

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 502¹ in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Anecdota Oxoniensia. Mediæval 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.

- 8281 I ndommuch na comdála
 iar n-eisserge co [n]dremna,
 nÍba cēim soer sográda;
 tecait druing duba demna.
- 8285 Tuir na n-arbar n-iffernna
 cen dīl a caroraib comul;
 fo garbdath a crithfedma
 līnfait in huili ndomun.
- 8289 Do-foethsat na hídala,
 dee duib na ngeinte cuilech;
 nī-s foelsat a ngnímrada
 do bith fiad gnúis ind Ruirech.
- 8293 Ruibni rúada richnessa
 tene derg troethas dúisse,
 duilgi trúaga trichessa
 co n-ilur fergg fría ngnússe.

(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; ¹ 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 (?), ² with many angers before their faces.

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1. Reading a carcar (: arbar) comul. Or, without emendation, 'from prisons of bonds'.
 2. Perhaps, like trichem, from triuch.

8297 Con-glúaisfi fonn fudonna
 domuin dein, dál co ndubai;
 ar-túaisfi co ndodonna
 cen búaid, cen bríg, cen brugai.

8301 Coe gránna agus glámnairecht
 co ndíth cen choimsi ngrétha,
 cen c[h]emsa, cen sádailecht,
 cen síd fri soillsi sretha.

8305 Sreba síabra sáraigter
 snímaig for hinn na lasra,
 cretha cíara gránaigter
 gnímaig for cinn na casra.

8309 Guidem frisín mórchoimíd
 in ceoh húair ar comráda,
 ar soerad diar trógdoingib,
 i ndomnuch na comdála.

.....

(8297-300) The base of the foundation of the good world
will move, a grievous matter; it will lapse into
unsubstantial ¹ silence, without virtue, strength
or lands.

(8301--4) Ugly wailing and sobbing with destruction,
without restraint of noise, without gentleness, without
delight, without peace before the bright ranks.

(8305--8) Spectral streams are restrained, sad upon
the summit of the flame, dark tremblings are feared,
active upon the top of the ~~top~~ hail.

(8309-12) 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 lainerda
 bratha fris ndālat píana,
 ferfait arbair aingelda
 catha fri demma díana.
- 8317 Troethfaidir drong dergnaide
 tria dremmu, tōlaib guba;
 ria n-aingliu cen terbaide,
 mebais for demmu duba,
- 8321 Cona toísiuch dolbaide
 Lucifer leóm as dúru,
 i n-Ifferu o[c] g~~e~~gaire
 fo-chichritar for cúlu.
- 8325 Iar sin bērtair fírbretha
 fíad gnúis Dē for clainn Ádaim;
 scērtair iarna ngníngretha,
 dechraigfiter 'n-a ndálaib.

C X L I I

(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.

8329 Dlomthar lat drong demnachda
i píanaib úaraib Iffirn,
pecthaig cen síl nderbgarta
fo chíabraib crúadaib crithfeidm.

8333 Cech firían fo glangeltad
for deiss Dé bí, búan bithfeidm;
fo dímiad cech anrechtach
for láim clí dochum n-Iffeirn.

8337 Ind formdig, in gúbrethaig,
in chosnamaig, in chuilig;
in druíd, ind ereteodaig,
in geint, in galaig guinig.

8341 In meirlig, ind adaltraig,
in goáig glóraib guba,
in[t] sántaig, in díummasaig,
ind éithchig línib 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.

- 8345 Ind ferggaig, ind ētradaig,
 in duinoirgnid co ndremmai,
aes ēcnaig, aes athohossain,
 aes ind indlaig no-s dedlai.
- 8349 It hē sin in p[h]rīmpecothaig
 artrebat Hiffern huarach;
tīagait cen nī d'fīrettlaib
 la Demun ndremun trūagach,
- 8353 Dochum pēne suthaine
 i carcair guires grithu,
íat-som nīpdāt duthaine
 ica fulang tria bithu.
- 8357 Bethu brónach bithtoirsech,
 Itu, dochtai iar sētaib,
cúairt glórach, nī clithchoimmsech,
 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 ¹ 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.

- 8361 D'ia dil, tuistid dítnidi,
na ndúla ndelbda ndegrach
ro-n soera ar glíphiti
ndemma i n-Iffurn engach.
- 8365 Ind noib is ind fíríanaig
do réir ind Athar nemda,
con-gérdar cen dímiada
dochum flatha sech tedma.
- 8369 Nássad síde síráitte,
amru ceoh ndúis cen chithu,
imcaissiu na Trínóite
o gnúis do gnúis tria bithu.
- 8373 Bith i sámaib sōnmige
iar mbás cen domgnās ndangen,
'n-a ndálaib cen dōnmige
do-grēs hi comgnāis angel.

(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 ¹
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 ² a strong habitation, in their
assemblies without poverty, always in the
company of the angels.

1. The second element is obscure.

2. Read co ndomgnas.

- 8377 Cen chrīni, cen galara,
cen snīm, cen saethar snīd,
cen occurus cotulta
cen aurchra broitt nā biīd.
- 8381 Bith i soere sīrsoillsi,
classa caīne, ceoil gelbda,
i nnoebi cen sīrthoirsi,
cen hāss, cen āes, cen erchra.
- 8385 Ad-roillemm, ad-sittrebam
centaid aingel cech trātha
liar Coimid co caitchennam
iar mbuaid a brethaib Brátha.
- 8389 Ad-fíadat ind ecnaide,
do réir ríagla as moö,
im-ríadat co hettlaide
mīli blíadna 'sind loö.

8390. na ríagla, R.

(8377-80) Without old age, without sickness, without care,
without labour which struggles,¹ 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 unsubstantially²
in a day.

1. The absolute form is hard to explain.

2. For the rhyme ecnaide : ettlaide
see 8181--3.