



August Schiøtt 'Kvöldvakan í sveit'
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10TH-11TH SEPTEMBER 2015,
ABERFOYLE HOUSE, MAGEE CAMPUS
ULSTER UNIVERSITY, DERRY

'POST-PRINT MANUSCRIPT CULTURES IN IRELAND, SCOTLAND AND ICELAND'

THURSDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER

10.00-10.15 Welcome, Tea & Coffee

10.15-10.30 Conference Opening

SESSION 1

CHAIR: FIONNTÁN DE BRÚN

10.30-11.30 *Margrét Eggertsdóttir*
'Hymns and sagas: Literary production and scribal activity in 17th century Iceland'

11.30-12.30 *Aonghas Mac Coinnich*
'Làmh-sgrìobhainnean, cleachdaidhean-litreachaidh agus cleachdadh-cànain air Gaidhealtachd na h-Alba, 1567-1767'

'Manuscript practices, orthography and language choice in the Scottish Gaidhealtachd, 1567-1767'

(Lecture in Scottish Gaelic with simultaneous translation to English)

12.30-1.30 Lunch

SESSION 2

CHAIR: MALACHY Ó NÉILL

1.30-2.10 *Silvia Hufnagel*
'Old and New: How Old and New Media Influenced Each Other and Society in Iceland during the 16th and 17th Centuries'

2.10-2.50 *Deirdre Nic Mhathúna*
'Irish manuscript culture - perspectives from within the tradition'

2.50-3.30 *Lesá Ní Mhugháile*
'Tiobrach ionmhain ó Fhine Gall: Richard Tipper's Scribal Legacy'

3.30-3.45 Tea & Coffee

SESSION 3

CHAIR: AILBHE Ó CORRÁIN

3.45-4.45 *Liam Mac Mathúna*
'A tale of two manuscripts: contrasting the subject-matter and approaches of Tadhg Ó Neachtain in NLI G 198 (1721-29, 1740-46) and BL Egerton 198 (1717)'

FRIDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER

SESSION 4

CHAIR: PETER SMITH

10.00-11.00 *Matthew Driscoll*
'Writing in the twilight: Icelandic scribes on the cusp of the modern era'

11.00-12.00 *Ulrike Hogg*
'Scottish Gaelic manuscripts from the 18th to the early 19th century'

12.00-1.00 Lunch

SESSION 5

CHAIR: NIOCLÁS MAC CATHMHAOIL

1.00-1.40 *Ruairí Ó hUiginn*
'Oileamhain Con Culainn and Oidheadh Chonlaoich mhic Con Culainn: aspects of their history and development'

ABSTRACTS

1.40-2.20 *Maxim Fomin*
'Dá síortha gus an Innia iartharaicc soir: What did Cú Chulainn reply to Conchobhar?'

2.20-2.30 Tea & Coffee

SESSION 6

CHAIR: MATTHEW DRISCOLL

2.30-3.30 *Pádraig Ó Macháin*
'The rise of the Gaelic paper manuscript'

3.30-3.40 Close of conference

7.30 Conference Dinner

Margrét Eggertsdóttir (Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies, Reykjavík)

Hymns and sagas: Literary production and scribal activity in 17th century Iceland

The great activity in writing and copying manuscripts in 17th-century Iceland involved all of the most important genres of Icelandic literature and was spread over the whole country. Humanism brought with it a new interest in the saga literature, as confirmed by the increasing number of manuscript copies containing sagas. It was on the initiative of the two bishops, Brynjólfur Sveinsson at Skálholt and Þorlákur Skúlason at Hólar, that many priests and literate members of the laity copied and sometimes also provided explanatory commentaries for old works. In my paper I will mainly focus on two prolific scribes, Ketill Jörundsson (1603–1670) and Jón Erlendsson (d. 1672), who were both in the service of the church and copied a large number of vellum manuscripts, in some cases thereby saving important medieval works from oblivion. Contemporary poetry, both secular and religious, was also transmitted in manuscripts – a fact often overlooked by modern literary critics and historians. In my paper I will mention a few examples of poetry that can shed interesting light on both culture and society in Iceland in the so-called Age of Learning.

Aonghas Mac Coinnich (Glasgow University)

Làmh-sgrìobhainnean, cleachdaidhean-litreachaidh agus cleachdadh-cànain air Gaidhealtachd na h-Alba, 1567-1767

Dh'fhoillsich an t-Easbaig Iain Carsuail Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh (stùireadh de dhaoine mar a bhiodh iad ag adhradh) ann an 1567, a' chiad leabhar a chaidh riamh a chur an clò an Gàidhlig (an Alba no an Èirinn). B'ann an Gàidhlig Chlasaigeach a bha seo sgrìobhte, modh-sgrìobhaidh air nach robh mòran air Gaidhealtachd na h-Alba eòlach, gu h-àraid taobh a-muigh Earraghaidheal agus ceann a deas Innse Gall. B'e creud a bh'anns a' chreideamh Phròstanach a bha a' cur cuideam mòr air sluagh gach dùthaich fa-leth ann a bhith a' leughadh



an t-Soisgeil nan cuid cainnt mhàthaireil fhèin. Ach, ged a bha mu dhà thrian de Ghaidheil na h-Alba nam Pròstanaich ri linn an Ath-leasachaidh, cha deach togail air euchdan Charsuail agus cha deach ach a bheag fhoillseachadh ann an Gàidhlig airson 200 bliadhna eile. Bha am Bioball Cuimreach na togail mhòr dhan chànan sin nuair a nochd e ann an 1588, a' toirt spionnadh do dhaoine gus a bhith a' leughadh is a' sgrìobhadh an cuid cànan fhèin. Ach, air Gaidhealtachd na h-Alba, cha tàinig leasachadh dhan t-seòrsa sin idir gu buil. A dh'aindeoin euchdan Charsuail, thug e dà cheud bliadhna mus deach an Tiomnadh Nuadh fhoillseachadh ann an Gàidhlig na h-Alba (1767) agus leth cheud bliadhna eile mus do nochd an t-Seann Tiomnadh (1801). Chuir an dàil seo bacadh mòr air litreachas (agus foghlam) ann an Gàidhlig.

Bheir an òraid seo sùil fharsaing air na cleachdaidhean-cainnt agus cleachdadh làmh-sgrìobhainnean air Ghaidhealtachd an Alba eadar Carsuail agus an Tiomnadh Nuadh (1567-1767). Thèid beachd a thoirt air dìleab nan teaghlachan 'foghlaimeach' Ghaidhealach traidiseanta a bha a' cumail bìùgan beag solais ri lòchran na sgoilearachd Gàidhlig, agus thèid aire a thoirt cuideachd ris na sgrìobhainnean a dh'fhàg buidhnean mar na fineachan Gaidhealach agus Seanadh Earraghaidheal air an cùlaibh. Dè na pàtranachan-cànan a bha a' dol air Ghaidhealtachd a thaobh làmh-sgrìobhainnean agus dè a b' adhbhar dhaibh sin? Thèid sùil a thoirt air seo air dè an seòrsa làmh-sgrìobhainnean a chaidh an cruthachadh le bhith mothachail air ceistean leithid inbhe-cànan agus foghlam.

Manuscript practices, orthography and language choice in the Scottish Gaidhealtachd, 1567-1767

Bishop John Carswell published Calvin's Geneva prayer book in 1567. This, the first ever publication in Gaelic, was written in Classical Gaelic, not a medium, perhaps, to which a great many Scottish Gaels (especially outside Argyll and the Isles) were accustomed. Protestantism, adopted in the wake of the Reformation of 1560 by, perhaps, up to two-thirds of Scottish Gaels was a creed which set great store on literacy and the ability to read the Bible in the vernacular. Despite the pioneering work of Carswell, however, few publications followed in Gaelic. In Welsh,

the publication of the Protestant Bible, 1588, proved to be a great boon for Welsh literacy. Yet in the Scottish Gaidhealtachd, which remained largely (although by no means wholly) Protestant, the New Testament was not published until 1767, followed by the complete Old Testament in 1801. The upsurge in Gaelic literacy (and education) which was dependent on the publication of the Bible was greatly delayed as a result.

This paper will survey some of the manuscript practices in the Scottish Gaidhealtachd in the two centuries between Carswell and the publication of the New Testament. Particular attention will be paid to the nature of the surviving Gaelic (as well as non-Gaelic) manuscripts produced by traditional classical Gaelic learned families, Highland clans and the Church, particularly the Synod of Argyll. Some consideration will be given to the attitudes to the language choice and orthography in these manuscripts as well as the purposes for which they were written.

Silvia Hufnagel (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)

'Old and New: How Old and New Media Influenced Each Other and Society in Iceland during the 16th and 17th Centuries'

Even though the first printing press was established around 1530 in Iceland, manuscript production did not stop. Instead, it grew to new quantitative and qualitative heights and came to include features of printed books. My study investigates the relationship between Icelandic books and manuscripts of the 16th and 17th centuries. The focus is on title pages, as they are a truly innovative feature of printed books that we also find in post-Gutenberg manuscripts.

The objectives of this project concern:

- a) The influence of a new medium on an old, existing medium.
- b) The utilisation of features of the new medium to achieve specific aims and goals.
- c) The impact of this utilisation on society.

Methods to conduct the study of title pages and their sociological impact include content analysis, quantitative codicological analysis

and iconographic/iconologic analysis. As this project has just started, I will give an overview of the planned work, my objectives and methods and will present a preliminary case study of books and manuscripts containing mythical-heroic sagas.

Deirdre Nic Mhathúna (St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin)

Irish manuscript culture – perspectives from within the tradition

This paper will examine central aspects of post-classical Irish language manuscript culture by investigating the transmission of the poetry of seventeenth-century poet Piaras Feiritéar. Aspects of transmission analysed will include an outline of the content of the corpus, information on the scribes who copied Feiritéar's poetry and the dating and geographical distribution of the manuscripts. The relationship between copies of Feiritéar's poems and the extent of textual variations, scribes' understanding of authorship and the possible influence of patrons' tastes and sensibilities on the texts transcribed will also be discussed, as will the relationship between the manuscript tradition and the emerging print culture.

There will be a particular focus on the renowned Ó Longáin scribal family who were central in the transmission of Feiritéar's poetry in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They transcribed many of the manuscripts which contain Feiritéar's poems and the survival of a number of his poems is due to their labours. Other copies can be traced to the Ó Longáin family through a network of scribes who were active in the Munster area in the post-classical period. By concentrating on the corpus of an individual poet, it is hoped that this case study will give an insight into post-print manuscript culture in Ireland that is both sensitive to the tradition and that will be of benefit to future collaborative research between scholars in Ireland, Scotland and Iceland.

Lesá Ní Mhunchaile (New University of Ireland, Galway)

Tiobrach ionmhain ó Fhine Gall: Richard Tipper's Scribal Legacy

This paper will examine the corpus of Irish-language manuscripts written by the Co. Dublin scribe Richard Tipper between the years 1709 and c.1730. He was both a prolific and competent scribe and

approximately thirty manuscripts penned by him are still extant. He was a member of the Tadhg Ó Neachtain school of scholars and scribes active in Dublin during the first quarter of the eighteenth century that produced a vast number of manuscripts comprising historical, hagiographical, legendary and poetic material, particularly from 1710 to 1745.

The focus of the paper will be threefold. First, it will place Tipper in the wider context of his involvement in the Ó Neachtain circle and will examine the extent of the cooperation that existed between him and other scribes. Second, it will consider in detail the content of the manuscripts he transcribed, looking at the genres most common to those codices and comparing them with the corpus created by other members of the Ó Neachtain circle. Third, it will consider in brief the dispersal of Tipper's manuscripts after his death.

Liam Mac Mathúna (University College Dublin)

A tale of two manuscripts: Contrasting the subject-matter and approaches of Tadhg Ó Neachtain in NLI G 198 (1721-29, 1740-46) and BL Egerton 198 (1717)

NLI G 198 is a substantial manuscript, containing more than 600 pages. It mostly consists of geographical and historical material, which was based on English works and composed as a dialogue between Tadhg and his father Seán. As well as this, there are a few pages that describe current affairs. There are around 200 pages in BL Egerton 198. This manuscript consists almost entirely of devotional material, mostly prayers and saints' lives translated from English. This manuscript also contains a significant list by Tadhg that gives a chronological record of the dates of family members' deaths. This paper will examine the range and handling of the subject matter in both manuscripts, comparing them and situating them within Tadhg's scribal corpus.

M. J. Driscoll (University of Copenhagen)

Writing in the twilight: Icelandic scribes on the cusp of the modern era

The first printing press came to Iceland in the early part of the 16th century, but chirographic transmission remained the norm, for certain

types of literature at least, throughout the late pre-modern era. My paper will focus on two of the more prominent and prolific scribes of this last phase of manuscript culture in Iceland, Guðbrandur Sturlaugsson (1820-1897) and Magnús Jónsson (1835-1922), both from the Breiðafjörður region of western Iceland, both essentially ordinary people with little or no formal education who, chiefly for their own pleasure and that of the other members of their households, spent much of their time copying out texts of all kinds, principally sagas and metrical romances (rímur), some going back to the middle ages, others more recent. Although some of this material also found its way into print during this period, the bulk of it did not, circulating entirely in handwritten form and read aloud during the kvöldvaka or 'evening wake'. Even today this vast storehouse of material remains largely unedited and unknown to modern scholarship.

Ulrike Hogg (National Library of Scotland)

Scottish Gaelic manuscripts from the 18th to the early 19th century

The later 18th century saw a rise in Gaelic literacy in Scotland, and with it a growing number of printed publications in Scottish Gaelic. A renewed interest in the language, much increased after the publication of James Macpherson's adaptations of Ossianic verse, brought with it the realisation that much work remained to be done in the collection and analysis of Gaelic poetry.

However, positive developments such as these were offset by a continuing decrease in numbers of the speakers of the language themselves, caused in particular by the Highland clearances and large-scale emigration. Various factors contributed to a loss of common ground between many Highland landlords and their Highland populations, which did not fail to have an impact on Gaelic literary production and scribal activity. The Church, in contrast, was concerned to fulfil its mission in the Highlands by maintaining a strong Gaelic element among its ministers and in its publishing.

This talk will give a broad survey of what manuscript material survives from this period, and of the scribes and their reasons for writing. It will try to trace the changes that we see in Gaelic manuscript production,

and to show which manuscript traditions and types of contents continue, which become more predominant, and which come to an end.

Ruairí Ó hUiginn (New University of Ireland, Maynooth)

Oileamhain Con Culainn and Oidheadh Chonlaoich mhic Con Culainn: Aspects of their history and development

These two closely-related tales are found in numerous manuscripts dating from the 17th to the 19th centuries. Belonging to a later phase of the Ulster Cycle, they represent modernised and expanded versions of the Early Irish Tochmarc Emire (Part II) and Aided Énfir Aífe. As such, they afford us some interesting insights into how earlier material was reworked and transmitted to later audiences or readerships. In preparing an edition of these tales, I have sought to examine their history and transmission, looking at matters such as the distribution of the various witnesses, the identification of discrete versions and their internal manuscript context. In this paper I intend to discuss such issues in relation to these and some other tales.

Dr Maxim Fomin (Ulster University)

'Dá síortha gus an Innia iartharaicc soir: What did Cú Chulainn reply to Conchobhar?'

The Early Modern Irish saga Oidheadh Chloinne Uisnigh presents a challenging task for its researchers. The text is contained in more than 60 manuscripts and is divided by its editor into six major recensions. For the purposes of my talk, I will look at the phrase 'gus an Innia iartharraig soir' ("to the distant India in the east") and discuss its various lectiones contained in the extensive MSS tradition of the text. I will also look at the different ways India was depicted in the late medieval and early Modern Irish literary tradition as reflected in these readings.

Pádraig Ó Macháin (University College Cork)

The rise of the Gaelic paper manuscript

This talk will consider some of the implications for the Gaelic manuscript tradition of the change from vellum to paper as the principal material in manuscripts from c. 1600 onwards.

The overall objectives of this conference are (i) to look at the later Irish, Scottish and Icelandic manuscript cultures of this period in a comparative way, (ii) attempt to identify commonalities and differences between scribal practices in each country, and (iii) to establish further avenues for comparative study of the post-print manuscript tradition in the 'Atlantic fringe' area.



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