads to a treatment of that mutation in §5.

²⁰*GGBM* 3313–16. For *IGT I*, see p. 140 below. (The discussion of compounding in *GGBM* 478–525, 4030–60 does not make specific reference to this class of noun.) On the attribution of the tract to Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, see Walsh (1947: 74–9) and Sharpe (2013: 235–6, 325); compare Ó Concheanainn (1968: 340).

²¹Where reference is made to the beginning of a compound word (*tús comhfhocail*), the type of compound envisaged would appear, in general, to be made up of only two elements since the items faulted could not be placed, for example, in intermediate position in a compound made up of three elements. This underlying concept may find expression in the disapproval of longer compounds in *GGBM* 2864–5: *Narab dhot dheoin chuirfios tú nisa mhó inā dhā fhocul a ccomhfhocul dā mbia agad ad dhán* ‘Let you not place willingly more than two words in a compound word which you will employ in your poem’. This is not, of course, to suggest that compound words of more than two elements do not occur; compare also *BST* 207.5 *IGT I* §§100, 137 and *GGBM* 551–3, 3215–17 where longer compounds are conceived of.

²²The plural is also faulted as the first element in a compound in *BST* 207.27 and *IGT I* §97. It is specified in *IGT I* §118, however, that the genitive plural is excluded from this prohibition; see further n. 18 above.

²³See further discussion of the last items below pp. 142–4.

²⁴See *BST* 206.25–207.15 (and notes on those lines; cf. also *Mag.* 401 l. 185 n.), 21a.3–4; *IGT I* §§96–100, 111, 113–19, 121–5 (cf. 126), 138, 148; *GGBM* 512–25, 3361–9; *IGTV* §§28, 129, 134, 137.

²⁵*IGT I* §2; *GGBM* 278–85, 496–503, 508–12, 2959–69 (termed *coimhfhreagra*), 3989–91, 4043–5; TCD D 4. 35 (no. 1431), 173. Not all of these passages are restricted to compound words.

²⁶Although *f* and *s* are given in the list, this statement does not in fact apply under certain circumstances to *f* and *s* as is made clear in §§6–7. See pp. 137, 171, 172–3, 174–5, 180–2 below.

(Lenition is only mentioned in the context of this metrical ornament with regard to specific consonants on which it places certain restrictions in §§6–7).

(§5) This passage includes two lists of letters. They may be compared to another list, consisting of eleven consonants, which is given in the traditional order of the Ogam alphabet as *b, l, f, s, n, d, t, c, m, g, r* in the previous passage (§4).²⁷ The same order is not, however, adhered to in the first list in §5, owing to misplacement of *l* (*s, n, l, m, r*). This is a list of consonants which are not subject to nasalisation.²⁸ The second list in this section gives the seven consonants which can be nasalised and adheres to the traditional order except that it includes the letter *p* in penultimate position (*b, f, d, t, c, p, g*); its correct position is uncertain.²⁹ These lists are followed in both instances by examples of words beginning with each letter listed. The only exceptions are *f* and *d* which appear to have been omitted inadvertently, presumably as a result of a copying error. (The letter *f* is dealt with in §6, but this would appear to be of no importance since examples of words beginning with *s* and *p* are given in §5 in addition to the separate treatment of these letters in §§6 and 7). The order in which the examples are listed in the second instance does not reflect that of the traditional alphabet or that of the immediately preceding list (*m, l, s, r, n*). In the third instance, the order is traditional with the exception of the position of the word beginning with *p* which is placed last although it occurs in penultimate position in the list.

Nasalisation is dealt with in detail in *IGT V* §§125–6 and in the technical poems beginning *A aos dána, is aithnidh damh* and *Ca med focal féghar lend* in the context of infixed pronouns and conjugated forms of the copula.³⁰

²⁷For the order, see, for example, *IGT I* §4, and for the use of this order in the schools, see Ó Cuív (1966). The list does not include (i) *p* or *ng* which make up the total of thirteen consonants mentioned in *IGT I* §1 according to Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 165 ll. 18–19 n.); (ii) *h* which was not considered a letter in its own right, *IGT I* §17, *GGBM* 29, 2899, cf. Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 163 l. 5 n.). The omission of *p* may be an oversight given its occurrence in the second list in §5 or may reflect its non-traditional status, see p. 137 below. On the letter *p*, see Ó Cuív (1965: 162), idem (1966: 287), *IGT I* §1 and Appendix I below.

²⁸The same consonants are listed in *IGT I* §104 in the order *s, m, r, l, n* in response to a question posed *ibid.* §1 as to the identity of the five consonants which cannot be nasalised (*na cóig connsuine gan ogham gan ghéidheilg n-uirrdhighthi ar a ccóir uirrdhughadh do thuigsim*).

²⁹See n. 27 above. It may be observed that *p* is the last consonant listed in *IGT V* §125. (The list of consonants there may be said to reflect generally the traditional order, although two letters occur out of sequence and another has been omitted entirely, perhaps due to a copying error. Explanations might be offered for the ordering of the letters, but this would require further discussion than could be provided in the present context.) The seven consonants which can be nasalised (*na seacht cconnsuine ar a téid uirrdhughadh*) are listed in *GGBM* 129–30, 3928–31 and mentioned in *IGT I* §1, but not specified in that tract.

³⁰See McKenna (1940) (= *IGT V* §§118–28), Ó Riain (2008) and NLI G 3, ff. 75r9–76vz (at f. 75v1–9 qq. 6–8). Editions of *IGT V* and the latter text are in preparation.

The mutation is also treated of in *GGBM* and receives some mention in *IGTI*.³¹ There is a slight difference between the texts with regard to the letter *p*. It is omitted in the technical poems, as it was not a part of the traditional alphabet, but is included in the other sources, thus at least partly aligning our text with them.³²

(§§6–7) Alliteration of *f*, *p* and *s*. The following rules are illustrated: (i) *f* alliterates with *bhf*; (ii) *p* alliterates with *bp*; (iii) lenited *f* followed by a vowel alliterates with a vowel; (iv) *f* alliterates with *bp*; (v) *sd* alliterates only with *sd*; (vi) *sg* alliterates only with *sg*; (vii) *sb* alliterates only with *sb*; (viii) *sm* alliterates only with *sm*; (ix) lenited *s* followed by a vowel alliterates only with another lenited *s* followed by a vowel; (x) lenited *sl*, *sn* and *sr* do not alliterate with one another or with lenited *s* but only with another lenited *sl*, *sn*, *sr* or *s*. This is because lenited *s* is not pronounced before these consonants.³³ (The rules regarding alliteration of the letter *p* receive further discussion in Appendix I below.)

The fragment breaks off in the course of this topic. With regard to assessing the relationship with other tracts, it may be noted that certain faults related to alliteration are laid down in *IGT V*, while only stray comments concerned with the ornament are found in *IGT I* and *BST*.³⁴ Some of these have to do with the letter *s*, however, and this represents a further connection between the fragment and those texts. The treatment the ornament receives here can be said to be more comprehensive and, indeed, more methodical than that encountered in *IGT I* and *BST*. More fully comprehensive treatments of the metrical ornament are, however, found in *GGBM*.³⁵

IDENTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL TOPIC

In addition to establishing the contents of the tract as we have it, it is possible to identify a topic which was dealt with in a part of the text that no

³¹*GGBM* 120–43, 3109–33, 3925–33; see n. 28 and 29 above.

³²See n. 27 above.

³³The rules regarding alliteration of *f*, *s* and *p* are given respectively in *GGBM* 2484–6, 3505–8 (*f*); *IGT I* §§13, 39, 71, *BST* 213.10–15, *GGBM* 2486–93, 3509–17 (*s*); for *p*, see Appendix I below. For additional remarks on *sh*, *shl*, *shn* and *shr*, see *IGT I* §34, cf. also *ibid.* §102, *GGBM* 77–8, 111–13, 166–73, 2362–4, 2392, 3099–104, 3924, 3947–51, TCD D 4. 35 (no. 1431), 174, C. Breatnach (1990: 145), Ó Cuív (1966b: 96, 97–8, 102), Ó Dochartaigh (1988: 23–6), *SNG VIII* §3.3.

³⁴*IGT V* §§7, 9, 93; cf. also *ibid.* §96 and §§54–71, 74 (on linking alliteration in the opening couplet known as *lurgu bhrisde*); *BST* p. xvii; Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 166 ll. 21–2 n.).

³⁵*GGBM* 2476–2503, 3462–3517.

longer survives. This may be determined on the basis of the following remark: *nī lōr lind ar labrumur do na cāeltaibh tuasud* ‘I consider what I said above concerning the palatal forms of vowels to be insufficient’ (§3). This makes it clear that our text had more to say about palatalisation and this observation may be taken a step further by examining the term *cāeladh*, used here in the dative plural. The term is rendered in *DIL* as the ‘act of making (becoming?) slender, attenuation (of vowels)’. The only other instance to hand of the term in the plural occurs in *IGT I* §14 which is headed *Dona cáoltuibh [bh]udheasda* ‘Concerning the palatal forms of vowels now’.³⁶ This passage is concerned with demonstrating the forms adopted by velar vowels when palatalised, as for example in *Cáoladh .eó. shinidh fhada ag dul a n.eóí* ‘long *eo* when palatalised (*lit.* palatalisation of long *eo*) becomes *eóí*’.³⁷ A comparable treatment of vowels is found in *Rudimenta Grammaticae Hibernicae* where the verb *extenuātiō* corresponds to *cāeladh* as may be seen in the following example: *Vocales extenuantur et crassescunt regulariter et irregulariter; quando regulariter, mutatur ... eo longa in eoi, ut deór, don deóir ...* ‘Vowels are palatalised and velarised regularly and irregularly; when regularly ... long *eo* is changed to *eoi*, as in *deór, don deóir* (‘a tear, of the tear’)’.³⁸ The usage of the term *cāeladh* in *IGT I* and the similarity of treatment there and in the *Rudimenta* allows the tentative inference to be made that our tract dealt with this topic in a similar manner at an earlier point, now lost. Moreover, the treatment of that topic in other texts forms part of a larger discussion of the alphabet and it is conceivable that this observation may give some indication of wider concerns of our tract.³⁹

³⁶For other instances of the verbal noun, see *BST* 210.25 (*bis*)/29b.29–30 (*ter*), 71b.31; *IGT III* §§1 (p. 168 l. 7), 23 n. 12, 83; *IGT I* §§14, 74, 100, 146 and 149 (the examples from *IGT I* are registered in *DIL s.v. cáelad*). It is also found in the form *cáolughadh* in *BST* 210.24, *IGT III* §§1 (p. 168 n. 9), 22 (cf. also §106) and *IGT I* §1 (these examples are not registered in *DIL s.v. cáelugud*). Note also forms of the finite verbs *cáolaid* (*IGT I* §74) and *cáolaighidh* (*IGT I* §§14, 150; *GGBM* 2964–5). The variation of *-adh* with *-ughadh* (*al. -achadh*) in the verbal noun is to be viewed as optional in the case of these denominative verbs and is also encountered in the case of *sealbhadh / sealbhughadh* (*IGT III* §§96, 106) and *iollradh / iollrughadh* below; compare *GOI* §§524, 525 and *Des.* p. 359. Further examples of such variation from the early modern period include *crutha(igh)idh* and *datha(igh)idh*, for which see *IGT III* §§80, 106, 122. (For variation between *-ughadh* and *-achadh*, see *GGBM* 911–13, *IGT III* §106, and *IGT I* §151; cf. also O’Rahilly (1932: 69–70).)

³⁷*IGT I* §14.

³⁸See *GGBM* 798–831. Compare also n. 25 above and vv. 17–19 of the poem beginning *Comhardadh cionnas is cóir* where the palatal vowels are also listed but the terms used of them are *íseal(l)* and *íse*, see Ó Riain (2013: 55, 62–3).

³⁹Compare also the accounts of the alphabet in *Aibidil Gaoidhilige & Caiticiosma* (Ó Cuív 1994: 58–67); Nugent’s primer for Elizabeth I (ff. 8r–9r; digitised at www.isos.dias.ie (Farmleigh House));

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

The fragment contains no poetic citations, but does present examples of single words or phrases employed in each section of the text to illustrate points under discussion.⁴⁰ A handful of these are shared with other texts, as follows: (i) *droichfhear* §2 (: *IGT* I §97); (ii) *marbh na fir* §2 (: *GGBM* 721, 774 *marbh (na) fíora*; cf. also *IGT* I §151 *marbh fhíora*, *IGT* II §65 *marb fíra* HP (v.l. *meall fíra* CC²);⁴¹ (iii) *ar gceann* §5 (: *GGBM* 134, 3930); (iv) *ar mbean* §5 (: *GGBM* 3930); (v) *boghadhonn* §1 (: *IGT* I §142); (vi) *glaisliabh* §3 (: *IGT* I §37); (vii) *beagmhó* (see below).⁴² The use of the personal names *Fearghal*, *Pilib/Filib*, *Pól* and *Sadhbh* in a number of examples in *BST* may also be noted.⁴³ Most of the examples listed above are admittedly run of the mill. Those listed at (v)–(vii) are, however, somewhat less commonplace and warrant further comment as they may be of significance.

(v) *boghadhonn* ‘bow-brown’

This is cited as an example of a compound in which the first element is a noun which may be inflected as a vocalic or dental stem.⁴⁴ It may be noted that in this case, not only is the example identical, but there is also a close contextual correspondence between the passages in question which are reproduced below. Similarities extend partly to wording (*a chomhfhocal ón ainm úathaidh agus ón táobhréim isiol iollraidh ... a chomhfhocal ón táobhréim ard iollraidh: comhfocul aigi ón ainm uathaid agus ón táebhréim illraid*). Differences arise, on the one hand, from the fact that the genitive plural when inflected as a vocalic stem (the ‘low’ genitive plural) is not discussed in (b) below and, on the other, from the context in which the passages occur.⁴⁵ Passage (b) appears

see Ó Macháin (2012: 132–7) for an account of the text); a tract preserved in the Black Book of Clanranald (Gillies 2005: 68–9 §§2–3), and an unpublished text immediately following the section on faults in the *Rudimenta* in TCD D 4. 35 (1431), 173–7 (for which, see *GGBM* p. xxi).

⁴⁰It seems reasonable to assume that the part of the tract now lost contained poetic citations, as do all the other grammatical and metrical tracts.

⁴¹Compare also *marbh fear* at *GGBM* 729, 738.

⁴²I have not included here instances such as the use of *lámh* in §5 (*lámh*, *ar lámh*) to illustrate that *l* is not nasalised and its more general use as a headword in the tract on declension (*IGT* II §192) or the use of *bogha* as an example of spelling or as paradigm in *GGBM* 270, 839–43.

⁴³*Fearghal* e.g. *BST* 187.18; *Pilib/Filib* and *Pól* e.g. *BST* 187.6–7, 206.8; *Sadhbh* e.g. *BST* 203.5–9, 214.28–30. The possibility that in §5 *mór* may represent a personal name is raised in the Notes at p. 169 below.

⁴⁴See discussion above pp. 134–5.

⁴⁵With regard to the fact that the ‘low’ genitive plural is not discussed in (b), it should be borne in mind that that passage represents the acephalous beginning of our text. See further note on §1 (*täebhréim illraid*) below.

to be intended as a statement of a general rule regarding this noun class, whereas in *IGTI* such nouns have been discussed earlier in the text and also in the immediately preceding passages; (a) also occurs in the context of teaching regarding the spelling of final vowels (although not specifically commented on in the passage).

- (a) *Bogha agus donn, boghadhonn* a chomhfhocal ón ainm úathaidh *agus* ón táobhréim ísiol iollraidh, *boghadonn* a chomhfhocal ón táobhréim ard iollraidh (*IGT I* §142).

‘*Bogha* and *donn, boghadhonn* is its (*sc. bogha*) compositional form (*lit. compound*) based on the nominative singular and on the genitive plural when inflected as an *io*-stem (*lit. with regard to the low genitive plural*), *boghadonn* is its compositional form (*lit. compound*) based on the genitive plural when inflected as a dental stem (*lit. with regard to the high genitive plural*).’

- (b) *nī* beith da comfhocul aigi ach[t] **boghadhond** a-māin *agus* a-tā *gac* focal is cōir d’ainm uathaid *agus* illraid mur sin .i. comfhocul aigi *ōn* ainm uathaid *agus* *ōn* tãebrēim illraid *agus* *nī* fuil do deifriugud eturra *acht* duir go n-uath ag ēirghi (éirighi MS) *ar* deiredh in tãebrēime illraid do-nī *ãenduir lom d̄fbh.* [§1]

‘it should only form a compound as *boghadhonn* (“bow-brown”) and each word which has the same form in the nominative singular and plural (*lit. which is correct as nominative singular and nominative plural*) is like that. That is, it has a compositional form (*lit. compound*) based on the nominative singular and [another] based on the genitive plural and there is no difference between them save that *dh* occurs at the end of the genitive plural which makes a single unlenited *d* of them (*sc. dh* and *d* in *boghadonn*).’

(vi) *glaisliabh* ‘blue mountain’

This represents one of six examples cited in §3, the purpose of which is to show that the first element of a compound is palatalised if the second element begins with a palatal consonant. This is seen in the present instance in that the final *s* of *glas* is palatalised when compounded with *sliabh*. It may, however,

be noted that the same example is employed in *IGTI* to show that two instances of *s* are assimilated in a compound, being thus reckoned as one:

Tíad dá .s. na chéile a ccomhfhocal mur so: glas *agus* smior,
 glaismior sin; glas *agus* slíabh, glaislíabh sin. Imtheachd do-rinne
 .s. an tshléibhe ann sin. (*IGTI* §37)

‘Two instances of the letter *s* combine in a compound word like this: *glas* (“yellow (?)”) and *smior* (“marrow”), that is *glaismior* (“yellow (?) marrow”); *glas* (“blue”) and *slíabh* (“mountain”), that is *glaislíabh* (“blue mountain”). The *s* in *slíabh* disappeared in that case.’⁴⁶

In fact, all six examples in this section of the fragment are not only suitable to exemplify the doctrine of assimilation of quality. They could also appropriately demonstrate the following assimilatory effects of adjacent consonants at compound junctures which are not, however, made the subject of commentary: (i) *nn* (< *-nn* and *d-*) in *doindian*; (ii) *b* (< *-bh* and *b-*) in *duibearn*; (iii) *n* (< *-n* and *d-*) in *findearg*; (iv) *ll* (< *-l* and *d-*; *-l* and *l-*) in *geillearg* and *sgoilleinbh*.⁴⁷ It may be noteworthy, then, that two specific instances of sandhi phenomena receive brief mention in other passages of the fragment.⁴⁸ The effects of adjacent consonants on one another in compound words is a matter which receives a great deal of attention in *IGTI* and the pedagogical poem beginning *Feadha an oghaim aithnidh damh* which was edited by R. A. Breatnach in *Éigse* 3.⁴⁹ The topic is also dealt with in *GGBM*.⁵⁰ It would not, however, seem possible to determine to what extent, if any, they could be regarded as giving an indication of topics dealt with in more detail in the lost portion of our tract.

⁴⁶See also *IGTI* §36, *GGBM* 3336–8, 3782–3. For *glas* ‘blue’ in the context of ‘mountain’, see *DIL* s.v. 2 *glas* I (b); for *glaismior*, tentatively interpreted as ‘yellow (?) marrow’, see, perhaps, *ibid.* I (f) ‘of shades of grey’ and (g) ‘discoloured’ etc.; compare also Murphy (1953: 321 s.v. *smaois*). The alternative would be to render it as ‘fresh marrow’, see *DIL loc. cit.* II (b). I am grateful to Professor Pierce Grace for assistance with this example from a medical point of view.

⁴⁷(i), (iii) and (iv) (*ll* < *l* and *d*) are optional. For (i) and (iii), see *IGTI* §41, *GGBM* 162–4, 2360–1, 3323–7, Breatnach (1941: 41 q. 21); (ii) *IGTI* §42, *GGBM* 149–50, Breatnach (1941: 40 q. 16); (iv) *IGTI* §41, *GGBM* 161–2, 2360–1, 3319–23, Breatnach (1941: 41 q. 23).

⁴⁸§§1 (*-dh* and *d-*); 6 (*-mh* and *bhf-*). See discussion at pp. 134 and 171–2 respectively.

⁴⁹See Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 176 57–8 n.) (for *IGTI*) and Breatnach (1941) (a list of relevant points made in the poem is given *ibid.* 51). General studies of adjacent consonants will be found in Ó Cuív (1965: 147–8), *idem* (1966b), (1986), and (1987).

⁵⁰*GGBM* 125, 145–79, 181–205, 2319–21, 2323–92, 2328–44, 3158–212, 3312–60, 3732–99, 3935–76.

(vii) *beagmhó*

This example illustrates a correct compositional form and occurs alongside an accompanying example, *mórlugha*, as follows:

nī cōir is lugha mē nā tū mur a-tā sō is lugha agus is mō mē nā tū, is beagmhō mē nā tū, is mō agus is lugha mē nā tū, is mōrlugha mē nā tū

‘is lugha mé ná tú (“I am smaller than you”) is not correct as in *is lugha* (“smaller”) and *is mó mé ná tú* (“I am bigger than you”), [that is] *is beagmhó mé ná tú* (“I am slightly bigger than you”), *is mó* (“bigger”) and *is lugha mé ná tú* (“I am smaller than you”), [that is] *is mórlugha mé ná tú* (“I am rather smaller than you”).’ (§2)

The purpose of this passage may simply be to set down the teaching that the comparative form of an adjective is excluded from acting as the first element in a compound. This would be in line with other tracts.⁵¹ The first instance of *lugha* and the second instance of *mó* in the passage cited above would, accordingly, be representative of the category of the comparative and employed in preference to the technical term for that category which is *iomarbháigh*.⁵² There is nothing particularly unusual in this suggestion. It may be observed, however, that the adjectives *beag* and *mór* act here as modifiers of the comparative forms to which they are attached, thus the compounds *beagmhó* and *mórlugha* mean ‘slightly bigger’ and ‘rather smaller’ respectively.⁵³ For this reason, it may be significant that a form *bec máo* occurs in the St Gall glosses on a passage of Priscian which is concerned with degrees of comparison and diminutives. The relevant text and gloss read as follows:

Thais quam ego sum maiuscula est, id est, ‘paruo maior* quam ego’
*inbec máo .i. isbec as máo oldáusa .i. is bec inderscugud

⁵¹See n. 24 above.

⁵²For examples of the term, see e.g. *IGT V* §112, *BST* 198.25–8, *IGT I* §§153–5, *IGT IV* §2, *IGT IV* 1011 (n. 13).

⁵³The examples cannot be regarded as dvandva compounds as such formations would be meaningless in these combinations. With the compound *mórlugha*, compare a periphrastic phrase such as ‘*Mō budh beag dā mbeitheá ann*’ in Mac Cárthaigh (2012: 173 q. 23a) (rendered ‘... would not be so bad if we had you’ [sic]). For this periphrastic construction with the comparative of *mór*, see further *BST* 71b.16–19 and R. A. Breatnach (1990: 4–8).

‘Thais is a bit older than I am, that is slightly older than I’
 ‘a little greater i.e. she is a little greater than I, i.e. the distinction is small’.⁵⁴

The form in question is not without its difficulties, however. The editors query the manuscript reading *bec máo* in this instance and tentatively suggest that *bec máo* be regarded as a compound or, alternatively, that *bec* be emended to dative singular *biuc* to form an adverb.⁵⁵ The former suggestion has the advantage of retaining the manuscript reading. It is also adopted in *DIL* where the compound *becmáo* is described as artificial.⁵⁶ If this is the case, the example in our fragment might then be taken to represent a shared occurrence of the compound. A possible connection, whether direct or indirect, with the grammatical tradition reflected in the glosses on Priscian might not be too far-fetched given the function of the adjectives in question as modifiers.⁵⁷ A further consideration may be the unusual nature which has been proposed for the example involved. At present, I have no examples to hand of *beag*, or indeed *mór*, compounded with comparatives or superlatives in bardic poetry, although some examples of *mór* in such combinations are cited in *DIL* from other kinds of texts.⁵⁸ There is, however, some evidence for the compounding

⁵⁴Stokes and Strachan (1903: 99): 45a15; see also Hofman (1996: I 247, II 223–4 and II 207) on the term *derscugud*. The source of the citation is Terence, *Eunuchus* (referred to as unidentified in Hofman (1996: II 223), although the text from which it was excerpted is mentioned by Priscian, see Keil 1855–80: II 101 l. 12); for text and translation (on which the above translation is based), see Barsby (2001: 370, 371) (with *maiusculast* for *maiuscula est*), cf. also idem (1999: 182 l. 527 n.).

⁵⁵‘leg. *inbiuc*, or is *becmáo* a compound?’, Stokes and Strachan (1903: 99 n. c).

⁵⁶*DIL* B 48.57–9; see also *GOI* §382 (4) where it is noted that ‘[i]n the Glosses Latin adverbs are often rendered by the uninflected forms of the comparative and superlative with *in(d)* ... Such forms ... occur only as isolated glosses, the language of which is probably somewhat artificial ... Still the *Vita Tripartita* has *in mó* “more” ... and *in mó ocus in mó* ... in continuous sentences’. Note that the glosses *máanu* and *laigeniu* which are found in the same passage of the St Gall glosses (Stokes and Strachan 1903: 99 45a12, 13) are also described as nonce formations in *DIL* s.v.

⁵⁷It may also be significant in this regard that the example illustrative of the compositional form of *maith*, namely *deaghmaith* ‘very good’, represents an additional instance of an intensifier in the relevant passage. See also note on word below (p. 167) for a substantive usage of the compound with the meaning ‘a noble’ (where the initial element is nonetheless an intensifier).

⁵⁸See *DIL* M 170.9–11 (*mór* compounded with the comparative and superlative of *álainn*) and *ibid.* 166.79–80, 168.23–30, 170.13–14 (for compound *mórmó*, on which see R. A. Breatnach 1990: 5). Note further the use of *beag* and *mór* with the base form of adjectives: *DIL* M 170.7–9, 11–13 and *DIL* B 48.39–57; cf. also M 170.15–22. For the use of the superlative of *mór* as the second element in a compound, see *romhó* in the line *Crann is romhó maith re maoidheamh* ‘A tree whose goodness is (the) very greatest to recount’ in Carney (1945: no. 6 q. 43a l. 627).

of *mór* with the degrees of comparison in a passage in *BST*. The passage in question is concerned with the spelling of unstressed vowels in comparative forms of an adjective ending in *-amhail* and reads as follows:

Na mná as m(h)inbhanumhla ionáid ar mnáine *a n-ur* [sic leg. MS .u.] *’s a n-onn* [sic leg. MS .o.]; na mná as mórbanumhla [-na- MS] ináid ar mnáine *mar sin*; *an tráth a-tá mór na mholadh ann*, agus *an tráth as comhfhocal ón ainm bhaisde a n-ur* [sic leg. MS .u.] *’s a n-onn* [sic leg. MS .o.] *’s a n-ailm* [sic leg. MS .a.] *as, .c. an tráth sin é.*⁵⁹

McKenna interpreted the first compound, *minbhanamhail*, as being comprised of the elements *mín* ‘smooth’ and *banamhail* ‘womanly’.⁶⁰ The interpretation offered here differs and takes *min* to represent the adjective *mion* ‘small’. This seems preferable as it provides a contrast to the second compound in the passage, that is *mórbanamhail*. This suggestion finds support in the fact that comparable contrasts between opposites occur in the foregoing passages.⁶¹ The proposed use of *mion-* as opposed to *beag-* is of interest, although this may be conditioned to a certain extent by a desire to provide alliteration with *mná* (despite the fact that the examples do not represent lines of verse), and may suggest that compounds formed from *beag/mion* or *mór* and the comparative degree of an adjective had more currency than might appear to be the case at first glance. Nevertheless, the Old Irish gloss on Priscian remains the closest available parallel to *beagmhó*.

⁵⁹*BST* 203.28–204.3. McKenna should have read *m(h)órbhanumhla* and *c(h)omhfhocal* since he supplied lenition after the relative form of the copula in the first instance. His second semicolon and second comma should be deleted. See also *ibid.* 17a.9–12: Na mna as minbhanamhla inaid na mna *a n-onn ’s a n-ur*; na mna as morbhanamhla *mar sin*; *an trath a-ta mor na mhol(adh) ann agus a chomhfhoc(al) anna baisde, .c. a n-onn ’s a n-ur ’s a n-ailm e.*

⁶⁰McKenna’s explanation of the text as a whole reads as follows: ‘This passage seems to say merely that, when *banamhail* is compounded with an adj. (e.g. *mín, mór*) or a proper name (e.g. *Mór*), the ending of its compar. may have the usual variations, *-amhla, -amhlo, -amhlu*’, *BST* p. 134 (204.1–3 n.). Clearly, his interpretation is incorrect since ‘a’ is not mentioned in the first sentence. However, a full elucidation of the passage cannot be attempted here owing to considerations of space; accordingly, only points relevant for present purposes are discussed.

⁶¹*BST* 203.17–27; 17a.14–16. For example, *Banumhla iad ina m’fhear . le daghumhla tiad timcheal .c. ‘they (the men) are more womanly than my husband, they go about so demurely [correct]’* *BST* 203.23 (McKenna’s translation). Note also the observation made in *DIL* M 141. 9–10 that compounds with *mion* are often opposed to a compound with *mór* (albeit with reference to compounds formed with substantives).

The level of significance to be attached to shared examples such as those considered above in (vi) and (vii) is not entirely clear.⁶² On the one hand, it seems impossible to overlook the potential dual function of the relevant examples, and this could hardly have escaped the attention of the compiler or, indeed, the users of the tract. On the other hand, it is entirely conceivable that these items may simply represent standard teaching examples which could have been employed in different contexts and with different purposes.⁶³ This does not, of course, rule out the possibility that they may derive from a shared textual tradition or shared stock of examples or that they may reflect the influence of one text on another. Accordingly, it is important to draw attention to the identity of the examples employed in exploring connections between the various grammatical and metrical texts.

PRESENTATION

A further feature which can be cited as aligning the fragment with certain other tracts is the manner of presentation adopted. This consists in the main of expository prose accompanied by the kind of lexical items just discussed to illustrate the teaching. The text is on occasions based around the example with following prose explanations or commentary placed in a secondary or supporting role (§§6, 7). This combination of styles is maintained throughout all passages of the fragment which, it may be noted, deal with several distinct topics. We have no other recourse than to regard this as indicative of the general character of presentation. Without wishing to overgeneralise, this style of presentation can be said to be broadly similar to *IGT* I, the *Rudimenta* and Tadhg Óg's grammar in which continuous prose explanations, as the primary medium of instruction, are combined with lexical examples and, to a much lesser extent than in the other tracts, with poetic citations.⁶⁴ *BST* contains

⁶²For some discussion of shared illustrative examples in the Latin tradition, see Holtz (1981: 109–11). See also remarks by Eoin Mac Cárthaigh and Ailbhe Ó Corráin in their contributions to this volume.

⁶³For instances of the same citations employed with different purposes in different texts, see (i) *BST* 224.8–9 and compare *IGT* I §68 and *IGT* II 493; (ii) *BST* 17a.37–8 and *IGT* II 1024 (this citation has not been previously identified as shared; note that there is some variation between the texts).

⁶⁴The total number of citations (including recurring citations) in *IGT*I–IV and *BST*, as preserved in RIA 24 P 8 (no. 752), is given in Breatnach (2000: 15–17) as follows: 87 (*IGT* I), 2123 (II), 1019 (III–IV), 480 (*BST*). The present writer counts 152 citations in *IGT* V, 46 in the *Rudimenta* of which 9 are found in the Latin grammar (one, on p. 22, represents a mnemonic verse which is also found separately in RIA 24 P 8 (no. 752), 254, 23 D 4 (no. 5), 151, 23 M 30 (no. 20), 489, 23 M 16 (no. 308), 54, TCD D 4. 35 (1431), 154 (written in *oghamchraobh*), and NLI G 546, 95; the

elements of this and another approach. It is generally based around an example (whether that takes the form of poetic citations, lexical items or syntagmic units), while its prose exposition is far less extensive than that of *IGT I*, the *Rudimenta* or Tadhg Óg's grammar.⁶⁵ Despite the fragmentary nature of our text, then, its general character would appear to be sufficiently established to align it more closely with the last-mentioned texts in which the instruction is placed primarily within a continuous prose framework.

TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY

Examination of the contents of the fragment thus far reveals that the topics it deals with are also the concern of other texts, most notably *IGT I*, *Rudimenta Grammaticae Hibernicae* and Tadhg Óg's grammar. It has also been established that the fragment shares other features with those texts. Attention may now be turned to items of technical terminology. The object of this exercise is to identify further similarities and differences between the fragment and other grammatical and metrical material. Any bearing this may have on the relationship of the fragment with other tracts will be assessed more fully once each term has been examined. The items which have been selected for discussion are *sealbugud* and *urrdibad*. Of course, these are not the only technical terms which occur in the fragment. Others are, in order of occurrence, *comhfhocul*; *focal is cóir d'ainm uathaid agus illraid*; *ainm uathaid*; *táebréim illraid*; (*duir*) *go n-uath*; *lom*; *imdugud*; *oibrigud*; *urálam*; *cáeladh*; *guthaige*; *lethan*; *cáel*; *cáelaidh*; *uaim*; *fiodh*; *condsain*; *lomaidh*.⁶⁶

citations printed as if a single quatrain at 2239–42 represent two independent couplets as noted in Ó Ríain (2008b: 215 n. 3); see also Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 239 ll. 706–9 n.) on the resemblance of l. 1841 to a couplet found in *IGT I* and *BST*) and 37 in the section on prosody, 52 in Tadhg Óg's grammar (all in the prosody; some consist of a single line only, while two pp. 128 (l. 3456), 130 (l. 3508) may represent versions of the preceding citations). I have not included the likes of *fear na falluinge deirge* at *GGBM* 2116–17 in the above as it is not necessarily a citation.

⁶⁵Compare Dillon's somewhat impatient comments on *BST*: 'The author of the tract is not very systematic. His work consists of a number of examples, — some made up by him, some quoted from the bardic poetry, — and of the rules he means to establish. Sometimes the examples come first and then the rule, sometimes the order is reversed, and occasional comments are added' (Dillon 1927: 332). *IGT II–IV* differ in that they are built around headwords and blocks of poetic citations with little commentary (see comments in Breatnach 2000: 13), while *IGT V* is generally built around poetic citations with prose explanations or commentary placed in a secondary or supporting role, Ó Ríain (2016: 3–4).

⁶⁶See discussion of 'focal is cóir d'ainm uathaid agus illraid'; 'imdugud'; 'oibrigud'; 'urálam', and 'lomaidh' in the Notes. For *cáeladh*, see p. 138 above. For some of the other terms, see (Ó Cuív 1965: 152–3, 160).

(1) *sealbugud* (§5)

This term means literally ‘possessing’. It is used in the fragment to denote nasalisation in constructions which are cited here in dictionary form:

- (a) *téid sealbugud X i Y* ‘lit. the possessing of X becomes Y’ or ‘X when nasalised becomes Y’
- (b) *téid a s(h)ealbugud a X i Y* ‘lit. its possessing goes from X into Y’ or ‘it changes from X into Y when nasalised’
- (c) *cuiridh X a s(h)ealbugud ar Y* ‘lit. X places its possessing (*sc.* the form it adopts when possessed) on Y’ or ‘X nasalises Y’

The first phrase, and other related ones, also occur with reference to nasalisation in texts preserved in the fourteenth-century manuscript NLI G 3, namely *IGT V* and a poem beginning *A aos dána, is aithnidh damh*.⁶⁷ There the form of the noun is *sealbhadh*, e.g. *sealbhadh beithe ag dol i muin* ‘the *sealbhadh* of *b* becomes *m*’.⁶⁸ Such terms are not found in phrases indicating nasalisation in *IGT I*, *BST*, the *Rudimenta* or Tadhg Óg’s grammar. That mutation is indicated throughout those texts by a different term which is not, to my knowledge, attested in this sense in the earlier material and is discussed under (2) below.

The construction of the above phrases may be explained by adverting to the technical meaning of the noun *sealb(ug)ad*. It denotes an infix pronoun or a personal form of the copula in its earliest attestations in early modern material.⁶⁹ In the present text, the term *sealbugud* may indicate personal forms of the copula in some cases, such as *ar Sadbh* which might be rendered ‘we are (= I am) Sadbh’ or ‘our Sadbh’.⁷⁰ In most, however, it is best taken as denoting

⁶⁷The poem is edited in Ó Riain (2008). The same manuscript also preserves a poem beginning *Ca med fhocal féghar lend* where the following phrases are used in the context of nasalisation (*sealbhadh*): *aithrighidh consain (cruth)*, *cuiridh consain i gcruth éagsamhail*, *do-ní claochmhódh consaine*, *do-ní X do Y* (qq. 3–8 at ff. 75r15–75v9).

⁶⁸Ó Riain (2008: 38 q. 2a); see *ibid.* 40 q. 1b n. See also *IGT V* §§119, 125, 126 (where the phrases *ní théid sealbhadh X amach* and *ní théid sealbhadh X esdi féin* are used of consonants which are not subject to nasalisation). None of these usages are recorded in *DIL*. For the variation *sealb(ug)ud*, see n. 36 above.

⁶⁹These are more specifically designated *sealbhadh oibrighthe* and *sealbhtha molta* γ *tathaire* in *IGT V* §§27, 118–19, 122–6, 128. See *BST* Appendix 1 p. 250 (l) for the term *sealbhadh oibrighthe* in that text. The term *sealbhadh* is used exclusively of infix pronouns in *IGT I* (§82); for its use in *BST*, see Appendix 1 to that text and n. 71 below; compare also McManus (1996: 177 §5.2 (3)). (Note McKenna’s comments on *BST* pp. 254, 258, 259 that some instances where he has expanded the abbreviation *.s.* as *sunnradh* may belong under the heading *sealbhadh* and *vice versa*. These and some other instances may warrant further examination.)

⁷⁰See further Notes at p. 170 below.

a possessive pronoun (which is followed by nasalisation) on the basis of the illustrative examples cited e.g. *ar nglac* ‘our hand’. The term is used in the sense of a possessive in *BST* and in *Rudimenta Grammatica Hibernicae*.⁷¹ Whether or not it is also invested with this meaning in material preserved in NLI G 3 cannot be determined on the basis of usage as it occurs only in the context of infixed pronouns and personal forms of the copula there.⁷² It might, however, be surmised that the term was first adopted with reference to the possessive on the basis of the literal meaning of *sealbh(ugh)adh*, that is ‘possessing’, and it may, therefore, be considered likely that the term represents a calque on Latin *possessivus*.⁷³ The term could then have been applied to infixed pronouns and personal forms of the copula which resemble, or in some persons are identical to, the possessive pronouns in appearance.⁷⁴ The next stage, the use of the term in phrases which denote nasalisation, could conceivably have arisen from the use of illustrative examples of infixed pronouns and personal forms of the copula in persons which are followed by nasalisation (whether to illustrate these grammatical categories or the mutation itself).⁷⁵

Before turning to the next term, a further use of *sealbh(ugh)adh* in *GGBM* must be mentioned. This occurs in a phrase which denotes a radical letter,

⁷¹*BST* 224.7 (*sealbhadh*) (cf. also n. 69 above) and *GGBM* 2499 (*sealbhugud*). In both those texts, however, possessives are usually referred to by the term *insgne* as is the case throughout *IGT* I. For *insgne*, and additional meanings associated with it, see *BST* Appendix 3; cf. also *ibid.* p. 250 (l). For the term *litir shealbhtha* in the *Rudimenta*, see Appendix II below.

⁷²*IGT* V §131 is the only passage in that text where the term could conceivably encompass the meaning of a possessive pronoun.

⁷³See Schad (2007: 308) s.v. *possessivus* 2 (iii) for the sense ‘possessive pronoun’. The term *sealbad* denotes the genitive case in *Auraicept na nÉces* (see Calder (1917: 354) and Ahlqvist (1983, 80) s.v.); this may also be derived from Latin, see Schad *op. cit.*: 2 (i) for the use of the term *possessivus* in this sense by Priscian.

⁷⁴The occurrence of more specific designations of infixed pronouns and personal forms of the copula mentioned in n. 69 above may also support this suggestion. See Murphy (1940: 73–4) on confusion of personal forms of the copula with pronominal forms in Middle Irish.

⁷⁵Note that the third singular infixed pronoun and the subsequent nasalisation is exemplified in *IGT* V §125, while the first plural possessive pronoun is employed to illustrate nasalisation in *IGT* I §8, *GGBM* 133–8, 142–3, 3056–7, 3143–4, 3930–1, 3933 and §5 below. Compare also *IGT* I §7 where *ar* is cited as an example of a word followed by nasalisation (*Ar ó innsne .sinn. cuiridh uirrdhioghadh ar an uile fhocal*). (This discussion may have a bearing on the interpretation of q. 5ab of the poem beginning *A aos dána, is aithnidh damh*. The couplet reads as follows: *Sealbhadh cuill i ngort geal glan / cuiridh inn madh cóir sealbhthar* ‘We change the *sealbhadh* of *c* into bright, pure *g*, if it is properly affected by *sealbhadh*’, Ó Riain (2008: 39 and 40 n.). A possible alternative suggestion may be to regard the couplet as meaning that *c* is nasalised after the 1 plur. infixed pronoun or personal form of the copula corresponding to the 1 plur. personal pronoun *inn*. Thus *inn* would represent the grammatical category of the 1 plur. which would in turn be illustrative of persons followed by nasalisation; the text could be rendered ‘*inn* (“1 plur.”) changes the *sealbhadh* of *c* into ... *g*.’)

namely *litir shealbhtha / shealbhoighthe* ('a letter affected by *sealbh(ogh)adh*' or '*lit.* a possessed letter').⁷⁶ In two of the three instances of this term, it is employed in the context of a letter subject to mutation by a possessive pronoun, the mutation in question being nasalisation. The use of this term by the authors of *GGBM* is undoubtedly connected to phrases outlined above which indicate nasalisation. It presumably referred originally to a letter affected by a (nasalising) infixed or possessive pronoun or personal form of the copula. It may have arisen in contexts such as *Sealbhadh beithe ag dol i muin* cited above where *b* (*beithe*) is the radical or the letter affected by *sealbhadh*.⁷⁷ Instances of the phrase *litir shealbhtha / shealbhoighthe* are worth quoting in full as they are not unconnected to the usage in our text and will be found in Appendix II below. It would appear, however, that the use of phrases involving *sealbh(ugh)adh* to describe nasalisation is confined to texts preserved in NLI G 3 and our fragment.

(2) *urrdibad* (§7)

This term denotes lenited *s* in the fragment. The same term (in the form *oirrdibhadh*) is in use in this sense in *IGT V*. It is applied to both lenited *s* and lenited *f* in commentary on *Auraicept na nÉces* in the forms *airdibdad / airdipdad*. These passages are discussed below. The first has to do with the incorrect use of *ts* for *sh*, the second with the powers of the letter *h*.

(a) *IGT V* §94

The passage in question is concerned with the occurrence of *ts* in instances in which *sh* would be expected and describes the circumstances in which this might arise. This usage is faulted as in the example *nī do saland tSaxsanach* [*sic leg.*] 'any English salt'. Lenition of *s* is described there by the term *oirrdibhadh*.⁷⁸ The same process would appear to be termed *cadad ar uathadh .s.* in *BST* and *IGT I*.⁷⁹

⁷⁶Termed 'an litear ar a ccuirthean an t-uirdhioghadh' in *IGT I* §6; cf. also *GGBM* 128 (*consonam propriam seu radicalem*) and *fiodh dúthchasa* in n. 156 below.

⁷⁷See n. 68 above.

⁷⁸The term occurs in three instances, two of which are qualified by *lochtach* 'faulty' and *brēgi* 'false' and advert to the fault (i.e. *ts* for *sh*). For remarks on and examples of *ts* for *sh*, see Ó Cuív (1983: 12 n. 28), where the statement that this passage in *IGT V* lays down that '*ts* was correct under certain conditions' is quite mistaken as evidenced by the words *lochtach* and *brēgi* there. It does, however, presumably give an indication of the circumstances in which *ts* arose in the spoken language as suggested by Ó Cuív. (There are a number of difficulties in the passage in question which would necessitate more extensive commentary than could be feasibly provided in the present context; for this reason, the passage is not reproduced here.)

⁷⁹See *BST* 213.6 (and n.), 9a.18 and *IGT I* §69 (*pace* Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 235) whose explanation requires that part of the relevant passage be regarded as parenthetical). Note also the

(b) Treidi doghni uath .i. bogad 7 semigud 7 airdibdad ... Airdibdad immorro forta [dá] taebomna .i. for sailig 7 for ferna (.i. taebomna amal fedaib) .i. orro dibdudh .i. a mbricht ass di raith amal ata ardbdad sailech .i. a s[h]al, a s[h]uil. Airdibdad ferna .i. a fhind, a f[h]ir, ind f[h]eda.

‘H causes three things, to wit, *bogad*, lenition of final (?), *sémigud*, lenition of initial (?), and *airdibdad*, extinction ... *Airdibdad*, extinction, however, comes upon two consonants (i.e. consonants become like vowels), that is, the letters s and f, that is, extinction is on them, that is, their being deleted altogether, such as the extinction of s, to wit, *a shál*, his heel; *a shúil*, his eye. Extinction of f, to wit, *a fhind*, his hair; *a fhir*, O man; *ind fheda*, of the letter’.⁸⁰

Passage (a) is found in *IGT V* which may, at present, be dated to some time between the second half of the thirteenth century and the second half of the fourteenth century on the basis of identifiable citations and personages mentioned in the tract taken in conjunction with the date of writing of the manuscript.⁸¹ Passage (b) is preserved in the Book of Ballymote which has been dated to the end of the fourteenth century.⁸² Thus a superior date within the fourteenth century is provided for both passages. It may also be noted that the term with which we are concerned does not occur in other texts which can be dated to around the sixteenth century or later. In the grammatical and syntactical tracts, lenition of *s* is referred to by the term *uathadh*, literally *h-ing*.⁸³ The use of this term as opposed to a form of *urrdibad* of the others

use of the phrase *séimhioghadh sunnarthach .s.* or *tulshunnradh .s.* for *ts* (after the definite article) in *IGT I* §§34, 39, 67, 68 (cf. §71).

⁸⁰Text and translation: Calder (1917: ll. 1264, 1280–4) (‘short’ recension); cf. *ibid.* xlv–xlv, ll. 4338–42 (‘long’ recension) and note that at l. 4344 *seimugud* is also used of *f(a)pher*. For the editor’s ‘short’ and ‘long’ recensions, see Calder (1917: xiii). For a reassessment of the manuscript tradition and identification of witnesses not known to Calder, see Ahlqvist (1983: 22–9).

⁸¹On the date of *NLI G 3*, which contains passage (a), see Ó Riain (2008: 35 n. 5) and references cited there. On the date of *IGT V*, see *idem* (2016: 7 n. 40).

⁸²For the date of the Book of Ballymote, see Ó Concheanainn (1981: 24). For remarks on the dating of commentary to *Auraicept na nÉces*, see Ahlqvist (1983: 31–2) where it is assigned to c. 1100 with later additions (the criteria upon which this dating has been arrived at would benefit from further discussion). See also Calder (1917: xxxi) and discussion in McLaughlin (2005b: 125) where a section of the commentary is provided with a *terminus ante quem* of c. 1060.

⁸³For *uathadh* applied to *s*, see e.g. *BST* 213.10, 213.16, 9a.18; *IGT I* §§34, 39, 69; *GGBM* 2490; cf. also Ó Cuív (1965: 152). It may be significant, *pace* Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 166), that the term *séimhioghadh* is only used in the tracts in the context of *s* when it is not the only or main consonant under discussion, e.g. *IGT I* §§1 (p. 1 l. 28), 20, or with reference to the unlenitable clusters *sb*, *sd*, *sg*; cf. also §§34, 39; for its use with reference to *ts*, see n. 79 above.

may be related to a possible connection between the term for lenited *s* in the fragment and a term for nasalisation found in *BST*, *IGT* I, the *Rudimenta* and Tadhg Óg's grammar, as will be seen. Attestations of this term are listed below where notice may be taken of the variation in form: (a) *uirrdhiobhadh*, (b) *uirrdhioghadh*, (c) *urrdhubhadh*. The manuscripts in which these forms occur date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁸⁴

- (a) *urrdhibhadh* [sic leg.]/*urrdiobadh*/*uirrdhiubadh*/*uirrdhiobhadh*: *BST* 8b.15 [C]; *BST* 239.7 [P]; *IGT* I §1 (*quater*) [B]; *GGBM* 2946, 3053, 3054, 3063, 3109, 3110, 3116, 3118, 3120, 3122, 3123, 3127, 3129, 3131, 3139, 3501. cf. also *uirrdhiobha(igh)idh* (verb): *GGBM* 3119 (*bis*), 3121, 3142
- (b) *uirrdhioghadh*/*uirrdhiughadh*/*oirrdhioghadh*: *BST* 195.1, 207.27–8, 211.15 [P]; *IGT* I §§1 (*quinquies*), 5, 6, 7 (*bis*), 8, 18 (*bis*), 39, 71, 78 (*bis*), 104, 157, 159 (*bis*) [P]; *IGT* I §5 [A]; *GGBM* 120, 124, 125–6, 2362, 2367–8, 2494–5, 2861, 3926.
- (c) *urrdhubhadh*: *BST* 7b.45, 21b.21 [C].⁸⁵

Both George Calder and Gerard Murphy, following the medieval etymology, suggested that this term for nasalisation derived from the word given in *DIL* as *airdibdud* which means literally 'extinguishing' or 'destroying'.⁸⁶ We have also encountered this word in the sense of lenited *s* and *f*.⁸⁷ It must be remarked that

⁸⁴The sigla employed may be resolved as follows: *A* and *B* are NLS 72.2.2 and RIA B iv 1 (a) (no. 236a), fragmentary copies of *IGT* I printed in Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 150–62); *C* is RIA C ii 3 (no. 1218); *P* is RIA 24 P 8 (no. 752).

⁸⁵The above examples include the following (i) genitive singular and (ii) nominative/accusative plural forms: (i) *uirrdibaidh* [sic leg.] *IGT* I §1 [B] (Mac Cárthaigh 2014: 151), *urrdhubhaidh* *BST* 7b.45, 21b.21, *uirrdhiobhaighthe* *GGBM* 3118, *uirrdhighthe* *IGT* I §§1, 159 [P], *BST* 211.15; (ii) *uirrdiobhta* *IGT* I §1 [B] (Mac Cárthaigh 2014: 151), *uirrdhiobhaighthe* *GGBM* 3116, *uirrdhighthe* *IGT* I §§1, 7, 8 [P].

⁸⁶Calder (1917: xxiv (citing O'Molloy's seventeenth-century grammar as his source for the term), 317); Murphy (1961: 90). Note also Ó Flannghaile (1908: 19 n.) 'Uirdhiughadh (eclipsis) was sometimes considered a derivative of *diobhadh* or *dioghadh* cutting off, destruction, O. Ir. *díbad*, but more usually it is written *ur-dhubhadh*, a compound of *dubhadh* darkening, from *dubh*, black, dark.' Compare *DIL* s.v. *airrdiugad* 'nasalisation' which is listed as a separate word and where a cross reference is given to *airdibdud* but accompanied by a query. The six examples cited there are from *IGT* I. For the medieval etymology, see p. 150 above.

⁸⁷See above p. 150.

no details of the proposed derivation were provided by Calder or Murphy. This necessitates some comment on certain formal and semantic aspects of the matter here. The salient points to be taken into consideration are as follows:

- (1) The long vowel in the headword *airdibdud* (*air-* + *dibdud*) in *DIL* may present a formal objection to the proposed derivation. However, there is no evidence to suggest that the vowel *i* in the second syllable in forms (a)–(b) above is long and the variation with the ending *-ughadh* in (b), which appears to represent the verbal noun ending, would seem to support a case for regarding the vowel as short. Murphy also regarded the vowel as short.⁸⁸ The rhyme *uirghiughadh* with *cúimhniughadh* in a poem which appears as an envoy to O'Molloy's *Grammatica Latino-Hibernica* may bear out this suggestion.⁸⁹ The length of the vowel might then be explained in one of the following ways: (i) A short vowel would be in accordance with a principle formulated by Thurneysen which states that long vowels in unstressed position are shortened, e.g. *airchetal* (*air-* + *cétal*).⁹⁰ This suggestion depends, of course, on the word *airdibdud* representing an old formation. If, however, it was a more recent formation in Early Irish, the vowel would have been long. It could also have been relengthened under the influence of *dibdud* where the *i* falls under the stress. (ii) If the vowel was long, a short vowel might perhaps be explained as having arisen due to the fact that long unstressed vowels tended to be shortened in later Irish.⁹¹ The evidence for this process would appear to be relatively late, however.⁹² Accordingly, the short vowel in forms in (a) and (b), if not explicable by (i), may perhaps be best explained as due to the analogical influence of etymological associations to be mentioned in (3) below.
- (2) The development from *airdibdud* to *uirghiobhadh* etc. involves loss of the dental spirant *-dh-* or confusion with *airdibad* which was similar in form and meaning and with which *airdibdud* was easily confused.⁹³
- (3) Variation between *bh* in (a) and (c) and *gh* in (b) may be connected with the phonetic realisation of *dh* or *gh* as *bh* which is attested in certain instances

⁸⁸Murphy (1961: 90) gives the Early Irish form as *airdibdud*.

⁸⁹*DBM* no. 41 q. 13cd. See remarks on authorship in *DBM* II 210.

⁹⁰*GOI* §43.

⁹¹See O'Rahilly (1932: 101–6) (refers to a process found in parts of Ulster); cf. also Ó Dochartaigh (1978), O'Rahilly (1942).

⁹²O'Rahilly (1932: 105).

⁹³Compare *DIL* s.v. *airdibad* 'act of extinguishing completely, quenching'. On the cluster *dhbh*, see Ó Maolalaigh (2006: 43) and references cited there; on confusion of *dibad* and *dibdud*, see Charles-Edwards (1969).

from the Middle Irish period.⁹⁴ Forms with *gh* in place of *bh* may also reflect reinterpretation, or association, with the verbal noun ending *-ughadh*.⁹⁵

- (4) The form *urrđhubhadh* at (c) above might perhaps be regarded as a separate term with the same meaning as (a) and (b), but it would appear more economical, given the fact that it refers to the same grammatical process as (a) and (b), to interpret it as a product of folk etymology in which the second element has been associated with the compound verbal noun *urđhubhadh* ‘blackening’ or ‘obscuring’.⁹⁶ Just such an association is in fact encountered in a discussion of nasalisation in the *Rudimenta*. There the author equates *uirrdhiughadh* with the Latin term *eclipsis* and compares the grammatical process to darkening:

Uirrdhiughadh, quod eclipsem significat, est praefixio alienae consonantis principio dictionis; ideo dicitur eclipsis quia consonam propriam seu radicalem ita tenebris obfuscat ut nullus appareat eius sonus.⁹⁷

‘*Uirrdhiughadh*, which means an eclipse, is prefixing an extraneous consonant to the beginning of a word; it is called an eclipse because it obscures by darkness a proper or radical consonant in such a way that none of its sound may appear.’

The occurrence of the spelling *urđhubhadh* in *Bardic Syntactical Tracts* suggests that such an association was not unique to the *Rudimenta*.⁹⁸

- (5) The semantic development of the term may be explained by adverting to the processes involved and their connection with the meaning

⁹⁴See *SNG* III §3.19, O’Rahilly (1930: 185, 195) and idem (1932: 79–80 and 268 (80 l. 2 n.)).

⁹⁵It may be observed that there are examples of the verbal noun ending spelt *-ubhudh*, see O’Rahilly (1930: 185, 190). Note also that the technical term *iomđhughadh*, for which see note on term below (pp. 165–7), occurs in the form *iomđhubhadh* on occasion; for the form with *-gh-*, see *DIL* s.v. *imđugud* and *BST* 21a.4; *IGT* I §§2, 97, 116, 127, 147, 151–5; *IGT* II §1 (MS P); *IGT* III §106 (p. 244 n. 6); *GGBM* 366 (v. l.), 401 (v. l.), 413, 4004, 4014; for forms with *-bh-*, see *BST* 206.26, *IGT* III (*loc. cit.*) and *GGBM* 366, 401 (in these instances a form with *gh* has been entered in the margin in Marsh’s Library Z3.5.3 (MS A); see *GGBM* pp. 16 n. 12, 17 n. 16, 17).

⁹⁶*DIL* s.v. *airđubad* to which the following examples (all instances of non-technical meaning) may be added: Ní Úrdail (2003: 38 q. 7d) (attributed to Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh), *AithdD.* no. 36 10c (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn d. 1448), *IGT* III 926 and *BST* 235.4–5/17a.34–5.

⁹⁷*GGBM* 125–9.

⁹⁸The sixteenth century is given as the date of writing for manuscript C of *BST* in *RIA Cat.* Fasc. 26: 3267, although it is noted *ibid.* 3268 that the only date in the relevant section of the manuscript is 1619 when it was owned by a poet named Aodhagán.

‘extinguishing’. The character of the radical letters *f* and *s* is significantly altered or obscured when lenited just as the radical consonant is obscured or extinguished in pronunciation when nasalised.

In light of these points, the proposed etymology would appear to be plausible.⁹⁹ Thus it would seem that one and the same term is used of lenited *s* (and *f*) and nasalisation in different sources, the possible importance of which will be discussed in the next section. The difference in meaning noted here may perhaps have some orthographical reflexes. The first is the spelling of nasalised *f* as *f̃* in some sources, the earliest instance of which the present writer is aware occurs in the fourteenth-century manuscript NLI G 3.¹⁰⁰ The same spelling had been employed since the ninth century to represent lenited *f* (and *s*).¹⁰¹ The second possible orthographical reflex is the practice of inserting a mark of lenition above a radical letter which is preceded by nasalisation as noted by McKenna in the fourteenth-century Book of Magauran (NLI G 1200), e.g. *Mag.* l. 1099 *na mbhreath* (genitive plural).¹⁰² The use of a *punctum delens* over nasal consonants in early manuscripts should also be noted, but it is unclear if this practice has a bearing on the present discussion.¹⁰³

ASSESSMENT

The above examination has shown that certain terms or phrases found in the fragment are shared only with material not later than the fourteenth century as against the usage of *BST*, which may be dated to the late-fifteenth or sixteenth century, and *IGTI*, which dates from the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹Incidentally, this means that the Modern Irish grammatical term *urú* is derived from a secondary form. However, it may be noted that Cormac Ó Cadhlaigh uses the form *uiridhiú* in *Gnás na Gaedhilge* (1940).

¹⁰⁰See *IGTV* §§15, 93, 135 and compare *SNG I* §4.8 where this spelling is noted with reference to the fifteenth-century Leabhar Breac (RIA 23 P 16 (no. 1230)). Additional examples will found in the fourteenth-century Book of Magauran (NLI G 1200; cf. *Mag.* 428 l. 3492 n.) ll. 2187 (Fáil), 2259 (Fábhair), 2692 (Fáil), 3830 (fád), 4227 (feil Fébail) and a fifteenth-century manuscript bound as part of the Yellow Book of Lecan at col. 129.8 (*ar f̃er*), 143.23 (*fa fuighinn*), 164.30 (*ca f̃alach*), 166.2 (*da fuair*), 171.35 (*na f̃er*), 212.19 (*a f̃oil*) corresponding to editions in Ó Cuív (1969: 54 q. 8*d*) (the editor was unaware of the copy of the poem in this manuscript; see n. 141 below), *DDé* no. 9 q. 6*d*, *AithdD.* no. 8 qq. 6*d*, 40*c*, no. 15 q. 27*c*, *DDé* no. 23 q. 33*d*. See also Uhlích (2008: 232) for an instance from Rawlinson B 512 (late fifteenth century).

¹⁰¹See *GOI* §33 (3).

¹⁰²See *Mag.* p. xvii. Examples will also be found in NLI G 3 (*IGTV* §§125–6, 128).

¹⁰³See *GOI* §§33 (1), 236 (3).

¹⁰⁴Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 2) suggests that the latest citations in *IGTI* ‘that can be dated with any certainty belong to the period before the death of the poet Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn in 1448’. In spite

Whether or not greater significance is to be attached to this observation is, however, uncertain as the differences in terminology could be approached in three ways. Firstly, the differences could simply be dismissed as coincidental or capricious. The distribution of the terms in the sources suggests that this is an unlikely and unsatisfactory approach. A second approach to the variation in terminology would be to allow for the contemporaneous existence of multiple terms, possibly reflecting local usages in different schools.¹⁰⁵ Such fluctuation is encountered on occasion from one tract to another, and sometimes within the same tract.¹⁰⁶ With regard to the terms discussed above, the differing senses of the term *urrdibad* could then perhaps have been retained side by side. While this is conceivable, it is not altogether likely given the frequency with which the linguistic processes to which they refer occur in the grammar of Irish. When taken together with the potential for confusion which these differing senses might give rise to, one referring to lenition, the other to nasalisation, one might be led to question if both meanings would have remained in active use for any great length of time. Our sources would not, in fact, appear to reflect a continuation of the earlier attested meaning and this leads to another possible approach. This third approach would be to regard the differences we have encountered as reflecting developments over time, with new terms or meanings displacing older ones. The earliest attestations of the term *urrdibad* in grammatical literature suggest that the original sense applied to lenition of *s* and *f* and that the meaning of nasalisation represents a secondary development. This would mean that the earlier attested sense of lenition of *s* became obsolete and that other terms for lenition were extended to take over its functions. By the same token, it would seem that phrases for nasalisation involving *sealbugud* were largely replaced, thus representing an innovation

of this and without any apparent basis, he agrees with Bergin that the tract 'was probably compiled later than the others'. Evidence for a later date may, however, be to hand in a citation from the poem beginning *Ní théid caitheamh i gcloinn Táil* (identified in Breatnach 2000: 14 n. 28) discussed by Pádraig Breatnach elsewhere in this volume, cf. Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 243 779–80 n.). (It may be observed in the context that the essence of the argument for dating poems in *rannai gheacht* appeared in Breatnach and Breatnach (2005: 31–2).)

¹⁰⁵For differences between schools, see *IGT* III 924 and Ó Cuív (1994b: 404); see also the chapter by McManus elsewhere in this volume. For a record of a difference of opinion with regard to terminology in the Middle Irish tracts, see *MV* III §47 and Murphy (1961: 88) s.v. *mór*.

¹⁰⁶It should be borne in mind that where such variation occurs in a tract of a later date, such as *IGT* I, it could conceivably represent an amalgamation of earlier terms or of divergent usages. Compare also Kelly (1991: 73), 103–4 for remarks on variation in terminology in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century arts of poetry and prose in Latin.

in the way that mutation was expressed.¹⁰⁷ It may be noted in passing that the second and third approaches adverted to here, that is rival methods in use and developments over time, are allowed for by Bergin in his discussion of the *Native Irish Grammarian*.¹⁰⁸

Before turning our attention to questions of dating, one passage in Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn's grammar which may represent a piece of evidence for the possible confusion, or equation of, the two senses of *uirrdhiobhadh* should be dealt with. The passage in question contains a discussion of the circumstances in which *t* is prefixed to *s* after the article and the process is included under the heading *don uirrdhiobhadh consaine* 'on consonantal nasalisation'.¹⁰⁹ After the prefixing of *t* to *s* is described, the following comment is made: *Gidheadh nī huirrdhiobhadh dīleas é ar an adhb[h]ar nach ttig an t mar sin acht a ndiaigh in dá fhocal sin 'an' nō 'don', ⁊ nach dona foclaibh chuireas uirrdhiobhadh iad san, ⁊ nach ttig t re s ⁊ cra* 'Yet it is not a true nasalisation for the reason that the *t* only arises in that way after those two words *an* [def. art.] and *don* [prep. *do* and def. art.] and they do not belong to the words which cause nasalisation and because *t* does not precede *s* (i.e. in nasalisation (?)) etc.'¹¹⁰ Knowledge of the term *uirrdhiobhadh* as applied to lenition of *s* could conceivably have prompted the author to include *ts* under the heading of nasalisation (also *uirrdhiobhadh*). Indeed, the passage might in fact suggest that the author was familiar with *IGT V*, or another text, in which the faulty usage of *ts* was described by the term *oirrdibhadh* (*lochtach, bréigi*).¹¹¹ If so, his inclusion of the prefixing of *t* to *s* under the rubric 'nasalisation' and his comment may reflect the falling together of the senses of these terms and an attempt to deal with what he perceived as a discrepancy in terminology and might suggest that the use of the term with application to *s* had become obsolete.¹¹² However, it is not inconceivable that the prefixing of *t* to *s* may have been listed schematically under this heading simply because it resembles nasalisation in that one letter is prefixed to another in spelling.

¹⁰⁷The terminology discussed in Appendix II may reflect some limited but specific and restricted continuation of expressions involving *sealbugud*. There was not, of course, the same potential for confusion in this regard (unlike the differing meanings of *urrdibad*) and, accordingly, there may have been less motivation for doing away entirely with such terminology. The same remarks might be applied to the passage discussed in the following paragraph.

¹⁰⁸Bergin (1938: 10).

¹⁰⁹*GGBM* 3109–33.

¹¹⁰*GGBM* 3127–30.

¹¹¹For discussion of the passage in *IGTV* in which these terms occur, see p. 149 above. Compare also *IGTI* §67.

¹¹²See n. 106 above.

DATING

There is nothing in the fragment to suggest that it does not belong to the early modern linguistic period.¹¹³ The date of the sixteenth century proposed for the manuscript provides a *terminus ante quem*.¹¹⁴ More precise dating is fraught with difficulty, however.

It will be appropriate at this point to allude to the method of dating the other tracts. The criteria which are employed to assign approximate dates to *IGT* I–V and *BST* are twofold. The first relates to the date of the earliest manuscript copies and the second to the date of the latest identifiable verse citations in the texts.¹¹⁵ These criteria indicate the latest possible date of compilation of the tracts in the form we have them and provide *termini ante quem* in the fourteenth-century for *IGT* V and other material in NLI G 3 and in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries for *IGT* I–IV and *BST*, with *IGT* I possibly being slightly later as suggested by Bergin.¹¹⁶ *Rudimenta Grammaticae Hibernicae* and Tadhg Óg's grammar have been traditionally assigned to the seventeenth century on the basis of the authors associated with those works (Giolla Brighde Ó hÉódhasa d. 1614; Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn (born 1582/3). The date of the Latin text of the *Rudimenta* is now in some doubt in light of Caoimhín Breatnach's argument against the authorship of Ó hÉódhasa elsewhere in this volume. It must, at any rate, postdate 1444 (the date of the latest dateable citation) and can be no later than the date of writing of the earliest manuscript copy in 1634.¹¹⁷ More precise dating awaits further research.¹¹⁸

As there are no poetic citations in the fragment, the only area from which any information relevant to its date might be gleaned apart from the date

¹¹³For notice of some non-classical forms in the text, see p. 168 below. For purposes of comparison, it may be noted that non-classical features are found, for example, in the prose of *IGT* V, e.g. §§9, 24 (*roimh in* for *rés in* and *ad-rubrumar* for *adubhrama(i)r*), and for the language of *IGT* I, see Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 25–49).

¹¹⁴See p. 132 above.

¹¹⁵See *IGT* I p. ii and *BST* p. ix. For important remarks on the dating of the tracts, see Breatnach (2000: 12–13).

¹¹⁶See previous note and n. 104 above. It will be well to bear in mind that the various recensions of *IGT* II–IV and *BST* have yet to be studied and such study may have a bearing on questions of dating; for remarks on the recensions of *IGT* II, see Breatnach (2015). On the dates of *IGT* I and V, see n. 104 and p. 150 above.

¹¹⁷The citation at *GGBM* 2239–40 is identified in Ó Riain (2008b: 215).

¹¹⁸The dates of the prosody by Ó hÉódhasa and Tadhg Óg's grammar would appear to be supported by citations from the sixteenth century therein, see *GGBM* pp. 95, 99, 100. Ó hÉódhasa's prosody presumably post-dates his graduation which is assigned to 1592 by Mhág Craith (1980: 110).

of the manuscript itself is that of technical terminology. Allowing for the possibility of developments over time in terminology and using relevant items as a rough dating criterion is not in and of itself an unthinkable proposition. Certain terms used in the *Rudimenta* and Tadhg Óg's grammar can be shown to represent innovations, while *Auraicept na nÉces* contains terms which fell into disuse.¹¹⁹ Following this line of investigation, then, one could perhaps argue a tentative case for relative dating, placing the composition of the fragment before the date of *Bardic Syntactical Tracts*, in which the latest citations are by poets who died no later than *c.* 1500 and the earliest manuscript copy dates to the sixteenth century.¹²⁰ How much earlier is more difficult to assess.

It must be stressed that this suggestion is tentative and is presented here simply as a possibility. Ready acknowledgment is made of the difficulties presented by the fragmentary nature of the tract, the small number of terms available for sampling, the absence of a full study of the technical terminology of the tracts, and the nature of the preservation of the sources (some in an early copy, others only in late copies but thought to derive from earlier stages); the differing thrusts of individual tracts might also be taken into consideration. Consequently, in assigning potential dates for the compilation of the fragment, it will be prudent to leave the overall range wide, that is to say that it was compiled at some time during the classical period with the date of the manuscript, the sixteenth century, as a *terminus ante quem* while acknowledging that, in the present instance, the close connection between the terms which have been examined may strengthen the argument for regarding them as reflecting developments over time and thus allowing for a narrowing of the range of dates.

In spite of the inconclusive nature of the analysis of terminology, the importance of examining the tracts with due regard for occurrences of terms in individual texts and a sensitivity to differences, however they are ultimately explained, should not be underestimated. Indeed, a full study of the terminology in all the grammatical texts might provide a more secure framework within which the possible approaches outlined earlier could be assessed and allow for a more secure conclusion to be reached in this matter.

¹¹⁹See, for example, Ó Cuív 1965 and n. 106 above.

¹²⁰McKenna states that 'every one of the quotations thus identified is from poets (Donnchadh Mór ... Maolmhuire Ó hUiginn, &c.) who had passed away before 1490' (*BST* p. ix). He does not specify further, but his date appears to be based on an attribution of a citation at *BST* 72b.10 to a Maol Muire Ó hUiginn whom McKenna is presumably identifying as the son of Tadhg Óg who died in 1488 (see *TD* II 316).

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER TRACTS

By way of conclusion, some final observations may be made on the fragment's relationship to the other tracts. The combination of grammar and metrics in our text is not unique. Both *IGT V* and *BST* respectively contain fairly substantial portions concerned with grammar and metrics, so much so that the titles given those texts by their editors are to a certain extent misnomers. As we have seen, however, the strongest connections of the fragment lie with *IGT I* and the seventeenth-century grammars.

Indeed, the combination in our fragment of broader metrical issues with the kind of material dealt with in *IGT I* is noteworthy and, in this context, it may be a useful exercise to compare the contents of the fragment with parts of two lists with which *IGT I* begins. These lists provide a catalogue of fundamental aspects of the alphabet (§1), of language and of poetry (§2) which a student should know, but not all of the items listed are dealt with in that tract.¹²¹ A comparison between these lists and the fragment reveals some correspondence, not only in terms of subject matter as discussed earlier, but also in the order in which these matters are listed. This may be seen below where the corresponding items are highlighted in bold and labelled with letters a to e.

... [a] **cáit a ttéid cáolughadh a nguthaidheadh leathan...** As díobh aithne ar [b] **chialluibh úathaidh agus iollraidh, agus na crotha dona ceartuibh ó mbeantur comhfocal, agus [c] na gnéithe don Gháoidhilg nach cóir a ttús chomhfocal, agus an mhéd nach cóir na ndeireadh. Dlighidh aithne reanna agus úaithne agus [d] **úama agus chomhardaidh ... agus dlighidh dá phríomhlochd na soidélach do sheachna .i. [e] cáol re leathan do ghuthaidhibh...** (*IGT I* §§1–2)**

‘... where the palatal forms of their velar vowels go ... Among them (i.e. the many branches) is knowledge of singular and plural senses and the declensional forms from which a compound word can be derived, and the elements of Irish which are not correct as the first element in a compound word, and those which are not correct as the final element. He should know about *deibhidhe-rhyme* and consonance and alliteration and fully-stressed rhyme ... and he should avoid the two main faults of the ignorant that is palatal vowels with velar vowels ...’

¹²¹See remarks on these lists by Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 1–2).

Item [a], it will be recalled, was identified as belonging to an earlier point of the fragmentary tract which is no longer extant.¹²² Items [b] and [c], which follow each other in the list, correspond to sections 1 and 2 of the fragment. There is a gap between these items and [d] which corresponds to sections 4–7 and another, larger gap before [e] which is dealt with in section 3 of the fragment and is the only item to occur out of sequence. These correspondences, while striking in some respects, are not complete and a number of items are passed over. Nevertheless, it would seem that these and other correspondences discussed earlier are sufficient to classify the fragment as being of *IGT* I-type but including specifically metrical material.¹²³ Unfortunately, not enough of the fragment survives to allow us to define the relationship between these two texts and the lists with which *IGT* I begins with any greater precision. Connections with the *Rudimenta* and Tadhg Óg's grammar which have been remarked upon (the topics covered, the manner of presentation and the seemingly more concentrated and methodical treatment of subject matter) suggest that the fragment can also be ranked to some extent as one of the precursors of those texts, one which has until now been absent from the record. This fragment, and the text on metres presented by Pádraig Ó Macháin elsewhere in this volume, provides a small insight into a grammatical and metrical literature which was clearly more extensive than that which has been transmitted to us.

EDITION

The text is edited below and is accompanied by a translation and textual notes. Spelling has not been normalised. Length marks, capitalisation, punctuation, word and paragraph division are editorial. Hair strokes, which are often written by the scribe over the letter *i*, have not been reproduced. Abbreviations are expanded in italics. Editorial insertions are enclosed in square brackets and any other departures from the manuscript are registered in the critical apparatus. Ellipsis enclosed in square brackets indicates a lacuna in the text. Words or letters under discussion in the text are marked in bold following the practice adopted by Bergin in his editions of *IGT*. The spelling of examples in the text is intended to reflect pronunciation in some instances and has not been altered where this is the case except that a radical letter has been supplied in square brackets in nasalised words. The form of Irish words cited in the translation has been normalised where appropriate as a clarification of the

¹²²See pp. 137–8 above.

¹²³Compare Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 2, 3).

points being made. With regard to the translation, technical terms have been rendered by corresponding English metrical or linguistic equivalents where possible, with literal renderings of the terms supplied in round brackets.

TEXT

- [1] [...] chōir nī beith da comfhocul aigi ach[t] **boghadhond** a-māin agus a-tā gac focal is cōir d'ainm uathaid agus illraid mur sin .i. comfhocul aigi ōn ainm uathaid agus ōn tæbhrēim illraid agus nī fuil do deifriugud eturra acht duir go n-uath ag ēirghi ar deiredh in tæbrēime illraid do-nī ænduir lom dībh.^a
- [2] Et nī cōir imdugud a tosach comfhocu[i]l [...] amail a-tā **mnā** nō **fir**, agus nī cōir oibriugud amail a-tā **marbh na fir** nō **buail na fir** nō **na mnā**, agus nī hē sin a-māin **acht** gac focal urālaime bhīs ann is oibriugud hē, agus nī cōir **maith** nā **olc** a tosach comfhocail mur a-tā **olc** agus **fear**, **droichfear** sin, agus amail a-tā **maith** agus **maith**, **deaghmaith** sin, agus nī cōir **is lugha mē nā tū** mur a-tā sō **is lugha** agus **is mō mē nā tū**, **is beagmhō mē nā tū**, **is mō** agus **is lugha mē nā tū**, **is mōrlugha mē nā tū**.^b
- [3] Et nī lōr lind ar labrumur do na cæeltaibh tuasud uair gac inadh a mbī guthaige leathan roim guthaige cæel cælaidh sī an guthaige leathan bīs roimpi amail a-tā **dond** agus **dian**, **doin[n]dian** sin, agus mar a-tā **glas** agus **sliab**, **glaisliabh** sin, agus mur a-tā **dub** agus **bearn**, **duibbearn** sin, agus mur a-tā **fīn** agus **derg**, **findearg** sin, agus mur a-tā **geal** agus **dearg**, **geillearg** sin, nō **sgol** agus **lei[nbh]**, **sgoillei[nbh]** (?) sin.^c
- [4] Do na huamannaibh ann sō sīs .i. na feadha is cōir a n-aigid a cæile: [(1) v] **.b.** fā dō agus **.l.** fā dō, **.f.** agus **.s.** agus **.n.** agus **.d.** agus **.t.** agus **.c.** agus **.m.** agus **.g.** agus **.r.** mur sin uile, uair nī gabann condsain dīb sin condsain ele 'na aigid acht é fēin fā dō, agus is cōir na huili guthaige a n-aigid a cæile.^d
- [5] **Agus** is iad sō na condsaine nac tēit a sealbugud a condsanaibh eile **.s.** **.n.** **.l.** **.m.** **.r.** agus ag seo dearbud air sin: **mōr**, **ar mōr** as cōir ann sin, **lāmh**, **ar lāmh** sin, agus **Sadbh**, **ar Sadbh** sin, agus **rōn**, **ar rōn** sin, agus

^a§1 gac] c dotted in different ink; ōn (ainm)] o formed from another letter; ēirghi] eirighi

^b§2 (Et nī) cōir] Space left at beginning of line (f. [1]r3); material apparently erased before coir; **deaghmaith**] death maith

^c§3 (Et) nī (lōr)] coir expunged after nī; (**findearg** sin.) agus] followed by et and an erased letter; **sgol**] sg stained; it appears that g has been formed from a c; (agus) **leinbh**] leim; **sgoilleinbh**] sgoill sgoilleimh (through partial dittography)

^d§4 (agus) **.s.**] first dot omitted.

neart, ar neart *sin*. *Agus nī mur sin* do na condsanaibh eile seo **sīs .b. .f. .d. .t. .c. .p. .g.** *amail a-deraid* na [f]ocuil seo **sīs: bān, ar mbān** is cōir and *sin, agus tuath, ar [d]tuath sin, agus ceann, ar g[c]eann sin, agus garg, ar ngarg sin, agus port, ar [b]port sin,* uair *gac condsain* as a *tēit* a sealbugud a condsain ele cuiridh ailm .r. a sealbugud air *agus gidh edh sin gac condsain dīb* as a *tēit* a sealbugud is cōir a n-uaim a n-aigid a condsaine *fēin é amail sō: bean agus ar m[b]ean; trom agus ar d[t]rom; cloch agus ar g[c]loch; glac agus ar nglac; peall agus ar b[p]eall,* *agus* is cōir na huamanda-*sin uile.*^e

[6] **Tabair seo a lāim b[f]ir** *agus Fergal,* *ōir nī cōir ach[t] lāim b[f]ir* uair lomaidh in *dā condsain-sin* a *cēile; Tabair sō a lāim b[P]ilib* *agus Pōl; Tobair sō a lāim [Fh]ilib* *agus Āedh; Tobair sō a lāim b[P]ilib* *agus Fāilbi,* is cōir na huamanna-*sin uile.*

[7] *Agus nī gabann .s.d. nī ele 'na aigid acht .s.d. ele agus nī gabann .s.g. acht .s.g. ele agus nī gabann .s.b. acht .s.b. ele agus nī gabann .s.m. acht .s.m. ele. Mo hadhb agus mo hiuān* is cōir *sin, mo hadhb agus mo hlāine* nī cōir an uaim-*sin* uair nī cōir a[n] t-urrdibadh teagmus re hucht condsaini a n-aigid an urrdibhaidh teagmus re hucht guthaige mur a-tā sō **mo hlāini** *agus mo hiuān agus mo hrian* uair nī cōir **mo hrian** nā **mo hlāine** nā **mo hnāthad** uair **mo lāine** *agus mo rian* **agus mo nāthad** is cōir ann *sin.*

Smacht *agus sbleaghach, sdairbeach* **agus sgairb** ag *sin ceithre* huamanna as nach [...]^f

TRANSLATION

[1] [...] correct (?) it should only form a compound as *boghadhonn* ('bow-brown') and each word which has the same form in the nominative singular and plural (*lit.* which is correct as nominative singular and nominative plural) is like that. That is, it has a compositional form (*lit.* compound) based on the nominative singular and [another] based on the genitive plural and there is no difference between them save that *dh* occurs at the end of the genitive plural which makes a single unlenited *d* of them (*sc. dh* and *d* in *boghadonn*).

^e§5 .s. .n. .l. .m. .r.] .s.n.l.m.r. (*dots run together*); (as cōir] ann sin] ann written after sin with transposition marks; .b. .f. .d. .t. .c. .p. .g.] .b. // .f.d.t.c.p.g. (*dots run together*); [f]ocuil] only head of f visible; (uair gac condsain] ele cuiridh written after condsain in an instance of homoeoteleuton and expunged; ailm] ailim; (as a tēit] teith; (is cōir a) n-uaim] ai rubbed; ar (b[p]eall)] ár

^f§7 **lāine**] hlaine; ceithre] .iiii.

- [2] And an adjective ending in *-ach* is not correct as the first element in (*lit.* in the beginning of) a compound word [...] as in *mná* or *fir* nor is a verb as in *marbh na fir* ('kill the men') or *buail na fir* or *na mná* ('strike the men' or 'the women'), and not only that but every imperative is a verbal form (*lit.* every command there is a verb), and neither *maith* ('good') nor *olc* ('bad') are correct as the first element in (*lit.* in the beginning of) a compound word as in *olc* and *fear*, that is *droichfhear* ('a bad man'), and as in *maith* and *maith*, that is *deaghamhaith* ('very good'), and *is lugha mé ná thú* ('I am smaller than you') is not correct as in *is lugha* ('smaller') and *is mó mé ná thú* ('I am bigger than you'), [that is] *is beagmhó mé ná tú* ('I am slightly bigger than you'), *is mó* ('bigger') and *is lugha mé ná thú* ('I am smaller than you'), [that is] *is mórlugha mé ná thú* ('I am rather smaller than you').
- [3] And I consider what I said above concerning the palatal forms of vowels to be insufficient for everywhere a velar vowel precedes a palatal vowel the latter palatalises the preceding velar vowel as in *donn* and *dian*, that is *doin[n]dian* ('brown and swift'), and as in *glas* and *sliabh*, that is *glaisliabh* ('a blue mountain'), and as in *dubh* and *bearn*, that is *duibbearn* ('a dark gap'), and as in *fion* and *dearg*, that is *findearg* ('wine-red'), and as in *geal* and *dearg*, that is *geillearg* ('bright red'), or *sgol* and *leinbh*, that is *sgoilleinbh* ('school children (?)).
- [4] Concerning instances of alliteration here below. That is the letters which correctly correspond to one another: *b* twice and *l* twice, *f* and *s* and *n* and *d* and *t* and *c* and *m* and *g* and *r* are all like that, for not one of them allows another consonant to correspond to it except itself (*lit.* except itself twice) and all vowels correctly correspond to one another.
- [5] And these are the consonants which are not affected by nasalisation (*lit.* forms of which when affected by *sealbugud* do not become other consonants) *s*, *n*, *l*, *m*, *r* and here is confirmation of that: *mór*, *ar mór* ('our great amount' / 'we are big') is correct in that case, *lámh*, that is *ar lámh* ('our arm'), and *Sadhbh*, that is *ar Sadhbh* ('our Sadhbh' / 'we are Sadhbh'), and *rón*, that is *ar rón* ('our seal'), and *neart*, that is *ar neart* ('our strength'). And it is not so for the other consonants here below *b*, *f*, *d*, *t*, *c*, *p*, *g* as these examples illustrate (*lit.* words say): *bán*, *ar mbán* ('our fair one' / 'we are fair') is correct in that case, and *tuath*, that is *ar dtuath* ('our t.'), and *ceann*, that is *ar gceann* ('our head'), and *garg*, that is *ar ngarg* ('we are rough'), and *port*, that is *ar bport* ('our place'), because *ar* nasalises (*lit.* places in the form it adopts when affected by *sealbugud*) every consonant which can be nasalised (*lit.* whose form changes when affected by *sealbugud*) and yet each of those nasalised

consonants (*lit.* whose form changes when affected by *sealbugud*) correctly corresponds to its radical (*lit.* own) consonant in alliteration as in *bean* and *ar mbean* ('our wife' / 'we are a woman'), *trom* and *ar dtrom* ('our weight' / 'we are heavy'), *cloch* and *ar gcloch* ('our stone'), *glac* and *ar nglac* ('our hand'), *peall* and *ar bpeall* ('our rug') and all of those instances of alliteration are correct.

- [6] *Tabhair seo i láimh bfir* ('place this in a man's hand') and *Fearghal*, for only *láimh bfir* is correct since those two consonants (*sc.* *mh* and *bh*) delentite one another; *Tabhair só i láimh bPilib* ('place this in Pilib's hand') and *Pól*; *Tobhair só a láimh Fhilib* ('take this from Filib's hand') and *Áedh*; *Tobhair só i láimh bPilib* ('place this in Pilib's hand') and *Fáilbhe*, all of those instances of alliteration are correct.
- [7] And *sd* allows only another *sd* to correspond to it (*sc.* in alliteration), and *sg* only another *sg*, and *sb* only another *sb*, and *sm* only another *sm*. *Mo Shadhbh* ('my Sadhbh') and *mo Shiuán* ('my Siuán') that is correct, *mo Shadhbh* and *mo Shláine* ('my Sláine') that alliteration is not correct for a lenited *s* which precedes a consonant does not correctly correspond to a lenited *s* which precedes a vowel as in *mo Shláine* and *mo Shiuán* and *mo shrían* ('my bridle') because *mo hrían* or *mo hláine* or *mo hnáthad* ('my needle') are not correct for *mo láine* and *mo rían* and *mo náthad* are correct (*sc.* pronunciations) in that case.

Smacht ('rule') and *sbleaghach* ('flattering'), *sdairbeach* ('strong' (?)) and *sgairb* ('a shallow') that is four instances of alliteration [...]

NOTES

[§1]

nī beith: Form is third singular present subjunctive of the substantive verb. The usage appears to correspond to one described by Thurneysen in *GOI* §516 (a) (2) as follows: 'In principal clauses the present subjunctive is used for commands where immediate compliance is not contemplated, e.g. in legal rules.' The use of the jussive subjunctive would not seem to be common in the Early Modern Irish period, but is allowed for in *IGT* III 20–1 (cf. also *BST* 66a.9–10, *GGBM* 1662–4, *Des.* 257–9 §20 and McQuillan (2002: 43–5) and, for the use of *ní* and *nír* with the subjunctive, see also *IGT* III §1, *GGBM* 1572–5 and *Ca med focal féghthar lend* qq. 24–5 at NLI G 3, f. 76va1, 3). Alternatively, the form would have to be emended, for example, to *beite* (verbal adjective) or *bí* (consuetudinal present), but such severe alteration is hardly warranted.

boghadhond: On this example, see above p. 140.

ach[t] (MS *ach*): The historical form of this conjunction is restored here and in §6 on the basis of a *plene* reading ‘acht’ in §7. The form *ach* represents a development of the conjunction which is attested as early as the fourteenth century, see Ó Riain (2013: 64 v. 3c n.).

focal is cōir d’ainm uathaid agus illraid: Term refers here to nouns which end in a vowel in the nominative singular but do not differ in form in the plural, with the exception of the dative, see *SNG* IV §§4.2, 4.13, 4.19, 4.21. As noted above p. 134, the vast majority of nouns encompassed by these terms are masculine *io*-stems, which may also be inflected as dentals in the plural, and feminine *iā*-stems, which may also be inflected as dentals in the plural and in oblique cases in the singular.

tāebhrēim illraid: The genitive plural intended in the context is that with dental inflection as is clear from the commentary, although not specified. The phrasing in the present text may simply represent shorthand for dental inflection or the sense may have been clear from the foregoing text which is now lost. Other tracts employ specific terms for distinguishing between vocalic and dental types of inflection respectively in the plural of this stem class and their usage would appear to be more precise than that of the present text. They include (i) the adjectives *ísiol* and *ard* in *IGT* I §§18, 84, 94, 139, 140, 142, 144, 151, 155, 157, 158 and *GGBM* 849–50; (ii) variations on the phrases *téid a réim a* and *anaidh a réim i*, e.g. *IGT* II §§2, 4, *IGT* I §87; compare also *BST* Appendix 8 and *SNG* IV §4.4.

comfhocul aigi ōn ainm uathaid agus ōn tāebhrēim illraid: This rule applies to most nouns as noted above, see p. 134.

deifriugud: The historical spelling of this word is *deithbrigud*, see *DIL* s.v. For the development *-ihbh-* > *-f-*, see *SNG* IV §2.11 (1) and references cited there.

do-nī āenduir lom dībh: Delenition of *dh* in contact with *d* is also set out in q. 25 of the poem beginning *Feadha an oghaim aithnidh damh*, Breatnach (1941: 41); *IGT* I §103, and *GGBM* 3313–16. The example given in the last source is *abhradonn* ‘having brown eyelashes’.

[§2]

imdugud: The nouns *mná* and *fir* (nominative plural) are cited as instances of this term in the present text as it stands in the manuscript. Elsewhere the term designates an ‘adjectival form terminating in *-ach* with quantitative definition *abounding in*’, *DIL* s.v. *imdugud* II and n. 94 above. It also refers to collective nouns ending in *-ach* in *GGBM* 412–15. (The term is glossed at *GGBM* 366 and 4004 by the noun *multitudo* which was used by some ancient grammarians in the sense ‘plural’ but was later generally replaced by *pluralis* according to Schad (2007: 254) s.v. *multitudo*; the examples given at *GGBM*

402–3 and 4015–16 clearly indicate that a word ending in *-ach* is intended.) This gives rise to a problem in that no instances of words ending in *-ach* are listed in the present passage. It is possible, however, that the term may also be used to connote ‘plural’ rather than the more familiar *i(o)l(l)r(ugh)adh* as was suggested by McKenna in his edition of the poem beginning *Madh fafraidheach budhfeasach* which is attributed to Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh (d. 1387). The term *imdugud* occurs there in the context of a series of questions which are concerned with ascertaining which individual items of each of the following pairs are more numerous: consonants or vowels (q. 40) (in this case it is also asked which have ‘the stronger title to renown’, *cia dhiobhso* [sic] *as lia briogh blaidhe*); singular or plural (q. 41) and *feirinsgne* or *baininsgne* (q. 42) (these terms are taken by McKenna as referring to declensional patterns, see *ibid.* 74 and *BST* pp. 285–6). These questions are resolved in chiasmic order in quatrains 43–5. The answer which is of relevance for present purposes reads: *Lia iná an fheirindsgne ar fhoghnámh / an bhainindsgne bhionnorlamh; / na hiomdhuighthe cia nach cluin? / lia iollruighthe náid uathaidh* ‘Ever-ready melodious *baininnsgne* is more numerous in its functions than *feirinnsgne*; more numerous are plurals -who knows not of them?- than singulars’, McKenna (1947: 70, 73 q. 43). As noted above, the term *na hiomdhuighthe* was interpreted by McKenna as referring to the plural (‘here equivalent to *iollruighthe*, has another technical meaning; cf. *BST* 206 25 note’, *ibid.* 75). The possibility that the term *imdugud* could be applied to the plural is not implausible, if we are to judge by the primary meanings given for the word in *DIL* s.v. *imdugud* I, namely ‘abundance, exuberance, redundance; act of multiplying (trans. & intrans.), enhancing’. Nevertheless, the passage may be susceptible to a different interpretation than that offered by McKenna. It is conceivable that the term simply means ‘multiplications’ and refers not specifically to the grammatical category of the plural but to each of the three individual items which are identified as being more numerous than their counterparts in the pairs under discussion. If this suggestion is accepted, the term *imdugud* would then best be taken to indicate an adjective ending in *-ach* in the present text as in other sources. This presents another problem, however, in that not only are no instances of words ending in *-ach* given in the text, but examples of plural nouns are given while the term *i(o)l(l)r(ugh)adh* is absent. The likeliest explanation is that some text has dropped out from the list of items which should not form the first element in a compound in the course of transmission and that *agus ní cóir illrad* should be supplied before *amail a-tā mnā*. (Compare the list of such items in *IGT* I §97 where *iomdhughadh* follows *iollradh*: *iollradh no iomdhughadh*. If the exemplar of the present text had the two terms in a similar order the initial *i(o)-* and final *-adh* may have resulted

in an instance of eye-skip.) Alternatively, a scribe at home with the subject matter of the text may have inadvertently written the wrong term through a slip of the mind in which case we should simply emend *indugud* to *illrad* (the form used in the fragment) or *ilrugud* (which has a closer resemblance to *indugud*); compare Timpanaro (1985: 64) for confusion of phonically similar words with affinity of meaning.

a tosach comfhocu[i]l: The emendation to the genitive singular of *comfhocul* is made on the basis of a second instance of this phrase in the present section (a *tosach comfhocail*) and is done in preference to regarding the form as genitive plural. The manuscript reading presumably arose through misexpansion of a suspension stroke. Compare the use of the genitive singular in similar circumstances in *plene* readings in *IGT I* §§99, 121 (*a ttús chomhfhocuil*) and *BST 207.5* (*a ttús comhfhocuil cheirt*).

gac focul uráilaim bhís ann is oibriugud hē: This comment is presumably introduced as both of the examples which are cited to illustrate the category of verb (*oibriugud*) are in the imperative mood (*urálamh*), namely *marbh* and *buail*. It may be intended to clarify, given the difference in terminology, that the imperative forms given are illustrative of the wider category of the verb. It may be noted (i) that both terms occur together in passages in *IGT I* §78 and *BST 66a.3–5*; (ii) that in *IGT V* §18 an imperative (*marbh*) is simply described as *oibriughudh ... c[h]uireas bean asa rēm* ('a verbal form which places *bean* in the accusative case'). For further instances of the term *oibriugud*, see *BST* Appendix VI, cf. also Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 205 ll. 279–81 n. and 240 ll. 754–6 n.).

deaghmaith: This compound is rendered 'very good' in *DIL D 13.38–9*; examples are also cited of a substantival use in the sense 'nobleman'. Additional examples include *go ndligheadhaibh deaghmhaithibh* 'with very good rights', Carney (1943: 1 l. 20) and Smith (2007: 140 q. 95b) (*...láech ro chaith*)/*noí mbliadna déc co degmaith* (v.ll. *fa deglaith, fa degmaith*) '... (a warrior who spent) nineteen years very well'. Note also the abstract in *foda dhó bhus degmhaithéas* 'long will it be very good (*lit.* great goodness) for him' in Ó Donnchadha (1931: 135 no. 17 q. 2d l. 8).

marbh na fir ... buail na fir nō na mnā: The nominative plural *fir* for accusative plural *fiora* is at odds with correct usage and represents an instance of the fault known as *anrēm illraiche* (*IGT V* §18; see also *ibid.* §149 and the forms of *fear* in *IGT I* §78, *IGT II* §65 and Gillies 2005: 69 §5). Its occurrence here is somewhat unusual given that the phrases in which the nominative plural occurs are cited as illustrative examples and are not simply part of the ordinary discursive prose. It may be explained in one of three ways. (1) It may be regarded as an instance of modernisation corresponding to the prose

register where the nominative plural is found in use for the accusative plural in the early modern period, see further *SNG* IV §4.8 where examples are given. (2) The phrase ‘*nō na mnā*’ in ‘*buail na fir nō na mnā*’ could perhaps be regarded as a correction of *fir* which was possibly introduced above the line, or in the margin alongside the main text, at some stage during the course of transmission. If so, it was subsequently incorporated into the main text having been misinterpreted as an addition. However, whether such a correction could be regarded as also applying to the instance of *fir* in ‘*marbh na fir*’ is uncertain, if not indeed unlikely, and as *fir* is written twice as the direct object, this may be an unnecessary conjecture. (3) A previous instance of the word *fir* (nom. plur.) in this passage may have prompted the scribe to write this form in the phrases under discussion. The first suggestion is perhaps the likeliest given the presence of other non-classical forms in the text, on which see p. 157 and notes on §§3 (*roim*), 6 (*lomaid*) below.

is beagmhō mē nā tū ... is mōrlugha mē nā tū: See discussion of these examples above pp. 142–4.

nā: The use of the comparative particle in the form *nā* in place of *iná* is faulted in *IGT* V §12; see also *BST* Dd.2–3, *IGT* IV 1018, *GGBM* 1078–81 and *SNG* IV §5.8 where examples of *nā* in verse are cited.

[§3]

nī lōr lind ar labrumur: For comparable discourse markers, see, for instance, *Lōr liom ar labhrus don bháthadh go léig* ‘I consider what I have said concerning assimilation to be sufficient for the present’ in *IGT* I §48; see also *IGT* I §137, *GGBM* 3550–2 and Carney (1942: ll. 1026, 1149, 1292, 1835, 1944–5, 2000–2, 2145, 2484).

roim This is an unclassical form of the simple preposition (classical *ré*), see *BST* 195.13–21, O’Brien (1956: 176) and McManus (2005b: 158).

doim[n]dian: The spelling ‘doindian’ in the manuscript may in fact be intended to represent *doinnian* with the common spelling *nd* for *nn*. On spellings reflecting pronunciation, see above p. 133, and for further discussion of this and other compounds in the present passage, see pp. 134–5 and 139–41.

sgol agus lei[nbh] (MS *leim*), *sgoillei[nbh]* (MS *sgoilleimh*) *sin*: The first element in this compound is *sgol* ‘school’. The second element is spelt both with final *-m* and *-mh* in the manuscript. The noun *léim* ‘jump’ would seem to provide little sense, unless it is connected with a figurative use such as that encountered in *AithdD*. no. 1 q. 28 where a group of poets descending on a patroness’ house to receive her hospitality is likened to an attack on a foreigner’s dwelling: *Minic lem chléir gidh creach ghearr / léim fa a teach mar bhudh teach* [sic leg. or leg. *bha* (= *fa*); mur u tech MS] *Gall* ‘Often do my

poets rush to spoil her house as though 'twere the house of a Gall—and short work they make of it'. This notwithstanding, the spelling in *-mh* indicates that the final consonant is lenited. A word *leimh/léimh* (nominative) is unknown and emendation is therefore required. The solution adopted in the text is to read nominative plural *leinbh* (*IGT* II §15) on the understanding that an *n*-stroke has been omitted and that *mh* represents *bh* (for confusion of *mh* and *bh*, see *SNG* III §3.20). Compare the phrase *leanab léighinn* in *IGT* II 709. An alternative would be to suggest that a velar fricative has dropped out, reflecting developments in the spoken language (see n. 11 above), and to restore the noun (-)léigheamh 'reading, studying' (*DIL* s.v. *légad*). This is not entirely unproblematic, however, in that only *léaghadh* is listed in *IGT* III (§71) and, accordingly, a further emendation to (-)léigheann might be required. A compound *sgoilléigheamh/-léigheann* might mean 'instruction in school'; compare the line *do léagh ar sgoil Sgathuighe* 'who studied at Sgathach's school' in *AithdD.* no. 16 q. 48*d* and *DIL* s.v. *léigheann* (f). Other possible meanings include (i) private or communal reading or study in a school setting; (ii) reading undertaken in a school, possibly with the connotation of set texts; (iii) reading aloud in accordance with the pronunciation of *dán díreach* as taught in school.

[§4]

f. agus .s. These letters are, of course, subject to special rules which are given in §§5–7.

[§5]

dearbud: For *dearbhadh* used in similar contexts as proving a statement or rule, see for example *Ag so dearbhadh air ó Mhac an Bhaire* 'Here is a confirmation of it from Mac an Bhaire' (*IGT* I §11) and *anderbad hua desimrechaib auctoritatis* 'to certify them by examples of authority' (Stokes and Strachan 1903, 134 90a3; this example is cited in *DIL* s.v. *derbad* a). Compare also the phrase *dá dhearbhadh (sin)* in e.g. *IGT* I §6, *BST* 239.17, 70b.27.

mōr: This could, perhaps, also be interpreted as a personal name. Note that the name *Mór* is used in numerous examples in *BST*, e.g. 200.16–201.3, 203.5–9, 205.6–7, 206.7, 214.28–30, 223.4–5, 11, 224.1, 225.22 241.9–10. See note on *ar Sadhbh* below and footnote 43 above.

ar mōr: This and the other examples cited in the present section consist of the word *ar*, which is followed by nasalisation, and a noun. In some cases, *ar* can only be understood as the first plural possessive adjective, namely *ar lām*h; *ar rōn*; *ar neart*; *ar [d]tuath*; *ar g[c]eann*; *ar [b]port*; *ar g[c]loch*; *ar nglac*;

ar b[p]eall. In others, however, it may be interpreted either as the possessive adjective or as the first plural personal form of the copula, namely ar mōr; ar Sadbh; ar mbān; ar m[b]ean; ar d[t]rom; see further note on *ar Sadbh* below. In one instance, it seems implausible not to construe *ar* as a personal form of the copula, namely ar ngarg, as no examples of a substantival use of this adjective are given in *DIL*. In rendering these examples into English, all instances of *ar* have been given as first plural since nasalisation is associated with that person, although it may be more suitable in some cases, e.g. *ar m[b]ean*, to regard the meaning as first singular, with plural for singular as often (cf. *BST* 203.16 and *GGBM* 1965–6). In instances where *ar* may represent a possessive or a form of the copula, both alternatives are given in the translation. On the omission of some letters in the lists of words exemplified and on the ordering of examples, see p. 136 above.

ar Sadbh: This example represents an instance of the fault known as *iomarcaidh sunnartha* ‘excess definition’ if *ar* is interpreted as the possessive (‘our Sadbh’). The fault arises when a definite noun is further defined, see *IGT* I §15 and *GGBM* 1905–32, 2840–4. In the present instance, the fault arises because a personal name is defined by a possessive pronoun and further instances of it occur in §7 below (*mo Shadbh*, *mo Shláine* and *mo Shiuán*; cf. also note on *mór* above). The fault would be remedied by the presence of an emphasising particle attached to the name, as in *ar Saidhbhne*. The example in the present passage could be rendered ‘we are (= I am) Sadbh’, interpreting *ar* as a personal form of the copula, thus avoiding the difficulties involved in taking *ar* as a possessive pronoun. However, the examples in §7 below just mentioned cannot be so interpreted and the fault would certainly seem to be present in those instances. Note also the same usage in the following couplet from a poem by Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn (d. 1448): *is é ar n-Art ar éise* [sic leg.] *an ríogh / gart a síol na déise as dual* ‘he (Énri [sic]) is our Art taking after the first; corn takes after the seed in its stalks’, *AithdD.* no. 17 q. 36cd (see *ibid.* II 362 where the ‘blot’ referred to is, in fact, an erasure).

bān: Rendered ‘fair one’ above. It might also be rendered ‘lea’ as a noun (*DIL* s.v. *bán* IIb).

a-deraid na [f]ocuil: The word *focail* must be interpreted in the context as referring to the forms which follow in the text as examples, a use which is also attested in: (i) *Ca med focal féghar lend* q. 12 (NLI G 3, 75v17–19): *Ader rit ... / na sealbhta le foclaibh fen / is amlaidh sin badh shoiller [leg. soiléir]* ‘I will relate to you ... the personal forms of the copula with examples; thus will they become clear’ (precedes 2 qq. in which the personal forms of the copula are exemplified in use with the noun *fear*, e.g. q. 13a *Ad fear fear .thu. tuigthear as* ‘*Ad fear* “you are a man” *fear thú* “you are a man” is

understood from it’) and (ii) *IGT* III §4: *An chichsin ní thógaib ceand acht ar chúig fhoclaib, do-chichser, do-chichsem, do-chichsedh, do-chichsind, do-chichsead .c., agus ní .c. uirre acht sin* ‘Corresponding to [verbal noun] *an chichsin* there are only five forms; *do-chichser, do-chichsem, do-chichsedh, do-chichsind, do-chichsead* are correct, and no other such forms are correct’ (translation in Ó Cuív 1994b, 402). In (i) the relevant words are illustrative examples, in (ii) they represent specific forms. *ailm .r.* The letter names, *ailm* ruis, spell the word *ar*.

[§6]

Tabair seo a láim b[ff]ir agus Fergal: This is one of four examples of alliteration involving the letters *f* and *p* in §6 which we are subsequently told are correct (is cōir na huamanna-sin uile). These examples are comprised of two units connected by the conjunction *agus*. The first unit is a phrase containing a verb (*tabair*), object (*seo*), preposition (*i*) and noun phrase (*láim b[ff]ir*) in which the first element is in the accusative and, accordingly, the initial of the second element (genitive) is nasalised. The second unit consists of a noun which is syntactically independent of the first phrase (*Fergal*), the purpose of which is to illustrate that its radical alliterates with the mutated final word in the first unit (*b[ff]ir*). For variation in one of the four examples, see the following note. *Tobair sō a láim [Fh]ilib agus Aedh*: The personal name following *láim* is lenited. This may be interpreted in one of two ways: (i) the preposition might be interpreted as *a* ‘from’ which places a noun in the dative singular with the expected lenition following a noun in that case; (ii) *láim* is followed by lenition rather than the expected nasalisation after the accusative singular; this may reflect leeway regarding the mutation of personal names, on ‘asp[iration] of the initial consonant of a proper name in the gen. sg., independently of any consonant-affecting power in a preceding word’, see Murphy (1953: 131), *IGT* II 332, *Mag.* no. 27 q. 44c (MS) and Ó Macháin (2013: 697 q. 2ab).

lomaidh in dā condsain-sin a cēile: This comment adverts to the delentition of homorganic consonants across word boundaries. It is presumably to be interpreted as indicating the pronunciation of *bh* as *b* in the example *láim b[ff]ir* (*láimh bhfir*), with delentition of *bh* in the combination *-mh bhf-* (the *f* is not, of course, pronounced in *bhf*). The phrase is therefore to be understood as a general remark on the effects of *m* and *b* on one another and would also mean that if the order of consonants was inverted, with *mh* following *bh*, the *mh* would be delentited. This is in accordance with the teaching of *GGBM* where it is stated that only the initial of the second word is delentited across a word boundary, see *GGBM* 190–7, 3158–95; cf. also *ibid.* 2319–21, 3206. It is accordingly less likely to indicate that the phonetic realisation of the letter

combination *-mh bhf-* is *-m b-* in a situation such as that presented. If this were the case, it could only be understood as reflecting pronunciation in speech as to allow for delentition of a final consonant across a word boundary would spoil instances of rhyme; compare comments on delentition and devoicing over word boundaries in Bergin 1921–23, 78–80. In addition to the latter objection, if delentition of the consonants on either side of the word boundary was intended, the examples *lāim b[P]ilib* would also involve delentition of lenited *m* followed by *b*, but this is not mentioned. For comments on the effects of *b* and *m* (also *p* and *f*) on each other, see *IGT* I §§42–3, 103, Breatnach (1941: 44 qq. 36–7), *GGBM* 198–200, 2328–33, 3171–5, 3191–4, 3327–31 (cf. Ó Concheanainn 1968: 343), 3963–4, cf. also O’Rahilly (1932: 152 n. 2). For further instances of *lomaidh* in the sense in which it is used here, see Mac Cárthaigh (2014: 198 ll. 193–5 n.). Note also the non-classical use of the third singular of the verb (*lomaidh*) with a dual subject (in *dā condain-sin*), on which see *Des.* 256–7 (§18) and *SNG* IV §7.30. This could, however, be emended to *lomaid*.

b[P]ilib ... [Fh]ilib ... Fáilbi: For the forms of these personal names, see, respectively, *IGT* II §112 (*Pilib/Filib*); *Fáilbhe* (: *áirmhe*) in the poems beginning *Cuirfead comaoin ar chloinn Táil* q. 68 (RIA B iv 2, 88; Book of the O’Conor Don, 307v (q. 67); NLI G 131, 212 etc.; cf. McManus and Ó Raghallaigh (2010) no. 139) and *Iúl an gheinealaigh ór gheinis* q. 24 (RIA 23 O 78, 93; 23 L 17, 23v; 23 N 11, 196 etc.; cf. McManus and Ó Raghallaigh (2010) no. 291).

Tobair: For this form, see pp. 133–4 above.

[§7]

mo hlāini agus mo hiuān agus mo hrian ... mo nāthad is cōir ann sin: This sentence provides details of the impermissibility of (i) alliteration between words beginning with lenited *s* followed by a vowel and those beginning with lenited *s* followed by a consonant and (ii) of words beginning with lenited *s* followed by a consonant with any other combination. The idea is that just as *Shiuān* will not alliterate with *shl-*, *shr-*, *shn-*, so too *shl-*, *shr-*, and *shn-* will not alliterate with each other. The reason given is that the *sh-* is not pronounced when followed by *l*, *n* or *r* and so it is as if one were to alliterate a radical *l*, *n* or *r* with *sh-*; on pronunciation, see n. 33 above. There is a slight problem in the text as it stands in that *snāthad* is absent from the first set of exemplary words following *mur a-tā sō*. This might be explained in one of three ways: (i) the text may simply have been clumsily designed with an example of a word beginning with *sn-* omitted in the first set; (ii) *mo shnāthad* may have been omitted from the first set of words in the course of transmission; (iii) the present sentence might be regarded as introducing two distinct but related points by inserting

a divide after *agus mo hiuān agus mo hrian* and omitting *uair*. The second suggestion is perhaps the likeliest, but I have not supplied the words or inserted a lacuna into the text as the first suggestion is equally plausible.

mo lāine (MS *mo hlaine*): The point being made here is that lenited *s* is not pronounced when followed by a consonant, as noted above, and the orthography is intended to reflect pronunciation as indicated by the spellings *mo rian* and *mo nāthad*. This makes it clear that the spelling with initial *h* in the present example is inadvertent and arises under the influence of the previous instance of *hlāini*. On the pronunciation of *shl* etc. in word initial position, see n. 33 above.

hiuān For this form of the personal name *Siuán*, *al. Siobhán*, see q. 3 of the poem beginning *Nél rioghna ós ráith Iughaine* where *Siuáin-ne* [*sic leg.*; MS *sibanni*] consonates with ‘tuaili’ and ‘miaili’ in *a* and *b* (*d* is largely illegible), RIA 23 E 29 (no. 1134), 166. For the form *Siobhán*, see Risk (1974: 68 §224).

sdairbeach This form is not listed in *DIL* and there are no other examples to hand. It is tentatively suggested here that the initial *s* is prosthetic; for remarks on prosthetic *s*, see O’Rahilly (1927b: 27) and Gleasure (1973: 190–1). The orthography does not clearly indicate whether the *b* is lenited or not and the word is perhaps to be identified with that given in *DIL* s.v. *tairp(th)ech* ‘strong, violent, vigorous, impetuous, etc.’ according to which ‘-*p*- represents an original voiced -*b*- ... the form *tairpthech* (with voiceless -*p*-) is frequent only in late texts’. A form with initial *s* might perhaps be compared to: (i) Scottish Gaelic *stairbheanach* ‘athletic, well-built person’ (Dwelly s.v.) (compare *starraban*, Campbell (1972: 229), and *starbanach* ‘stout fellow’, *starbhanach* ‘firm, steady; robust; noisy, rustling’, Dwelly s.v.); (ii) *stáirfeach* ‘trampling or strutting about in fury, rage, bad temper’ (Dinneen s.v.). However, the etymology of these words is uncertain. (The word is perhaps unlikely to be connected with the Modern Irish adjective *tairfeach* < *tairbh(th)each* as the classical form of this is *tarbhach/torbhach*, see *DIL* s.v. *torbach* and *tarbha*, *torbha* in *IGT* II §3).

sgairb See discussion of this word in Murphy (1953: 317) s.v.

APPENDIX I

ALLITERATION WITH THE LETTER P

§6 of the fragment represents a fuller treatment of alliteration involving the letters *f* and *p* than is found in other tracts. Of particular interest is the rule that radical *f* alliterates with nasalised *p* as this is not recorded elsewhere to the present writer's knowledge. With this in mind, it is worth drawing attention briefly to some aspects of alliteration involving the letter *p*. This takes the form of (i) an examination of comments in the prosodies and (ii) a preliminary collection of examples of *p* in alliteration in certain combinations.

(i) *Comments in the prosodies*

The only explicit comments in any of the other prosodies occur in *GGBM* and have reference to alliteration between *ph/f* and lenited *p* (*ph*). The rules given there differ, however, in that the first mentions only alliteration between *ph* and another *ph* (comparable to rules regarding *sh*), while the second adverts only to alliteration between *ph* and *f* (based on the identical phonetic realisation of *ph* and *f*). Whether or not the wording of these passages is to be interpreted strictly as confining alliteration with lenited *p* to another *ph* or *f* respectively is not entirely clear. It could be argued that alliteration of *ph* with *f* and *ph* is envisaged in both cases.

Ní cóir ph gan ph oile na aghaidh (*GGBM* 2494)

'*ph* is only correct with another *ph* corresponding to it [in alliteration].'

an úair thig h ar p, as eadh as sēimhioghadh dho f, & mar sin as f do-ní uaim ris an uair sin, *ut*: 'Admhaim dhuit mo pheacadh féin' (*GGBM* 3502–4)

'when *h* affects *p*, *f* is its lenited form [*sc.* it becomes *f*], and so it is *f* which alliterates with it then as in *Admhaim dhuit mo pheacadh féin* "I confess to you my own sin".'

A further item of evidence is found in a passage in *BST* which is not specifically concerned with alliteration, but incidentally provides material regarding the letter *p*. The text has to do with lenition after an abstract noun and was interpreted by McKenna as follows: '*lór*, acting as verb-noun subject of the sentence, puts *gile* in gen. fem. which of course does not lenite'.¹²⁴ The point

¹²⁴*BST* p. 123 (198.3–7 n.). See also *BST* 1aa.27–8, 68a.8–10 and *IGT* IV (p. 255).

which is relevant for present purposes is that the various copies of this passage demonstrate alliteration between (a) *f*- and *ph*-, (b) *p*- and *p*-, and (c) *f/p*- and *ph*-. (The choice of the name *Pilib/Filib* to illustrate the principle is motivated by the fact that a form with initial *Fh* will not alliterate with *P* under any circumstances. The use of the form *Pilip* in (b) is, accordingly, less clear than passages (a) and (c); however, (c) would appear to require emendation.)

(a) *Lór burba Filib ar Phól . lór a chungá íbhíd fhíon .c., lór burba Fhilíb ar Pól .l. (BST 198.6–7)*

‘Rough enough was P. to P., sparingly enough they drink wine’ (McKenna’s translation);

(b) *Lor burba Pilip ar Pol . lor a c(h)um(h)ga íb(h)íd fhín .c. [...] lor burbacht Pilib ar Pol lor a c(h)umhghacht íbhíd fhín, .l. sin o na chur a leath indsgní (BST 8a.54);*

(c) *lor burbacht Filib ar Phol . lor a chumhghacht íbhíd fhíon .l., lor burba Philib (leg. Filib or Pilib?) ar Phol .c. (BST Dc.14–15).¹²⁵*

In addition to this passage, it may also be noted that the label *cóir* is found applied to a citation in *IGT* II and III which contains an example of alliteration between *p* and *ph*, (b) (iii) below.

(ii) *Examples*

Brian Ó Cuív pointed out that examples are found of *ph* alliterating with *bp* or *p* in contrast to rules given in the standard handbooks.¹²⁶ McKenna also described alliteration of *p* and *ph* as ‘not unusual’.¹²⁷ Additional examples of alliteration of (a) *ph* with *bp* and (b) *p* with *ph* are given below. Instances of alliteration of *p* with radical *b* and *f* are discussed in (c) and (d). With regard to some of the examples listed here from *Mag.*, *PB*, *AithdD.* and *DDé*, it may be noted that the editor (Lambert McKenna) was under the mistaken impression that forms with initial *Ph* in personal names such as *Pól* were

¹²⁵Passage (c) would appear to require emendation to *Filib* or *Pilib* in accordance with the rule being demonstrated, namely that the abstract noun is not followed by lenition in the relevant circumstances.

¹²⁶See Ó Cuív (1962–63: 240) (of the examples cited there, a number involve proper names, while one should be read as *gach phuirí phiasdaigh* (as in the more recent edition in *GBMCM* no. 17 q. 42d) with lenition after *gach* (gen. sing.) preceding a masculine noun). For the rules given in the standard handbooks, see Knott (1957: 11) and Murphy (1961: 37). Ó Cuív’s remarks do not seem to have received attention; see, for example, *SNG* IV §1.5.

¹²⁷*BST* p. 171 (224.2 n.).

permitted unaffected variants.¹²⁸ In the case of other examples which also involve the restoration of a manuscript reading, the emended text as printed in the relevant edition is also given for ease of comparison. The translations are those of the editors where available.

(a) *ph - bp*

- (i) *Ní beag tré Phádraig na bpeann* GBMCM no. 17 q. 42a [*sic*
ed. *Ní beag ar Pádraig na bpeann* leg. = MS];

‘Because of Patrick of the pens ... is sufficient’

- (ii) *lór do phianadh na bpeacthach* DDé no. 5 q. 42d [*sic leg.* = MS];
ed. *lór do phianadh na bhfeactach*¹²⁹

‘enough to punish sinners’

- (iii) *Tig do Phól i bpurt nimhe* DDé no. 6 q. 32a [*sic leg.*];¹³⁰
ed. *Tig dó Pól i bpurt nimhe*

- (iv) *a pháis is ar bpeacaidhne* PB no. 25 q. 25b / Ó Cuív
(1994: 203);

‘His passion and our sins’

- (v) *rug tré ghrádh ó Phurt na bpian* DDána no. 38 q. 7d

‘in love He rescued from the Place of Pains’ (transl. McKenna 1928: 380);

- (vi) *do chemaigh cách múr port bParrtais* Book of the O’Conor Don,
a ttocht ad ráth armthais ard 367r3 q. 27cd
(leg. *mar phort bParrthais*);¹³¹

‘their entering your lofty fort of smooth weapons like Paradise has redeemed all’

¹²⁸See DDé 140 (no. 6 q. 34a n.), PB 236 (no. 24 q. 12d n.) and Mag. 423 (l. 2704 n.).

¹²⁹McKenna coins the form *na bhfeactach* as a variant of *peacthach* in his edition, see DDé p. 140 (where a cross-reference is given to what appears to be a form of *feacadh*, cf. DIL s.v., not a variant of *peacadh* as McKenna seems to have thought; it should be noted that the manuscript is faded at the relevant point in the cross-referenced text).

¹³⁰The relevant manuscripts read as follows: *Tig dopol apurt nime* Yellow Book of Lecan, 140; *Tucc do phól a bport nimhe* TCD 1340 (H 3. 19), 25; *Tic do pol a port nimhe* NLS 72.1.29, 11r. The rest of the quatrain in the edition reads *i n-éaraic a aithrige / d’éis a sbreaghta* [*sic*] *ón Sbiorad Naomh / ionad leabtha dá leathaobh* ‘Paul, as reward of his penance, reaches God, a home in compensation for his chiding by the Spirit’ (McKenna’s translation). It will be clear, however, that *ionad leabtha* must be taken as the subject of *Tig* (‘A resting place by his side comes to Paul in heaven’).

¹³¹This example could also be emended to read *mar phort Parrthais* (cf. Ó Rian 2010: 102 n. 1c) and included under (b).

(b) *p - ph*

(i) *díol a pheacaidh peall gaoiside* DDé no. 30 q. 6b
 ed. (*Dá mbé ag duine /*) *i ndíol a* [sic leg. = MS];
pheacaidh peall gaoiside

‘If a man wear, to atone for his sins, a horse-hair shirt’ (*recte* If a man were to have atonement for his sin, [there should be] a horse-hair shirt ... (?))

(ii) *Ní fhaca i bpurt do na portaitbh /*
puball mar do phuball snáith DDána no. 41 q. 44b;¹³²

‘I have not seen in any place a baldaquin like your threaded (*sc.* fine-threaded?) baldaquin’

(iii) *do chan re phobul Pádraig* Mag. no. 21 q. 24d
 ed. *do chan re phobul Phádraig* [sic leg. = MS];

‘so spoke Pádraig to his folk’

(iv) *Gan guth codarsna do chroid*
in pobalsa do Phátraic .c. IGT II 739 (= IGT III 648);¹³³

‘This people believed in Patrick without a dissenting voice’

(v) *na pubaill (leg. pobail) ó Phurt Láirge* GBMCM no. 13 q. 19b
 ed. *na pubaill a Purt Láirge* [sic leg. = MSS];

‘the tents [*leg.* people] from Port Láirge’

(vi) *An miomn tighé ata san phailís* Book of O’Conor Don,
port ina mbíd bráighde gall 367r18 q. 35¹³⁴

‘The splendid building which the palace is is a place in which hostages of foreigners are wont to be’

(vii) *grádh an phobail dona peacthaibh* Ó Cuív (1969: 56 q. 18c);¹³⁵

‘the people’s love for sin’

¹³²Alternatively, this example could be read with *phuball* (direct object of verb).

¹³³The source of this citation is identified in Breatnach (1997b: 30).

¹³⁴The word *phailís* could perhaps be taken as a placename.

¹³⁵A previously unnoticed copy of this poem (beg. *Tugadh mo choimhead do chóigear*) is found on col. 128[a]m–129z in a fifteenth-century manuscript which is bound as part of the Yellow Book of Lecan. Only a large initial *T* is visible on col. 128[a] as the rest of the text is covered with gauze; 21 qq. are found on col. 129 beginning at q. 5 of the edition. That manuscript reads *donar* for *dona* in the present line, but as *do* and *ar* should become *dar* this reading would not appear to be acceptable.

(viii) *libh a peannaid an pheacthaigh* DDé no. 6 q. 23d [*sic leg.*];¹³⁶
ed. (*nach fuil /*) *libh i bpeannaid a bpeacaidh*

‘who do not penance like you (*recte* from the sinner’s suffering)’

(ix) *Is meince do pheacuigh Pól* DDé no. 6 q. 34a
ed. *Is meince do pheacuigh Phól* [*sic leg.* = MSS];

‘More often ... did Paul sin’

(x) *breith an phobail i bParrthas* DDé no. 18 q. 30d
ed. *breith na bpobal i bParrthus* [*sic leg.* = MS];

‘to bring His [*sic*] people to Paradise’

(xi) *Peadar do ba páirt daingean* DDé no. 20 q. 7b
MS: *peadur do ba páirt daingen* YBL 196 (leg. *pháirt*)¹³⁷

‘[Peter,] firm was his alliance (?)’ (transl. *DIL* P 173.71–2)

(xii) *go ndearnadh Pól ón pheacadh* DDé no. 21 q. 5d [*sic leg.*];
ed. *go ndearnadh Pól ón bpeacadh*

‘That Paul became what he was after sin’

(xiii) *Do fuilngedh leis go lá a pháise / pian* PB no. 8 q. 15ab;

‘Till death he bore ... pain’

(xiv) *Do bhí i ndán do dhíon an phobail / Pádraig* PB no. 10 q. 10ab;

‘Patrick ... was fated to save the people’

(xv) *Fuair Caiseal re cois a pháirte / Pádraig* PB no. 10 q. 29ab;

‘He found Caiseal on his side’

(xvi) *Fa cuid do phurgadóir Phádraig / pian* PB no. 10 q. 39ab;

‘The suffering ... was only part of Patrick’s purgatory’

(xvii) *sruth ionnalta an phobail Pól* PB no. 24 q. 12d [*sic leg.*];
ed. *sruth ionnalta an phobail Phól*

‘Paul, cleansing flood of the world’

¹³⁶The relevant manuscripts read *lib apennaid inpechthaidh* YBL, 139; *libh abpeannuid an pheacuidh* TCD 1340 (H 3. 19), 25; *lib a pennad an peacaidh* NLS 72.1.29, 11r.

¹³⁷This example is included here on the basis that *do ba* is followed by lenition according to *SNG* IV §7.27.

- (xviii) Nír pecach a páirt chogaidh Book of the O’Conor Don,
261r q. 47a;
- ‘Their part in war was not sinful’ (*leg.* Níor pheacach a bpáirt
chogaidh)
- (xvix) *bíodh ar th’úidh gur pheacaigh Pól* *AithdD.* no. 100 q. 27d
ed. bíodh ar th’úidh gur pheacaigh Phól [*sic leg.*];
- ‘remember that Paul too sinned’
- (xx) *do thonn fhéile ó phort co port* *DMU* no. 12 q. 14b;
- ‘the wave of your generosity from bank to bank’
- (xxi) *níor gadadh poinn dod p[h]romac* Breatnach (1942b: 240 q. 4d).¹³⁸
- ‘none of thy provender should have been stolen’

In certain instances above, emendation might be, or has been, proposed. However, such suggestions may be unnecessary in light of the other examples collected since these would appear to be sufficient to call into question the validity of the rules of the standard handbooks, as Ó Cuív proposed.¹³⁹

¹³⁸Some uncertain examples may also be mentioned: (i) *is í an phian-sa pian do thogh* ‘this suffering is the suffering he chose’ (*DDána* no. 58 q. 32c) for which, however, I note a variant reading with the article before the second instance of *pian* (i.e. *an phian*) in NLS 72.1.29, 10r and Belfast 29, 317; (ii) *fada don phobal ré phort* (*leg. ré bport* ‘before [the] gate?’) ‘long were its folk at its gate’ (*DDé* no. 20 q. 41c). The manuscript (Yellow Book of Lecan 197) reads ‘re port’. McKenna’s translation indicates that he was taking *re* as containing a possessive adjective (*a*). If the preposition is *ré* ‘before’, we would expect *réna* according to *BST* 192.6–7. It might, however, be interpreted as *re* (< *fri*) in which case McKenna’s text stands; (iii) *do-ním mur do pheacaigh Pól* (23 D 14 (no. 1), 22, cf. *DDána* no. 57 q. 25a v. l.; this reading is shared by NLI G 127, 152 *doním mar do pheacaidh póil* [*sic*]) corresponding to the text of the edition *Do-nim-se mar do-ní Pól* which reflects the readings of TCD 667 (F 5. 3) and RIA 3 C 18 (no. 782).

¹³⁹Ó Cuív (1962–63: 240). So, for instance, in (a) (v) *ó* ‘from’ could be emended to *a* ‘from’ (cf. (b) (v)); in (b) (xii), (xiii) and (xxi) the relevant nouns could perhaps be lenited if placed in the accusative after a passive verb (on the use of the accusative after the passive, see Murphy (1953: cxvii–cxix), *Des.*, 247 (§3), Breatnach (1943: 75–6), *LSN* p. lxxxviii, Ó Raghallaigh 2010: 180 q. 30d n.), cf. also *DDána* 454 (no. 68 q. 4c n. where, however, all but one of the examples may be disregarded as follows: those from no. 68 and 122 are not diagnostic; *riogha* in no. 71 cannot be accusative and should, at any rate, perhaps be read as *riodha*, *pace* Williams (1980: no. 12 q. 1c n.); that in no. 75 might be read as nominative in accordance with the readings of a copy in Det kongelige Bibliotek, Ny kongelig Samling 268b, 40v); in (b) (xx) *go port* could be read as *do phort*. As noted above, however, such suggestions may be unnecessary.

(c) (b)p - b

McKenna noted that this alliteration is found on occasion.¹⁴⁰ Examples to hand are:

(i) *I bParrthas na mbileadh dtoirtheach* DDána no. 31 q. 7a;

‘In Paradise of the fruitful trees’

(ii) *I bParrthas [leg. bParrdhas] na mbile n-úr* DDána no. 38 q. 8c

‘in fresh-treed Paradise’

(transl. McKenna
1928: 380);

(iii) *mac Prímh fa bras meanmanradh*

Walsh (1933: 35
q. 41b)

‘the son of Priam of lively courage’

(iv) (... *tug Toirdelbach .) snaidm pósta dá bláthagaid*
*Caithr. Thoird. 27.*¹⁴¹

‘to her own blooming face ... Turlough ... conceded the marriage knot’

It may be observed that the letter *p* is nasalised in examples (i) and (ii). We could perhaps read *bpósta* (after acc. sing. *snaidhm*) in (iv).

(d) p - f

(i) *Creuire críche Luibhni. dā mac Saidhbhe sūlghuirme. dā Pilib na bfléd naīdhe. dlighid dā fher d’ēgaīne .c. UCD-OFM A 10, 4v13–14*

‘The raiders of the territory of *Luighne*, the two sons of *Sadhbh* of the blue eyes, the two *Pilibs* of bright feasts, they should lament two men, correct’

(ii) *fiacha (: grian) fine a bpéin iomchrais* NUIM R 76, 180 : *fiaca fine a bpein iomchrais* NLI G 40, 6 (q. 12b)

‘she bore a race’s debts in pain’.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰See *DDána* p. 440 (no. 31 q. 7a n.).

¹⁴¹(iii) is included here on the basis that alliteration occurs in all other lines in this piece.

¹⁴²We might read *facha a fine* and translate ‘the debt of her race’.

Alliteration of this type is specified as a rule in our text. Two diagnostic examples are to hand at present against which it may be tested.¹⁴³ The first, with lenited *p*, (*dā* P[h]ilib na b[h]fled[h] naídhe) occurs in a fragment in UCD-OFM A 10 which may be associated with the textual tradition of *BST*. The second example is of *fine* alliterating with *bpéin* since the penultimate stressed word in every line must be involved in alliteration.¹⁴⁴ It occurs in a poem beginning *Maith an bhainliaigh bean Íosa* found in two eighteenth-century manuscripts where the piece is attributed to Ó Dálaigh Fionn.¹⁴⁵ Attributions to this author in manuscripts of that date are, however, often spurious.¹⁴⁶ The metre is *rannaigheacht bheag* and the use of imperfect rhyme in the opening couplets establishes a date later than *c.* 1500 for the poem.¹⁴⁷ These examples would appear to establish in practice the rule that *f* alliterates with *p*. In particular, the source of the first example and the use of the label *cóir* (*c.*) there would appear to be important evidence in support of the rule in our text.¹⁴⁸

Alliteration of radical *p* with *f* (as specified in our text) and *b* might be justified plausibly by reference to the precept that *p* is one of two consonantal ‘diphthongs’. That is to say, it is made up of two sounds, namely *b* and *f* (*dá dhefhoghrach na cconnsuineadh ... foghar .b. 7 fearn a mbeithe bogtha*).¹⁴⁹

¹⁴³Another uncertain example may be mentioned here. MacKenna (1952: 139 33d n.) drew attention to alliteration between *p* and *f* in the following instance from a poem by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh: *cloch fhógras gach ríghnia do réir . primhLia Fáil* ‘the stone which commands obedience for each warrior-prince, the great Stone of Fál’ (MacKenna 1952: 134, 137 q. 33cd). Elsewhere, however, he regarded *frimh-* as a doublet of *primh-* (see *AithdD.* II s.v. and *fear frimheolach* ‘any man excelling in wisdom’ *AithdD.* no. 61 q. 12d), presumably following Bergin (1921–23: 84).

¹⁴⁴For the rule regarding the penultimate stressed word, see Mhág Craith (1969). The rule is adhered to in all lines of this poem.

¹⁴⁵NUIM R 76, 179–80 and NLI G 40, 5–6 (cf. McManus and Ó Raghallaigh (2010) no. 312). The headings read respectively: Ó Dála Fionn .i. Aongus na Diadhachta; Ó Dálaigh Fionn .i. aongus mac amhlaoimh.

¹⁴⁶See McGrath (1946: 185–6 n. 4).

¹⁴⁷For the dating implications of the absence of perfect rhyme in the opening couplets of poems in this measure, see the important contribution by Professor Pádraig A. Breatnach elsewhere in this volume.

¹⁴⁸Accordingly, it would seem unnecessary to suggest emending the relevant text from (*Tobair sō a lāim*) *b[P]ilib* (*agus Fáilbi*) to *bhFilib*. While this might perhaps be done if further examples are not found to bear out the rule in practice, alliteration of *f* with its nasalised counterpart has already been established in §6 (first example) and such repetition would appear to be redundant.

¹⁴⁹*IGT* I §6; see also *GGBM* 55–7, 2350–1, 3153–6. The other *dhefhoghrach* is *ng*. Note that in *GGBM* 2349–50 the statement that the double consonants *rr*, *ll* and *nn* represent three of four consonantal ‘diphthongs’ (*deafhoghraigh*), the other being *ng*, would appear to be an innovation.

The phonetic realisation of lenited and nasalised *p* coupled with the non-traditional status of this letter may be additional factors to be taken into consideration with regard to this teaching.¹⁵⁰ The permissibility of employing *p* and *f* to form a metrical closure (*dúnadh*), as prescribed in *IGT* I §6, may also be adverted to in this context.¹⁵¹

Clearly a complete collection and analysis of alliterating examples of the letter *p* set against the teaching of the tracts would be desirable, but only a brief preliminary discussion of this topic has been possible within the confines of the present study.

(It may be noted that Bergin's division of *IGT* I §§5–6 into two separate paragraphs, followed by Mac Cárthaigh 2014, is potentially misleading, if not indeed erroneous, as the passage beginning *As é sin an t-énchonnúine* and ending *An léitear ar a ccurthear an t-uirdhioghadh as í féin as úaim ann* represents a brief, 'parenthetical' remark on the letter *ng* corresponding to a question asked in §1 (ll. 16–17); the following passage (*foghar .b. 7 fearn a mbeithe bogtha*) and subsequent illustrative example go with the text preceding *As é sin an t-énchonnúine*. Thus the two paragraphs are to be regarded as an integral unit.)

¹⁵⁰For the status of the letter, see n. 27 above.

¹⁵¹See Ní Dhomhnaill (1981: 51 §3.23 i) and McManus (2005b: 165) (who adds one example to those given by Ní Dhomhnaill); the following instances may also be added: *AithdD.* no. 39 q. 43; *Mag.* no. 9 q. 38 (cf. also *ibid.* q. 37 and n. on l. 1050 on *ph* corresponding to *f*).

APPENDIX II

LITIR SHEALBHTHA / SHEALBHOIGHTHE

The term *litir shealbhtha / shealbhoighthe* has been introduced and discussed above. The passages in which the term occurs are reproduced here. The setting of the first passage is a discussion of alliteration, the second concerns grammatical elision, the third a treatment of nasalisation.

(i) *Dā tteagmhadh uirrd[h]ioghadh ar fhocul ris an b[h]fhiodh ndút[h]chasa .i. an litir s[h]ealbhtha, as cóir uaim dho chur: ‘bean ar mbuachuill’, ‘feidhm ar bhfir’, cóir dh’uaim.*¹⁵²

‘If nasalisation should affect a stressed word, it is correct to alliterate with the original letter (*lit.* native letter), that is the radical letter (*lit.* letter affected by *sealbhadh*): *bean ar mbuachuill* (“our herdsman’s wife”), *feidhm ar bhfir* (“my (*lit.* our) husband’s effort”), alliterate correctly.’

(ii) *As eadh as báthadh guthaidhe geinearálta ann, in tan bhíos an t-iarmbērlaso ‘mo’, nō an t-iarmbērla ‘do’, agus focal ar bith thionnsgnas ō ghuthaidhe nō ó f agus guthaidhe go neimhinmheadhōnach na dhiaigh, báidhtear an o uile annsin ag ceangal d an ‘do’ nō m an ‘mo’ don fhocal sin bhíos mar sin na dhiaigh mar litir don fhocal chēdna, nō amhoil badh í an m nō an d badh litir shealbhtha don fhocal chēdna.*¹⁵³

‘General elision of a vowel is when this unstressed word *mo* (“my”), or the unstressed word *do* (“to”), and any word which begins with a vowel or with *f* and a vowel following it [i.e. the unstressed word] separately (*lit.* non-internally), the entire *o* is elided in that case joining the *d* of *do* or the *m* of *mo* to the following word as [if it were] a letter of the same word, or as if the *m* or the *d* was the radical letter (*lit.* letter affected by *sealbhadh*) of that word.’

¹⁵²*GGBM* 2494–7.

¹⁵³*GGBM* 2984–90. *Do* is taken as a preposition on the basis of the following discussion at 3001–16. It could also represent the second singular possessive pronoun. For further instances of the term *neimhinmheadhōnach*, see *ibid.* 2973, 2994, 3019, 3102, 3161, 3165, 3203, 3447, 3632, 3771, 3773.

(iii) *As eadh as uirrdhiobhadh consaine ánn, consaine dh'áiridhe ria cconsaine dh'áiridhe thosaigh focail, dā ngoireann an ghaoidhealg 'litir shealbhoighthe', agus an chuid thig mar sin do sgríobhadh & do chanamhoin mar chuid don fhocal, & báidhtear an consaine as litir shealbhoighthe san chanamhoin, acht gidheadh sgríob[h]thar araon iad ...*¹⁵⁴

'Nasalisation of a consonant is a certain consonant before a certain initial consonant in a stressed word, which *gaoidhealg* calls a radical letter (*lit.* a letter affected by *sealbhoghadh*), and the component which thus comes about is to be written and spoken as part of the word and the radical (*lit.* the consonant which is a letter affected by *sealbhoghadh*) is obliterated in speech, but nevertheless they are both (*sc.* both letters) written ...'

The verb *sealbhaidh* is also used with reference to the radical consonant in *GGBM* where it is synonymous with *tionnsgnaidh ó* (earlier *tig ar*):

(iv) *Atáid tuairim dheich b[h]focal ann chuireas lomadh ar ghuthaidhe mar so, 'a' ar son forainm sealbhtha[,] in uair shealbhas nō thionnsgnas ō ghuthaidhe gibē cinēl a mbía d'f[h]focal, do chinēl bhannda dā ngoireann in ghaoidhealg 'baininnsge', mur 'as ionmhuin lé mnáoi a hucht', 'a hēudan', 'a heochair', 'a hannsacht' ...*¹⁵⁵

'There are about ten words which prefix *h* to a vowel as in *a* representing a possessive pronoun of the feminine gender which *gaoidhealg* calls *baininnsge* ("feminine"), when whatever gender of word it (*sc.* the vowel) will be in begins or starts with a vowel, as in *as ionmhuin lé mnáoi a hucht* ("a woman is fond of her breast"), *a hēudan* ("her forehead"), *a heochair* ("her key"), *a hannsacht* ("her delight") ...'

¹⁵⁴*GGBM* 3110–15. For *do sgríobhadh* in the sense translated, see *DIL* s.v. *1 do V* 5. The terms *forainm sealbhaightheach* and *forainm sealbhtha* at *GGBM* 2992–3, 3066 (cited in iv below) are probably Latinate as suggested by the term *forainm*.

¹⁵⁵*GGBM* 3064–9 (punctuation emended). For *cinēl* meaning 'gender', see *GGBM* 639–40, *DIL* s.v. *cenél* (f) and Calder (1917: 323 s.v.). The phrase *a heochair* could also be rendered 'its edge'.

It was suggested above that the term may have arisen as a result of phrases which indicate nasalisation and involve the term *sealbh(ugh)adh*.¹⁵⁶ Thus, while the occurrence of the term *litir shealbhtha / shealbhoighthe* in *GGBM* might at first glance imply some knowledge of phrases denoting nasalisation discussed earlier, it should be pointed out that the term is only used of a radical letter and that nasalisation is referred to in the texts in *GGBM* by an unrelated term. The term *litir shealbhtha / shealbhoighthe* appears therefore to represent either a development in usage or a limited continuation of related terminology in a specific usage.¹⁵⁷ It may also be observed that in (ii) and (iv) above the term occurs in a context unrelated to nasalisation. Furthermore, in three of the four passages above the relevant term forms part of an explanatory or synonymous phrase where it is coupled with another term and is introduced, or followed, by the conjunction *nó* (i, ii, iv). This would appear to correspond to a usage which has been described by Falconer with reference to the tale *Lorgaireacht an tSoidhigh Naomhtha* as follows:

A new word may be followed by an explanation, e.g., *dhá lēge .i. sé míle, asmíron .i. cloch co ndath nglas*; or it may be coupled with an earlier synonymous word as in *(do-ronad) glóir ⁊ fēsta (dó), cuimne ⁊ rēsūn ...*¹⁵⁸

This practice is reflected elsewhere in *GGBM* where seemingly older items of technical terminology are paired with apparently innovative terms by means of the conjunction *nó/ná* in collocations such as *d'oghum nā dho sgríbhneorachd*.¹⁵⁹ This may suggest that the term *litir shealbhtha / shealbhoighthe* was obsolete or obsolescent. At the very least, the third example above implies that the term was associated with a particular register, termed *gaidhealg*. This might be interpreted simply as the Irish language as opposed to, say, Latin. To judge by the context, however, it may refer to

¹⁵⁶See above pp. 147–9.

¹⁵⁷See n. 105 above.

¹⁵⁸*LSN* p. xlii, cf. also *ibid.* p. xlv, Thomson (1970: lxix) and Ó Cuív (1977: 203).

¹⁵⁹*GGBM* 2342–3 (in negative clause), cf. *ibid.* 2981–2, 2996, 3021, 3093–4, 3101, 3113–14 where the older terms have been abandoned. This has been commented on by Ó Concheanainn (1968: 343) as follows: ‘Anseo tá na seantearmaí “ogham” agus “gaidhealg” ar tí a dtréigthe agus focail níos intuigthe á gcur leo .i. “sgríbhneoireachd” agus “canamhain”.

‘technical language’ or an upper register and be comparable to phrases such as *goirid an t-áos dána* (‘the poets call’) and *atá ag na fileadhoibh* (‘the poets have ...’), found elsewhere in the text.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰For another instance of *gaoidhealg* in this sense, see *GGBM* 3528. The word may be used in a similar sense in an eighteenth-century poem edited by Ó Conchúir (2002: 280 q. 5*bed*) (where it can hardly be intended literally): *ní thig ionsmadh na n-adhmad / gan oideas in alt don cheird / gan noidfhios gart gan Gaedheilg* ‘the construction of verse does not come without instruction in the way of the craft, without ample knowledge of contractions, without Irish’. The phrases *goirid an t-áos dána* and *atá ... ag na fileadhoibh* occur at *GGBM* 3484 and 3154; note also the phrase *do-bheirid na seinfhilidh air sin* in *GGBM* 2610 and references to *veteres* at *GGBM* 268, 336, 419, 1203, 1430, 1562 and *periti* at *ibid.* 1097, 1307, 1684, 1774; cf. also *ibid.* 1283 (*apud graves authores*) and 1432 (*meliori iudicio*). Compare also the contrast of prose (*prós*) and verse (*dán*; *fileata*) in *GGBM* 2977–8, 3153, 3156, 3268, 3440, 3521 (cf. also verse and speech, *GGBM* 1682–9).