Saltair na Rann

In 1883 Whitley Stokes published an edition without translation of the Middle Irish biblical poem *Saltair na Rann* from MS Rawlinson B 502 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Anecdota Oxoniensia. Medieval and Modern Series Vol. I, Part III). During the 1970s Professor David Greene conducted a seminar on this text at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. As a result, he published with Fergus Kelly an edition and translation of *The Irish Adam and Eve story from Saltair na Rann* (lines 833–2240) in 1976. This was accompanied by a volume of commentary by Brian O. Murdoch, published in the same year. Both volumes are currently in print, and for sale at €15 each (€25 for the pair).

Professor Greene intended to produce an edition and translation of the entire *Saltair*, accompanied by linguistic analysis and commentary on the subject-matter, but his death in 1981 put a halt to this project. In his weekly seminar he had covered about half the text, but he had established a provisional text and translation of the entire work, which was typed out by the Librarian Clerk, the late Peggy Walsh. He had inserted various hand-written notes and corrections on her typescript.

Since his death many scholars have come to the Institute to consult Greene’s text and translation. As there is no immediate prospect of a new edition in book form of the entire *Saltair* it seemed to be of benefit to reproduce Greene’s typescript on the website exactly as he left it. The published text and translation of lines 833–2240 have also been reproduced for the sake of completeness. The School would be most grateful for any suggestions relating to the provisional text and translation, which might be used (with due acknowledgement) in a future edition.

This work has been carried out by Sandra Carrick with the assistance of the School of Celtic Studies computer consultants Gavin McCullagh and Andrew McCarthy. The images were scanned on an Ubuntu Linux workstation, and post-processed using the ImageMagick suite before being assembled into PDFs using gscan2pdf.

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¹For a discussion of this manuscript, see Brian Ó Cuív, *Catalogue of Irish language manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford College Libraries* (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies 2001) 163–200.
I ndommuch na comála
iar n-eisserge co [n]dremna,
ní b' a cèim soer soigráda;
teacht druing dubh demna.

Tuir na n-eárbar n-áffernna
cean dill a carraib comul;
fo garbadh a crithfedma
líon tait in huilí ndommun.

Do-foethsat na hídala,
dee duib na ngainte cuilech;
ní–s foelsat a ngnímrada
do bith fíad gnúis ind Ruirech.

Ruibhni rúada richessa
tene derg troethas dúisse,
duilgi trúaga trichessa
co n-ilur fergg fria ngmússe.
(8281--4) On the Sunday of the gathering, after the fearful resurrection, it will not be a noble dignified event: black hosts of demons come.

(8285--8) The hosts of infernal bands without reward from the bond of prisons; they will fill the whole world by their dark and fearsome deeds.

(8289--92) The idols will fall, the black gods of the sinful heathen; their deeds will not allow them to be in the presence of the Lord.

(8293--6) Shafts of red coals, red fire that consumes treasures, weary, sad the paroxysms (?), with many angers before their faces.

1. Reading a carcar (s arbar) comml. Or, without foundation, from prais of bards.

2. Perhaps, like trichem, from triuch.
8297  Con-glúaisfí fonn fudonna
       domhain dein, dál co luibh?
     ar-túsaisfí co ndomnai
       cen búsaid, cen bríg, cen brugai.

8301  Cee gráma ocus glámmairecht
       co ndíth cen choimeai ngretha,
       cen [h]emna, cen sádailechta,
       cen síd frí soillsi sretha.

8305  Sreba síabra sáraigter
       gnísaig for hinn na lasra,
       cretha ciara gránaigter
       gnísaig for cinn na casra.

8309  Guidem frisain mórchoimhid
       in eoch huair ar couráda,
       ar scoirid diar trógloingib,
       i ndomnuch na comála.

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The base of the foundation of the good world will move, a grievous matter; it will lapse into unsubstantial silence, without virtue, strength or lands.

Ugly wailing and sobbing with destruction, without restraint of noise, without gentleness, without delight, without peace before the bright ranks.

Spectral streams are restrained, sad upon the summit of the flame, dark tremblings are feared, active upon the top of the hail.

Let us pray to the great Lord at every hour of our conversation for salvation from our sad difficulties on the Sunday of the gathering.

1. Following DIL D² 242.50.
8313 I llaithiu ind lúain laimnerda  
      bratha fria ndālat píana,  
      ferfalt arbar ailgelda  
      catha fri demna díana.

8317 Troethaideir árta dergnaide  
      tria dremmu, toláib guba;  
      ria n-aingliu cen terbaide,  
      mebais for demmu duba,

8321 Cona toisich dolbaide  
       Lucifer leó m as dúru,  
       i n-Iffern o[c] gægaire  
       fo-chichritar for cúlu.

8325 Iar sin bértair firbretha  
       fíad gnúis Dē for clainn ádaim;  
       scértair iarna ngnímretha,  
       deochraigfiter 'n-a ndálaib.
(8313--6) On the day of the shining treacherous Monday where torments congregate, hosts of angels will fight battles against swift demons.

(8317-20) The vile band will be defeated by fury, with hosts of lamentations; the unseparated angels will defeat the black demons,

(8321--4) With their lying leader Lucifer, the harshest lion, they will be thrown back lamenting into Hell.

(8325--8) After that true judgments will be given before God on the children of Adam; they will be separated according to their deeds, they will be distinguished in their conditions.
Dlomthar lat drong demnachda
  i píanaib úaraib Iffin,
pecthaig cen síl ndarbgharta
  fo chiabráib cuíadaib crithfeidm.

Ceich fírín fo glangeltad
  for deiss Dé bí, buan bithfeidh;
fo dimlad ceich anreachtach
  for lám cill dochum n-Iffin.

Ind fiorlig, in gubreachaig,
  in choisnasaig, in chuilib;
in druíd, ind ereteodaig,
  in geint, in galaig guinig.

In meirlig, ind adaltraig,
  in goíg glóraib guba,
in[t] šantaig, in dùmmsaig,
  ind ëithchig limib luga.
(8329-32) Let the demonic host be expelled by Thee into the cold torments of Hell, sinners with no trace of true charity in hard sadness and trembling.

(8333-6) Every just man feasting chastely on the right hand of God, lasting service; every unrighteous man without honour on the left hand to Hell.

(8337-40) The envious, the false judges, the contentious, the sinful; the wizards, the heretics, the heathen, the quarrelsome who wound.

(8341-4) The thieves, the adulterers, the liars, with sounds of grief, the covetous, the vainglorious, the perjurers with many oaths.
Ind fergaig, ind ërdaig,
in duinoirginid oc ñremmáig,
aes ëcnàig, aes athchossain,
aes ind ëndlaig no-s dedlái.

It hē sin in p[h]rImpeoithaig
artrebat Hiffern húrach;
tíaigait cen nì d'ìrrettaib
la Demun ñdremm trúagach,

Dochum pêne suthaine
i carosair guires grithu,
ìat-som nìpdat duthaine
ica fulang tria bithu.

Bethu brónach bithtoirmsech,
Ithu, dochtai iar sētaib,
cúairt glórach, nì olithcholmsech,
úacht, gorta, crith for dētaib.
(8345—8) The wrathful, the lustful, the furious murderers, backbiters, accusers, the stirrers up of dissension, who separate them.

(8349—52) These are the chief sinners who inhabit chilly Hell; they go without any trace of true innocence with a furious pitiful Devil.

(8353—6) To perpetual torment in a prison which causes (?) shrieks; they will not be short-lived, suffering it through eternity.

(8357—60) A sad, always mournful, life, thirst, hardship after riches, a noisy circuit, not powerful to protect, cold, hunger, chattering of teeth.

1. Perhaps read . . . . . ettlai.
Día dil, tuistid án tóidí,
na ndúla ndelbda ndeáise
ro-n scoí ar glíphití
néisma i n-Iffurn engach.

Ind nóib is ind firíanaig
do róir ind Athar nema,
con-góiríar cén dimadá
dochmha flatha seach tedma.

Nássad síde aírbuite,
amru ceoch ndús cén chithe,
imiaisin na Trí Nóite
o gnús do gnús tria bithu.

Bith i sámait aíomháige
iar mbus cén domnáis niangen,
'n-a ndalaib cén domháighe
do-gréis hic oomnáis anghel.
(8361--4) Dear God, protecting parent of the fierce
shapely elements, save us from the torments of
devils in noisy Hell.

(8365--8) The saints and the righteous (living)
according to the will of the heavenly father will
be called without dishonour to Heaven beyond
plagues.

(8369--72) Celebration of peace, of continuous . . . . .
more famous than any treasure, without troubles,
contemplation of the Trinity from face to face
throughout eternity.

(8373--6) To be in tranquillities of prosperity
after death with a strong habitation, in their
assemblies without poverty, always in the
company of the angels.

1. The second element is obscure.

2. Read condemnmas.
Cen chríni, cen galarə,
cen sním, cen saethar sníd,
cen occurring cotulta

cen aoichra broitt ná bíid.

Bith i soere sírsoillsi,
classa caíne, ceoil gelbda,
i mnoebi cen sírthoirsi,
cen hásə, cen ñes, cen erohra.

Ad-roillemm, ad-áittrebam
 centáid aingel cech trátha
 liair Coimíd co caíthennam
 liar mbuíad a brethaib Brátha.

Ad-ríadat in ecnaide,
do réir riagla as moθ,
im-ríadat co hetthaide
mili bí́dána ’sind loθ.

na riagla, R.
(8377-80) Without old age, without sickness, without care, without labour which struggles, without longing for sleep, without wasting of clothing or food.

(8381-4) To be always in the freedom of glory, fair choirs, bright music, in sanctity without long affliction, without growth, without age, without decay.

(8385-8) We merit, we dwell in the unity of the angels at every time, so that we may frequent our Lord after triumphing over the judgments of Doomsday.

(8389-92) The wise men declare, according to the greatest law, that a thousand years pass unsubstantially in a day.

1. The absolute form is hard to explain.

2. For the rhyme ecnaide : etlaide
   see 8131-3.