Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin: scribe and illuminator (*fl.* 1475)

Andrea Palandri

DIAS

Institiúid Ard-Léinn | Dublin Institute for
Bhaile Átha Cliath | Advanced Studies

TADHG ÚA RÍGHBHARDÁIN: SCRIBE AND ILLUMINATOR (*fl.* 1475)

Abstract

This article discusses all known manuscripts written by Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin, a prolific scribe and illuminator from the North-East Munster and Leinster border area who flourished during the mid-1470s. The history of these manuscripts is updated from the library catalogues where possible, and a new manuscript is added to those we can now list as being in the hand of this scribe — Rennes, Bibliothèque de Rennes Métropole MS 598. A list of all the texts copied by this scribe is provided and various sections of a number of them are reproduced in a discussion of his copying practices. This is followed by an analysis of the scribal and orthographical features typical of this scribe and the article concludes with a discussion of a number of spellings that may reveal aspects of the regional variety of Early Modern Irish that he spoke.

Introduction

Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin is the name of a scribe and illuminator who worked on and signed a number of Irish manuscripts during the late fifteenth century, three of which contain colophons written directly by him and two of which are dated to the first half of the 1470s. In this article I will show that a fourth manuscript, Bibliothèque de Rennes Métropole MS 598, was also written by Úa Ríghbhardáin in or after 1476, though his signature does not survive in it. In addition to sharing a great deal of scribal and illumination features, these four manuscripts also contain many of the same texts and literary themes, as well as sharing some linguistic and orthographic consistencies which set Úa Ríghbhardáin's work apart from that of other contemporary scribes who copied the same texts in other manuscripts during the late fifteenth century. In this article I will present this evidence and conclude with what can be surmised of Úa Ríghbhardáin's life and work. I will begin with an overview of the four manuscripts, adding, where possible, to the information in the various library catalogues about them.

Several transcriptions from manuscript colophons and portions from previously unedited texts are reproduced in this article, for which I have adopted a number of editorial conventions: 1) suspension strokes have been expanded in italics; 2) standard abbreviation conventions have been expanded silently where the spelling is unambiguous; 3) capitalisation and punctuation have been inserted in keeping with modern practice; 4) macrons are inserted where length marks are not found in the manuscript.

MANUSCRIPTS

1) RIA MS 3 B 22 (1226) and RIA MS 3 B 23 (1227) (= TC)

These two manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy were once bound together and formed part of the same manuscript, which has been called the Tallaght Codex (TC) by some and for convenience of reference will also be referred to as such in this article.[1] A detailed palaeographical and codicological analysis of TC along with a discussion on the origins of the shapes of the letters found in Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy of *Aibbgitir Crábaid* is being prepared by Dr Chantal Kobel. I have written the following brief description of TC after consulting her forthcoming research.[2]

Ua Ríghbhardáin was probably the sole scribe and illuminator of TC. In fact, it is argued in this article that the changes in style of script[3] in Úa Ríghbhardáin's manuscripts are not due to a change in scribe but rather show the same scribe's dexterity in altering calligraphic style. This is common in all of Úa Righbhardáin's works and similar variations in style of script recur throughout his manuscripts. TC contains no internal date and its contents are all, broadly speaking, devotional prose works. The manuscript strikes one as being somewhat less ornate than Úa Ríghbhardáin's other surviving works. A crude measurement of this may be represented by the ratio of illuminated initials that measure five or more lines in height per page of manuscript, which is 0.1, indicating that on average one in every ten pages contains an illumination of this kind.[4] The fact that, when compared with Úa Ríghbhardáin's other works, this manuscript does not show a great deal of decoration may indicate that the scribe was either conforming to the preferences of a particular patron or perhaps that TC is one of the scribe's earlier works, written before he fully developed the artistry and skill in illumination found in his other, possibly later, works. For example, the absence in TC of zoomorphic initials, which occur in all the scribe's other works, may further support this second hypothesis. I am not aware of any other way to relate TC chronologically to the rest of Úa Ríghbhardáin's surviving manuscripts other than by making this tentative suggestion.

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[1] *RIACat* 3357–60 and 3360–4 (nos 1226 and 1227). See also W. Follett, 'Religious texts in the Mac Aodhagáin Library of Lower Ormond', *Peritia* 24/25 (2013–14), 213–29, at 221–2; R. McLaughlin, 'A text on almsgiving in RIA MS B 23 and the *Leabhar Breac*', *Ériu* 62 (2012), 113–83, at 114; R. McLaughlin, 'A Latin-Irish commentary on Psalm 68.10', in Caoimhín Breatnach, Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail and Gordon Ó Riain (eds), *Lorg na Leabhar: A Festschrift for Pádraig A. Breatnach* (Dublin, 2019), 175–96, at 175; C. Ó Maonaigh (ed.), *Smaointe Beatha Chríost* (Dublin, 1944), xxxi.

[2] While preparing this article I was fortunate enough to discover that my colleague Dr Kobel had also been researching the work of Úa Ríghbhardáin. This article has been greatly improved by Dr Kobel's suggestions and her understanding of the topic. I hope that my research will also prove of help to her and I draw the reader's attention to her forthcoming article on TC. I also would like to thank Dr Kobel, as well as the anonymous peer reviewer, for their useful suggestions which greatly improved this article.

[3] For example, on pp. 33–8 of RIA MS 3 B 22.

[4] I count 22 illuminated initials measuring five or more lines over 195 pages in B.

Ua Ríghbhardáin's colophon is found at the end of his copy of *Aibbgitir Crábaid*, a text which interrupts the sequence of the Monastery of Tallaght in the manuscript:[5]

> Is fó cech ní sluindess ind lebar-sa día tuicmis hé, ⁊ a comald*adh*, Tadcc Ua Rigbard*án* qui scribsit ⁊ ni hanmfis tuc ind a. b. c. d. eidir na riaglaib acht d'ecla a faccbalae.

> 'Good is everything that this book relates, if we understood it, and good it is to fulfil it. Tadcc Úa Rígbardán is the one who wrote, and it is not lack of learning that placed the *Aibbgitir Crábaid* between the Rules (of Tallaght), but for fear of leaving it out.'[6]

A number of later non-scribal signatures in the margins of RIA MS 3 B 22 (1226) indicate that at least this part of TC was in the possession of the descendants of the Mac Aodhagáin and Ó Ceinnéidigh families of Lower Ormond during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[7] The pagination in pencil which runs across the two manuscripts is clearly non-scribal and may have been inserted when previously loose quires of TC were brought together in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. On the other hand, two facts support the theory that the two manuscripts were conceived as a single work, namely: 1) there is no overlap in content between the two manuscripts of TC; and 2) all the texts in them are more or less thematically homogeneous.

2) RIA MS 24 P 1 (1228) (= P)

This manuscript (henceforth P) is one of the most ornate and illuminated of Úa Ríghbhardáin's surviving works with an average of 1.2 illuminated initials measuring five lines or more on every page, more than one per page.[8] Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin is the sole scribe of this manuscript. Like TC, all the texts that survive in the manuscript are works of devotional prose. Two colophons survive in P, one giving the date 1473 and the second giving the name of the scribe. This is therefore Úa Ríghbhardáin's earliest datable manuscript:

> Mili bliadhan ⁊ cethri cét ⁊ trī bliadhna déc ⁊ tri fichit in t-annāl*adh* an tan-so.

> 'One thousand and four hundred and seventy three (1473) is the year at this time.'[9]

> Tadg Ūa Rīgbardān qui scribsit ⁊ cach aen léighfius tabr*adh* b*ean*dacht ar a anmain ⁊ ar anam an tí ō fúair.

> 'Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin is the one who wrote this and may everyone who reads this give a blessing on his soul and on the soul of the person from whom he got it.'[10]

[5]*RIACat* 3363 (no. 1227).
[6]RIA MS 3 B 23, p. 51a16–20. Translation is my own.
[7]*RIACat* 3357–8; Follett, 'Religious texts', 222.
[8]I count 85 illuminated initials measuring five or more lines over 72 pages.
[9]P, p. 14bz. Translation is my own.
[10]P, p. 52by–z. Translation is my own.

This manuscript appears in Muiris Ó Gormáin's 1772 catalogue of his personal collection,[11] much of which was inherited by Henry Wright after Ó Gormáin's death in 1794, who in turn sold it to Edward O'Reilly. After O'Reilly's death the manuscript was bought at auction by Robert MacAdam in 1830.[12] Little is known of how Ó Gormáin came into possession of P, or of the history of this manuscript between 1473 and 1772. The age of the manuscript was correctly calculated from Úa Ríghbhardáin's first colophon by anonymous readers in 1698 (p. 15) and 1732 (p. 14).

3) TCD MS 1303 (= Trinity)
The manuscript now known as TCD MS 1303 was rebound to its current state in 1982.[13]

It was formally divided into four manuscripts, which I list here in the order in which they have been reassembled: 1303 (H. 2. 12, no. 2); 1309 (H. 2. 12, no. 9); 1304 (H. 2. 12, no. 3); 1307 (H. 2. 12, no. 6).[14] The last of these, 1307, contains two folios that were most likely used as wrappers and which do not concern us here.[15] The first three however, 1303–1309–1304, i.e. up to fol. 34v of the new manuscript,[16] are all in the hand of Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin and appear to come from the same, once much larger, manuscript. For ease of reference I will refer to this as the Trinity manuscript.

The Trinity manuscript was once part of the collection of the Welsh antiquarian Edward Lhuyd (1660–1709) who collected 'about 20–30 Irish manuscripts on parchment'[17] during his travels through Ireland between 1699 and 1700.[18] An Irish ownership mark by a certain *Ruoighdhridh Ui Guidh[i]r* is found in the lower margin of fol. 18r, and another very faded signature in English, *Lauren[t] Haghy*, is found in the lower margin of fol. 11r. The northern association of these names (probably Mág Uidhir and Ó hEochaidh) may suggest that the manuscript was among those acquired by Lhuyd during

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[11]Lesa Ní Mhunghaile, 'An eighteenth-century Gaelic scribe's private library: Muiris Ó Gormáin's books', *PRIA* 110C (2010), 239–76, at 269 n. 6. This catalogue is in RIA MS 23 H 23.

[12]Ní Mhunghaile, 'Muiris Ó Gormáin's books', 267. *RIACat* 3365.

[13]Trinity College Library M&ARL Online Catalogue, ref. no. IE TCD MS 1303. See https://manuscripts.catalogue.tcd.ie/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=IE+TCD+MS+1303&pos=1 (accessed 13 January 2021).

[14]T. K. Abbott and E. J. Gwynn, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin, 1921), 84–6.

[15]I take this information from the conservationist's note which is attached to the inside of the back cover.

[16]Fol. 34 has been mutilated and only a slither of about a centimetre in width and a third of a folio in length survives. It is nonetheless possible to make out, I believe, that the hand is the same as that of the previous folia, i.e. that of Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin.

[17]From a letter dated 25 August 1700, in R. T. Gunther, *Life and Letters of Edward Lhwyd, Second Keeper of the Musaeum Ashmoleanum*, Early Science at Oxford 14 (Oxford, 1945).

[18]For a description of Lhuyd's tour see J. L. Campbell, 'The tour of Edward Lhuyd in Ireland in 1699 and 1700', *Celtica* 5 (1983), 218–28.

his journey through Ulster in the summer of 1699,[19] possibly from Eoin
Ó Gnímh from whom he bought about a dozen manuscripts in Larne.[20]

That the Trinity manuscript is a collection of fragments from a larger
manuscript is suggested by a number of quire markers in Úa Ríghbhardáin's
hand. Marking the beginning of a new quire we find 'R' in the lower margin
of fol. 1r; anticipating the following, now lost, quire after 'R' we find the
catchletter 'S' in the lower margin of fol. 10v; next we find 'T' in the lower
margin of 11r and finally 'X' on 29r.[21] There is an average of 0.5 illuminated
initials measuring five lines or more per page, i.e. one every five pages.[22]

Two dated colophons by the scribe survive in the Trinity manuscript, in-
dicating that the quires 'T' through to 'X' were written before and after the
Annunciation of 1475, i.e. the 25th of March, the feast-day that marked the
beginning of the new year at the time:

> Tadg Ua Rīgbardāin qui scribsit ⁊ cach oen léghfas tabr*adh* ben-
> nacht co paidir for a anamain ⁊ is *eadh* do bo sl*án* don tigearna
> an tan-so míle bliadhan ⁊ cethri cét ⁊ cethri blliadhna déc ⁊ tri fi-
> chit gusa Sanais so cugaind ⁊ an Sanais ⁊ ind eisēirghi ar óenlíth
> i*n* bliadhain-sin.

> 'Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin is the one who wrote and may everyone
> who reads (it) give a blessing and a prayer for his soul. The age of
> the Lord at this time is one thousand four hundred and seventy four
> (1474) up until the next Annunciation. The Annunciation and the
> Resurrection will be on the same feast in that year.'[23]

> Iss *eadh* do ba slán do Ísa ac scrib*adh* na sdaire so .i. mīle bliad*han*
> ⁊ cethri cét ⁊ cóic bliadhna décc ⁊ tri fichit cosa sanais so do cúaid
> tort ⁊ día na Sanaisi ⁊ aidhq*ui* na heisērgi a*r* aenlíth. Tadg Úa
> Rīgbardāin qui scribsit.[24]

> 'The age of Jesus at the time of the writing of this history was one
> thousand four hundred and seventy five (1475) up until the last
> Annunciation, and the day of Annunciation and the night of the
> Resurrection fall on the same feast day. Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin is
> the one who wrote.'

Easter Sunday fell on the 26th of March in 1475, the day after the Feast of
the Annunciation and therefore the second day of the new year by medieval

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[19]Trinity College Library M&ARL Online Catalogue, IE TCD MS 1303: https:
//manuscripts.catalogue.tcd.ie/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=IE+TCD+
MS+1303&pos=1 (accessed 13 January 21). No manuscript with a description that clearly
matches the contents of the Trinity manuscript is described by Lhuyd in his brief catalogue of
Irish manuscripts, which included his personal collection, published in 1707 in his *Archaeologia
Britannica*, 435–6. Campbell, 'Tour', 220–1.

[20]Campbell, 'Tour', 221.

[21]I am indebted to Dr Chantal Kobel for sharing this observation with me.

[22]I count 15 illuminated initials measuring five or more lines over 70 pages.

[23]Trinity, fol. 18va10–14. Translation is my own.

[24]Trinity, fol. 29vb24–7. Translation is my own.

Irish reckoning. This is significant because the year 1475 (beginning 25 March 1475 and ending 24 March 1476 by our reckoning today) would have had no Holy Week, since Easter fell on 14 April in 1476. This important detail, besides giving context to our scribe's two notes on this calendrical phenomenon, helps us provide a *terminus post quem* for another colophon found in what I take to be the fourth of Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin's manuscripts.

4) Rennes, Bibliothèque de Rennes Métropole MS 598 (= R)

This manuscript (henceforth R) contains no scribal signatures or dates by Úa Ríghbhardáin and the scribe has so far not been identified. The images reproduced from all aforementioned manuscripts in the next section demonstrate, I believe, that Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin was both the scribe and illuminator of the entire manuscript. The manuscript is divided into three sections.[25] In the first section, i.e. fols 1–74, an average of 0.5 illuminated initials measuring five lines or more occur per page. In the second section, fols 75–89, there are no illuminations of this type and many spaces for illuminated initials are left blank, especially after fol. 80r. The final section, fols 90–125, appears initially to be the most illuminated section of all of Úa Ríghbhardáin's manuscripts, since we find an average of 1.5 illuminations of five lines or more per page up until fol. 107, but after this point all the initials are incomplete. The unfinished state of the illumination in large parts of R, especially when compared to the completeness of the artistry in other manuscripts by the same scribe, may suggest that Úa Ríghbhardáin was unable to finish the manuscript.

R contains a copy of Fínghean Ó Mathghamhna's translation of the Book of John Mandeville, which was completed in 1475 in Ros Broin, West Cork, indicating that the manuscript must have been written after that. A scribal note, written in the same ink and script as the Mandeville text under which it is placed, indicates that the scribe copied that text in Cill Chréidhe, in the lands of Mac Carthaigh Múscraighe in Cork. The scribe's comment on the people with whom he was staying implies that he was not at home in this community, and that he may have travelled there for the specific purpose of copying a text from a library in Cill Chréidhe.

> Dardaeín Manndála indiú ⁊ ar comarci an fir do caithes indiú damh ⁊ a Cill Crēidhi damh ⁊ dom aithni ní gúi-trēang*ach* an muindtir gá tú.

> 'Today is Holy Thursday and I am under the protection of the man of whom I partook today. I am in Cill Chréidhe, and I recognize that the people with whom I am are not ones to feign the fast.'[26]

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[25] Dottin also noticed this division. See G. Dottin, 'Notice du manuscrit irlandais de la Bibliothèque de Rennes', *RC* 15 (1894), 79–91, at 79.

[26] R, fol. 69r lower margin. Translation is my own.

The final part of this note has long been left untranslated[27] and it is acknowledged that the interpretation proposed here is not entirely satisfactory since it relies on *trēangach* being a spelling for *tredhnach* 'fasting, abstinent' (< Lat. *triduana*) and the first syllable to be *gú-/gó-* 'false'. The word *gúitreangach*, as it appears in the manuscript, is otherwise unattested. Nevertheless, if the interpretation is correct the scribe appears to have been commenting on the fact that he was unable to get any meal other than the Eucharist on that particular day, Holy Thursday, due to the strict observance of the Triduum fast (from Holy Thursday to Holy Saturday) among the people with whom he was staying to copy Fínghean Ó Mathghamhna's Mandeville, perhaps the Franciscans in Cill Chréidhe or the nearby residence of Cormac Láidir Mac Carthaigh Múscraighe. As discussed above, the year 1475 (beginning 25 March 1475 and ending 24 March 1476) had no Holy Week since Easter fell on 14 April 1476. Therefore, this note, written on Holy Thursday below a text that was not completed until 1475, illustrates that this part of R must have been written in or after 1476.

Ua Ríghbhardáin's description of the strict rule of the Triduum fast in Cill Chréidhe that, if the interpretation suggested above is correct, caused him to go hungry while he copied the Mandeville there fits well with the account we have of this area at the time. Indeed, Cormac Láidir Mac Carthaigh Múscraighe, who founded the Franciscan friary in Cill Chréidhe in 1465, ordered a strict observance of the Sabbath during his reign and is remembered in the annals as a deeply religious man.[28] He was killed by his brother in 1495.

A very faded note, revealing some of the later context of R, is found on the final folio of the manuscript. While studying the manuscript, Georges Dottin sent a transcription of this note to Douglas Hyde who in turn published it in *Revue Celtique* in 1895 with a translation. I have re-transcribed this note from manuscript images kindly supplied to me by Professor Pádraig Ó Macháin[29] and have, I believe, improved on some of the readings and translations published by Hyde.[30] Words and letters between square brackets indicate that the manuscript is illegible in those points.

> Beannacht Dé agus mo bheannacht-sa ar thshealbhadóiribh an leabhair-si cibé hiad féin agus go soirbhighidh Dia dóibh agus don té agana bhfuil sé ann[ois], Conchubhar Mac Clannchadha

[27] J. Abercromby, 'Two Irish 15th century versions of Sir John Mandeville's travels', *RC* 7 (1886), 66–79, 210–24, 358–68, 451, at 286 n. 22: 'Today is Maunday Thursday, and I am under the safeguard of Him Whom I partook of today, and in Cell Crede am I: and I know that the community with whom I am is not ...?'; Dottin, 'Notice', 87–8: 'C'est aujourd'hui le jeudi saint et je me mets sous la protection de celui que j'ai reçu (littéralement 'mangé') aujourd'hui, et je suis à Kilcrea et la communauté avec la-quelle je demeure... '. The final part of the colophon is not addressed by John Fleming in 'Old Irish and the spoken language', *The Academy* 36 (1889), 170–1, at 171 col. 1.

[28] *AFM* 1495.3.

[29] I am indebted to Professor Ó Macháin for providing me with high definition images of R, which he was able to see in 2019.

[30] See Douglas Hyde, 'Deux notes du manuscrit irlandais de Rennes,' *RC* 16 (1895), 420. In particular, I think Hyde's reading *don chaillín Uileg* can be confidently corrected to *Dún Chaillín mo log*.

m[...]on*n* m*hei*c Aodha ⁊ Dūn Caillīn [mo] log ⁊ go sdiur*aidh*i
Dia Uilleg Búrc agā bfuilimsi 'na loc slán ōn tsibhul-sa síos [...]
*mi*llesimo quinquagesimus octagesimo sexto.

'God's blessing and my own blessing on the possessors of this
book, whoever they be, and may God help them and the person who
has it now, Conchubhar Mac Fhlannchadha m[...]on*n* mhic Aodha
and Dunkellin is my location, and may God guide Ulick Burke,
in whose place I am, safely back from this following journey [...]
1586.'

The journey referred to here, though illegible in the manuscript, is probably
the return of Uilleag Búrc, third earl of Clanrickard between 1582–1601,
from Dublin in 1586 after he was summoned to parliament there in 1585.[31]
Conchubhar Mac Fhlannchadha was likely a member of the Síol Fhlannchadha
of Tradraighe who may have been staying in Dún Caillín, seat of the
Clanrickard Burkes, while he offered legal services to the earl, a common
practice among his kinsmen in the sixteenth century.[32] This is the earliest
datable ownership note in R and indicates that by the end of the sixteenth
century, about a century after the book was written by our scribe, the
manuscript was in the possession of a member of Síol Fhlannchadha of
Tradraighe. Whether Úa Ríghbhardáin originally wrote R for a member of this
family during the fifteenth century or whether Conchubhar Mac Fhlannchadha
came by it later is difficult to ascertain.

Another two undated marginal notes in R further suggest that the
manuscript was being used by members of Síol Fhlannchadha during the
sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first is a faded note in the lower
margin of fol. 52r, a part of which reads: [...] mēg t*haidh*g mēg flanch*adha* [...];
the second is a signature in English on fol. 18r that reads: Hugo McClanagh.
Another interesting note was added on fol. 74v by a certain Éamonn Óg Ó
Ceallaigh in 1599:

Ambitiosus honos luxus turpisque voluptas
haec tria pro trino numine mundus habet
Misi Ēmand Óg Ó Cealluigh do scríobh an rand Laidhni-si a baile
puirt an Ridiri, .i. ansa Ghleand, an seiseadh lā do mī Auguist 1599
an céad blian do cogadh Muimhneach an aigaidhi Gall ⁊ go ma
leo-san ēreōchas sin mā tā toil Dia linn docum na guighi-sin do
dhēnamh.

'*Ambitious honour, sumptuousness and indecent pleasure,*
The world has these three instead of the Holy Trinity.
It is me Eamonn Óg Ó Ceallaigh who wrote this Latin verse, in the
port town of the Knight (of Kerry), i.e. in Glin, the sixth day of
August 1599, the first year of the war of the Munstermen against

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[31]*AFM* 1585.8–14.
[32]Luke McInerney, 'A Mac Fhlannchadha fosterage document, *c*. 1580: notes on the Síol
Fhlannchadha of Tradraighe,' *The Irish Genealogist* 13.2 (2011), 93–129, at 100–1.

the foreigners, and may they be successful if God's help is with us to answer that prayer.'

I am aware of no other information regarding this Éamonn Óg Ó Ceallaigh that might explain how he could have crossed paths with the manuscript in Glin, Co. Limerick, in 1599. The 'war of the Munstermen' probably refers to the Earl of Essex's incursion into the lands of the Geraldines in June of 1599.[33] Interestingly, the same Uilleag Búrc mentioned in the note by Conchubhar Mac Fhlannchadha and written 13 years earlier in the same manuscript, was on the side of the Earl of Essex in this war and met with him in Limerick that year to form a strategy against the Geraldines.[34] Ó Ceallaigh's enthusiasm for the Geraldine victory in 1599 is therefore curious in the context of the manuscript's location in Uilleag Búrc's home in 1586.[35]

The later history of R — its arrival in France and how Christophe-Paule Gantron de Robien, who left the manuscript with the public library of Rennes after his death in 1756,[36] came to own the manuscript — remains to be studied and is beyond the immediate scope of this article. However, Todd's suggestion[37] that the note in the left margin of fol. 37v[38] is in the hand of Charles O'Conor of Belanagare can be easily disproven by comparing it with O'Conor's notes in the margins of the Book of Ballymote.[39]

SCRIPT TYPES

Main script type

Close comparison of these four manuscripts shows that Úa Ríghbhardáin was able to write in a variety of scripts and would often change the shape of his letters within the same line, a practice not uncommon among his peers.[40] Nevertheless, in the interest of defining Úa Ríghbhardáin's main calligraphic style throughout his scribal career, four commonly-recurring letter shapes, which are distinctive of his hand and are all taken from a single column of each of the

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[33]*AFM* 1599.31.

[34]*AFM* 1599.30.

[35]The name Ó Ceallaigh may indicate that the author of this note was from the Uí Mhaine territory of south-east Connacht and indeed the extra syllable in the spelling *aighaidhi* (OIr *agad* > ModIr *aghaidh*) may suggest that he spoke a late early-modern variety of Connacht Irish. The pronunciation represented by *aighaidhi* is most likely əiə, which is described by Ruairí Ó hUiginn in his chapter on 'Gaeilge Chonnacht' in *SnaG*, 555 (VII 2.32) and by Éamonn Mhac an Fhailigh, *The Irish of Erris, Co. Mayo* (Dublin, 1968), 142 (§325). It was also commented upon by Ó Máille (T. Ó Máille, *Urlabhraidheacht agus Graiméar na Gaeilge* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1927), 86 (§340)).

[36]A. Vétault (et al.), *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France: Départements*, vol. 24 (Paris, 1894), 255–60.

[37]J. H. Todd, 'Some account of the Irish MS. deposited by the President De Robien in the Public Library of Rennes', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy Irish MSS series* 1 (1870), 66–81, at 72; Dottin, 'Notice', 79 n. 2.

[38]The note reads: is tearc duine an Ērinn do-nī a faesid*in* mar adeir an leabar-so. 'Few people in Ireland make their confession as this book says.' Transcription and translation are my own.

[39]For an example see RIA MS 23 P 12 (Book of Ballymote), fol. 7vb.

[40]Dr Kobel has a thorough discussion of this practice in late-fifteenth century manuscripts, including TC, in her forthcoming article.

scribe's surviving manuscripts, are described below and reproduced in figure 1 (p. 144).

The combination of the following characteristics distinguishes Úa Ríghbhardáin's main hand: the first is the most-commonly occurring shape of the letter **a**, which has a distinctive rightward point at its top, as well as a small upward stroke at the bottom of the right minim; the second is the design of the letter **d**, which is characterised by a downward curve or flick at the start of the top horizontal stroke; thirdly, the horizontal stroke on top of the letter **g** ends in an upward curve to the right, and the tail of the letter is usually a closed loop; lastly, the -**us** compendium usually reaches round and above the height of the previous minim.

Another typical feature of Úa Ríghbhardáin's general style is to mark the end of the text with a distinctive, often rubricated, *FINIT*, which is sometimes accompanied by or substituted for *AMEN*. While *FINIT*s are common in Early Modern Irish manuscripts, the combination of a smaller *t* at the end of the *FINIT*, together with long horizontal strokes in the **F** and **N** which help fill the line, and the occasional diagonal strokes between the letters, is quite distinctive of this scribe. These characteristics are exemplified in figure 2 (p. 145).

Secondary Script Types

At a glance, all of these manuscripts give the impression of being collaborations between multiple scribes, or at least of being the work of a main scribe who was being assisted by relief scribes.[41] But closer examination and cross-comparison of all of Úa Ríghbhardáin's surviving works raise a number of questions regarding these changes in script which are not easily explained by interventions of relief scribes. For example, a change in script occurs in half a column of the copy of Mandeville in R,[42] a text which, as the above discussion of the marginal note on fol. 69r shows, Úa Ríghbhardáin copied in Cill Chréidhe. First-person singular forms are used four times in this note, giving a strong impression that the scribe journeyed and worked alone, *a Cill Crēidhi damh*, and that he alone stayed with the people there, *an muindtir gá tú*. It is difficult to reconcile the context revealed by this comment with that of a scribal school where Úa Ríghbhardáin was supervising the work of a relief or trainee scribe. Instead, explaining this change in script as the scribe's conscious choice to create a visual effect that could enhance the appearance of the page is precisely consistent with the type of scribal and artistic decisions Úa Ríghbhardáin was making when he wrote TC. These decisions are discussed in detail in a forthcoming article by Dr Chantal Kobel, in which she makes a compelling case that variations in script are used by Úa Ríghbhardáin in TC to impart a higher status to certain texts.

The implications of Kobel's observations are that, in Úa Ríghbhardáin's work at least, the visual effect of a change in script was considered to be part of

[41] Todd argued that Rennes was the work of two scribes. Todd, 'Some account', 69–70. This claim was repeated recently in Denise Maher, *Kilcrea Friary: Franciscan Heritage in County Cork* (Ballincollig, 1999), 26.

[42] R, fol. 61va. See R2 in figure 3.
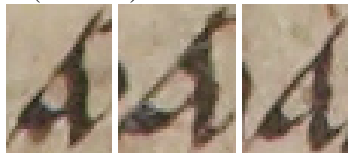
a **TC** (RIA MS 3 B 22, p. 51a)   **P** (p. 52b)

Trinity (fol. 8va)   **R** (fol. 69ra)

d **TC** (RIA MS 3 B 22, p. 51a)   **P** (p. 52b)

Trinity (fol. 8va)   **R** (fol. 69ra)
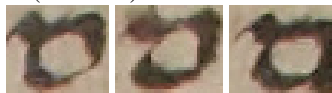
g **TC** (RIA MS 3 B 22, p. 51a)   **P** (p. 52b)
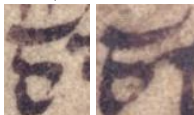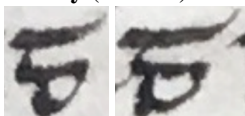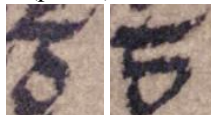
Trinity (fol. 8va)   **R** (fol. 69ra)

-us **TC** (RIA MS 3 B 22, p. 51a)   **P** (p. 52b)
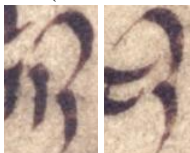
Trinity (fol. 8va)   **R** (fol. 69ra)

Figure 1: letter types

TC
RIA MS 3 B 23, fol. 57a

P
p. 70b

RIA MS 3 B 22, p. 5

p. 11b

RIA MS 3 B 23 p. 80

p. 16a

Trinity
fol. 6rb

R
fol. 49rb

fol. 8r

fol. 74rb

fol. 30vb

fol. 29rbx
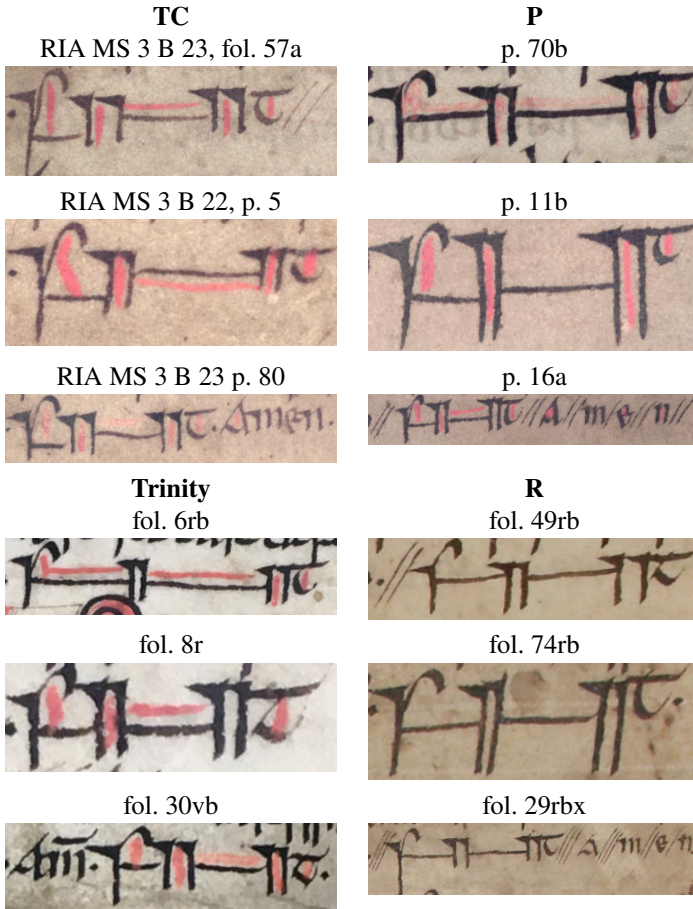
Figure 2: 'Finit' and 'Amen'

the artistry of the manuscript and that the physical aspect of a manuscript page could be enhanced not only by illumination but also by the combination of a variety of calligraphic styles. The appreciation for this style ma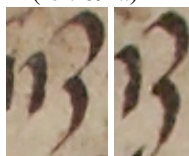y have developed out of the esteem in which older Irish manuscripts, produced in scholastic settings or commissioned by wealthy patrons from several scribes, were held by the learned classes. Úa Ríghbhardáin's variation in styles of script throughout his work may be explained as an artificial imitation of these high-status books, which often display a panoply of different hands.[43] It is unlikely that there was ever a pretence in Úa Ríghbhardáin's work, however, of trying to

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[43] See E. Duncan, 'The palaeography of H in Lebor na hUidre', in R. Ó hUiginn (ed.), *Lebor na hUidre*, Codices Hibernenses Eximii I (Dublin, 2015), 29–52; C. Eska, 'Rethinking the palaeography of H in Lebor na hUidre', *Peritia* 29 (2018), 65–79; E. Duncan, 'The Book of Ballymote: a reappraisal of the hand formerly attributed to Maghnus Ó Duibhgeannáin', in R. Ó hUiginn (ed.), *Book of Ballymote*, Codices Hibernenses Eximii II (Dublin, 2018), 273–300.

pass his manuscripts off as older than they actually were, as his comment under the Mandeville text in R, *a Cill Creidhi damh* and *an muindtir gá tú*, implies that he was the sole scribe of that text, despite the apparent change in hand only a few pages before, on fol. 61v (see figure 3).

Figure 3 contains examples of Úa Ríghbhardáin's hands in all these manuscripts. The first row contains examples of his main hand; the second contains examples of what I suggest are imitations of relief scribes; the third contains examples of a change in script style that is sustained across numerous folios, which are only found in TC and R. In R, most of the third section of the manuscript is written in this style. The final row contains an example from TC of the kind of 'peculiarities' discussed by Kobel in her forthcoming article, and first considered by the editors of the text in question, *The Monastery of Tallaght*.[44]

Isolating the specific features common to all of Úa Ríghbhardáin's changes in script style and describing the techniques used to achieve the visual effect of a change in hands is a challenging task. Nevertheless, the examples given in the second row show that: a) he consistently reduces the size of the script compared to his main hand; and b) he often slants the descenders of *f, p, r, s* more than he usually does with his main hand. Despite the apparent subtlety of these changes, the effect achieved is visually striking. All of these styles are variations of his main hand, the most distinctive features of which, described above, can still be observed in his alternative script styles. Significantly, the abbreviation conventions remain consistent throughout the variations in script.

As regards the broader significance of Úa Ríghbhardáin's changes in styles of script, a connection can furthermore be made here between the artificial imitation of secondary scribes, which I have argued is found in the work of this scribe, the standing of archaic orthography in Early Modern Irish manuscripts and the increasing tendency of scribes and authors of the period to display erudition and awareness of Old Irish forms in their texts. If the regard for the Irish manuscript tradition and all that it carried with it — its variation in hands and letter shapes, its archaic orthography and linguistic forms — was such that solitary, and probably professional, scribes in the fifteenth century were fashioning new manuscripts to incorporate as much of that artistry and variation as they could possibly recognise and imitate, it is easy to understand how such a learned culture would have seen little value in the advantages offered by the development of the printing press in fifteenth-century Europe. Indeed, the variations in orthography and the use of archaic linguistic forms are as diametrically opposed to the editorial decisions favourable to the preparation of a text for print as this appreciation for variant script types is to the appeal of a standard printed typeface.

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[44]E. J. Gwynn and W. J. Purton (eds and trans.), 'The monastery of Tallaght', *PRIA* 29 C (1911–12), 115–79.

1 TC (3 B 22, p. 103b9–19)

P (p. 23b8–18)

Trinity (fol. 3rb8–18)

R (fol. 31rb1–10)

2 TC (3 B 22, p. 75b8–16)

P (p. 48a10–20)

Trinity (fol. 7vb1–10)

R (fol. 61va7–17)

Figure 3: secondary script types

3 TC (3 B 22, p. 33a14–24)
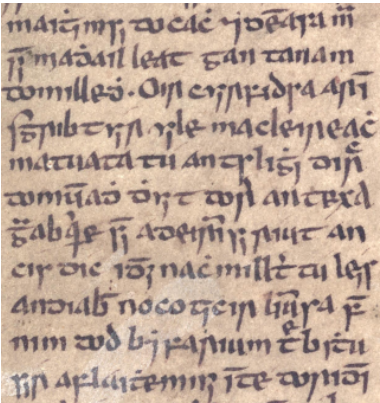
R (fol. 113rb17–28)
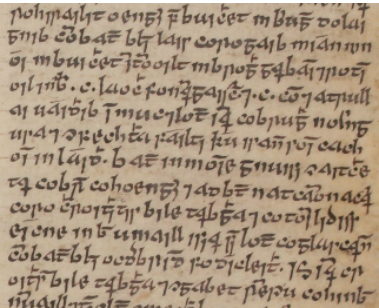
4 TC (3 B 23, p. 44a3–14)
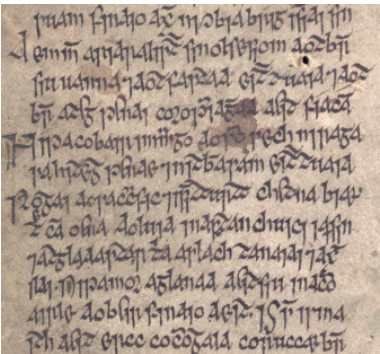
Figure 3 (cont'd): secondary script types

Illumination

The artistry found in Úa Ríghbhardáin's manuscripts is deserving of a study in and of itself, but since the unique opportunity afforded by these manuscripts to study the artwork of four closely related medieval books written by the same person is best left to someone more competent in the field of Irish manuscript illumination than this author, I will limit myself to reproducing a few images.[45] To demonstrate the consistent similarities between the illuminations found in Úa Ríghbhardáin's manuscripts, similarities which suggest, I believe, that he decorated as well as wrote his books, a number of examples are reproduced in figure 4 from all of his surviving manuscripts.

[45]For a discussion on the inspiration for Úa Ríghbhardáin's illuminations the reader is redirected to the forthcoming article by Dr Kobel.

Knotted

Zoomorphic

TC (p.1a)

P (p. 66b)

P (p.17a)

Trinity (fol. 1ra)

Trinity (30vb)

R (fol. 2ra)

R (fol. 4ra)

Figure 4: illumination

The following section contains a table (figure 5) of all surviving texts copied by Úa Ríghbhardáin. Re-examination of these manuscripts has revealed that several texts in TC, P and the Trinity manuscript had been either miscatalogued or omitted entirely from the library catalogues. In most cases I have been able to identify the text. These newly identified texts are accompanied by an asterisk in the table below. The texts are listed according to the order in which they appear in TC, followed by that of P, followed by that of the Trinity manuscript and finally by that of R. Numbers beside the titles in the columns for P, Trinity and R indicate the order in which the texts follow one another in those manuscripts today. The diverse titles used to label the same texts in the various manuscript catalogues are reproduced here for ease of reference, unless the text has been miscatalogued, in which case a correct title is used and the mistake in the catalogue is discussed in the footnote.

TC	P	Trinity	R
RIA MS 3 B 22			
Homily on Passion and Death of Christ p. 1a1–5b12			8) Traité de la Passion du Christ fol. 31vb16–33vb28
Homily on the Virgin Mary p. 5b13–6bz (defective)[46]	5) Homily on the Virgin Mary p. 15a1–16bz		3) Homélie sur la sainte Vierge fol. 25ra1–26b5
Homily on Mary*[47] p. 7a1–9b20 (acephalous)			2) Homélie fol. 23vb11–24vbz
Homily on Christian Government p. 9b21–11az			
Homily on the Love of God p. 11b1–12bz (defective)			5) Homélie fol. 28va23–29rb17
Homily on Loving God*[48] p. 13.1–17a25			4) Homélie fol. 26rb11–28va22
Homily on the Punishment due to Sin p. 17a26–25a22			17) Recueil de sentences sur les peines de l'enfer fol. 49rb33–52rb22
Homily on Repentance (a) p. 25a27–30vb22			14) Recueil de sentences sur la patience fol. 45ra1–47rb13
Homily on Peace of Mind p. 30b23–32bz			
Appeal to the sinner made by Our Saviour p. 33a1–38a26 (aceph.)			
Homily on Repentance (b) p. 38a27–bz (defective)	6) Homily on Repentance (b) p. 17a1–35		
Do Geinemain Muiri p. 39a1–52a18			

[46] For convenience, I use x, y, z to refer to the last lines in a column, rather than counting all the way from the top.

[47] This text is omitted in *RIACat* 3358. The chasm between p. 6 and p. 7, which causes the Homily on the Virgin Mary to be defective and the Homily on Mary to be acephalous, is not acknowledged.

[48] This text is omitted in *RIACat* 3358. This title is my own.

TC	P	Trinity	R
RIA MS 3 B 22			
Litany on Blessed Virgin p. 52a19–bz			
Smaointe Beatha Chríost (Aceph. and defect.)[49] Order of text is: 97–112, 113–114, 77–96, 55a, 75, 76, 53.	2) Smaointe Beatha Chríost p. 12a1[50]–bz		
Life of Mary p. 55b1–74bz	1) Life of Mary p. 1–11bz[51]		
RIA MS 3 B 23			
Homily on the Eight Arrows of Sin p. 1–7a25[52]			
Homily on Almsgiving[53] p. 7a26–12bz			
Treatise on the penitential commutations p. 13a1–16a24			
De Luxoria p. 16a25–28az			
Homily on the Passion p. 29a.1–b.21 (aceph.)			
Speculum Peccatoris p. 30a1–32bz (defect.)			
Monastery of Tallaght p. 33a1–47a21, p. 51a24–53bz			
Abbgitir Crábaidh p. 47a22–51a20			
Homily on poverty p. 53a1–57a23			9) Traité de la pauvreté fol. 33vb29–35rb27
Homily on Mercy p. 57a24–58bz (defect.)			15) Recueil de sentences sur la charité fol. 47rb14–48va29
Homily on Sin p. 59a1–65az			
Homily on the Ten Commandments p. 65b1–80a14		1) Homily on the Ten Commandments fol. 1ra–6rb13	
Homily beginning with the story of the priest Mathias and his resistance to idolatry p. 80a15–82bz (defect)			13) Homélie fol. 43rb1–44vb27

[49] To p. 71a1 of RIA MS 3 B 22 corresponds p. 12a1 of P, p. 75v of RIA MS 23 B 3 (written by Diarmuid Ó Conaill *c.* 1461), and line 1901 of Ó Maonaigh, *Smaointe Beatha Chríost*.

[50] Interestingly, almost exactly the same amount of text and page layout is found on RIA MS 24 P 1, p. 12 (a verso) and on RIA MS 3 B 22, p. 75 (a recto). In RIA MS 3 B 22, this continues onto the next page (p. 76, and verso of the folio of which p. 75 is the recto). It does not on RIA MS 24 P 1, due to loss of the next folio. This may indicate that Úa Ríghbhardáin was replicating the layout of the same exemplar in both copies. However, see the comparison of the 'Homily of the Virgin Mary' below for a discussion of how it may be impossible to ever determine this with certainty.

[51] This has a number of internal chasms, correctly identified in the catalogue (*RIACat* 3366).

[52] Owing to a chasm between 6–7 this could be a different homily (*RIACat* 3362). It concludes: 'al*iter* trocairi Dé uasail ro airiltnegeam uile an oentaid-sin ro ísam ro aitrebam in secula seculorum amen.'

[53] Recently edited in McLaughlin, 'Almsgiving'.

TC RIA MS 3 B 22	P	Trinity	R
	3) Treatise on Patience from Bonaventura*[54] p. 13a1–10 (aceph.)		16) Traité fol. 48va30–49rb32
	4) Treatise on the Resurrection of Christ*[55] p. 13a11–14bz		7) Traité de la Résurrection du Christ fol. 30va31–31vb15
	7) De Contemptu Mundi p. 17a36–52bz		1) De Contemptu Mundi fol. 1ra–22ra19
	8) Páiss Peadair ⁊ Póil p. 53a1–60b14		
	9) Páis Parrthalóin p. 60b15–66b28		
	10) Páiss Iacob p. 66b29–70b15		
	11) Páiss Andrias p. 70b16–72bz		
		2) The First Age?*[56] fol. 6rb14–8ra11	
		3) The Second Age?* fol. 8ra12–18rbz	
		4) Invencio Sanctae Crucis fol. 19ra1–19vbz (defect.)	
		5) Stair Fortibrais fol. 21ra1–29vb22 (aceph.)	
		6) Gabháltais Séarlais Mhóir (GSM-1) fol. 30ra1–33vb (aceph. and defect.)	
			6) Traité (on sacraments) fol. 29rb18–30va30
			10) Traité de la confession (a) fol. 35rb28–36va11
			11) Traité de la confession (b) fol. 36ra12–37vb19
			12) Homélie (expulsion of Lucifer) fol. 37vb20–fol. 43raz
			18) Mandeville fol. 52rb23–69vbz (defect.)
			19) In Tenga Bithnua fol. 70ra1–74rb4

[54]This text is omitted in the *RIACat* 3366, where it is considered to be part of the preceding *Smaointe Beatha Chríost*. This title is my own. Only the last ten lines survive in P but it is complete in R.

[55]This text is miscatalogued in *RIACat* 3366, where this is identified as a section of *Smaointe Beatha Chríost.*

[56]I have not been able to identify texts (2) and (3) of the Trinity manuscript. The beginning of (2) bears great resemblance to the first and second recensions of *Lebor Gabála Érenn* (R. A. Macalister (ed. and trans.), *Lebor Gabála Érenn: The Book of the Taking of Ireland*, 5 vols, ITS 34, 35, 39, 41 and 44 (Dublin, 1932–42)), but it begins to diverge from it after fol. 6vb4. I have not been able to identify (3). The TCD catalogue calls them both a 'A brief history of the Creation and the patriarchs, from the Old Testament' (Abbott and Gwynn, *Catalogue*, p. 84).

TC RIA MS 3 B 22	P	Trinity	R
			20) Breanndán ⁊ Bríd fol. 74rb5–z
			21) Colmán mac Luacháin fol. 75ra1–89vb15
			22) Dindshenchas fol. 90ra1–125rb

Figure 5: texts copied

This table shows that some of the same texts were copied repeatedly by Úa Ríghbhardáin during his career, a fact that suggests that he may have worked as a professional scribe and illuminator who was hired to create books for various patrons during his lifetime. It may also suggest that Úa Ríghbhardáin had easy access to a library from which he could make numerous copies of at least some of these texts. The resemblance of a number of the texts copied by Úa Ríghbhardáin to the contents of the *Leabhar Breac* (RIA MS 23 P 16) has been observed by Follett,[57] who suggested that they may have shared a common source in the library of the Mac Aodhagáin family of Lower Ormond, in north Co. Tipperary. It is also tempting, given the proposed earlier date of TC, the fact that it has such a large selection of homilies in common with Úa Ríghbhardáin's other manuscripts and the fact that it remained in the area of Lower Ormond long after the fifteenth century, to view TC as the scribe's personal collection of homilies out of which he could copy the same texts into new manuscripts for his clients. However, as is seen below, even a superficial comparison between his versions of any one of the texts shared by these manuscripts is enough to show that TC was most likely not the source of the scribe's other copies.

A detailed stemmatological analysis based on a thorough textual comparison of all the texts copied by Úa Ríghbhardáin and shared with the *Leabhar Breac* might be an excellent way to test the theory of the common source of this material. However, on account of Úa Ríghbhardáin's tendency to paraphrase greatly while copying, which is discussed below, the conclusions drawn by such a study could prove to be frustratingly vague.

Three copies of the 'Homily on the Virgin Mary'
As displayed above (figure 5), the 'Homily on the Virgin Mary' is the only text that can be compared across three of Úa Ríghbhardáin's manuscripts. The following table (figure 6) aligns the first three paragraphs of Úa Ríghbhardáin's three copies of this text, which suggests that each copy is an independent copy of the same source.

In order to facilitate the following comparison between these three copies, I have highlighted the differences between them using the following method: 1) words or blank spaces highlighted in red indicate that the copy departs from the other two in some way, either by inserting or omitting a word; 2) conversely, green is used to show where the reading is shared with a second copy against the

[57] Follett, 'Religious texts', 213–16 and 224–6; See also McLaughlin, 'Almsgiving', 113–83.

variation in the third. In this way, the presence of red in each of the following columns indicates that each copy contains unique readings against the other two, which probably maintain the readings, in green, that were found in Úa Ríghbhardáin's source.

TC p. 5b14–28	P p. 15a1–15	R fol. 25ra1–17
Utt dix*it* Bernardus in Sermone de **Beata** Maria Uirgine _____ .i.	Ut dixit Bern*ar*dus in Sermone _____ Maria Uirgine **ꝛcetera** .i.	Ut dix*it* Bernardus in S*er*mone de **B**e*ata* M*ari*a Uirgine **ꝛcetera** .i.
Adeir Bernardus _____ cid*h*bē ní maith dob āil let do ullm*hagh*adh tab*hair* fā lām*haib*h M*uir*e hé **dā ullum*hughadh*** óir is fearrdi blas ca*ch* **oen** ní _____ a c*hur* as [óighth]ech na meala .i. a ng*r*āsaib*h* M*uir*e acā roib*he* **Ísa** ana broind _____ _____ .	Adeir Bernardus **naem*h*** cid*h*bé ní maith dob āil let do ullm*hugh*adh tab*hair* fā lām*haib*h M*uir*e hé __ _____ fearrdi blas ca*ch* __ ní **truaillti** a c*hur* as ōigh*th*ech na mela .i. a ng*r*āsaib*h* M*uir*e acā roib*hi* **Mac Dé** ana broinn **acā imarc*h*or dā cead fēin**.	Adeir Bernardus **n**a*emh* cid*h*bé ní maith dob áil let do ullm*hugh*adh tab*hair* fā lām*haib*h M*uir*e hé __ _____ ōir is ferrdi blas cach **aen** ní _____ a c*hur* as ōig*h*th*ech* na meala .i. a ng*r*ā*saibh* Muire acā roib*hi* **Mac Dé** ana broind _____ _____ .
ꝛ adeir B*ernardus* _____ co roib*hi* M*uire*, d'ēis na n-aps*al* do fh*ā*gb*háil* a m*eic*, acā cēsadh ana hanm*ain* mar do b*hí* sin acā c*h*ēsad*h* na c[*h*orp] ꝛ cur fh*ā*cadar na haps*ail* **hé** trí aibriscacht **an duin**e doeanna, curab **ime** sin adeir B*ernardus* an tan guid*h*eas n*each* Muire dā ***fh*urt*acht*** co *d*teith*id* legion do d*hemh*naib*h* uadha __ _____ _____ .	ꝛ adeir B*ernardus* _____ co roib*hi* Muire, d'ēis na n-apsal do fh*ā*gb*háil* a m*eic*, 'gā cēsad*h* ana hanm*ain* mar do b*hí* sin 'gā c*h*ēsad*h* ana c*h*orp ꝛ cur fh*ā*gadar na haps*ail* **hé** trí abriscacht **na *ndaeine*** daenna, curab **aire** sin adeir B*ernardus* an tan guid*h*es nech Muire dā ***fh*urtacht** co *d*teith*eann* legeon do d*hemh*naib*h* uadha **an tan-soin do g*h*r*ā*saib*h* Muire**.	ꝛ adeir B*ernardus* **N**a*emh* co roib*hi* M*uir*e, d'ēis na n-aps*al* do fh*ā*gb*háil* a m*eic*, acā céasad*h* ana han*am* mar do b*hí* sin acā c*h*ésad*h* ana c*h*orp ꝛ gur fh*á*cadar na haps*ail* **sin** trí aibriscacht **na *ndaein*e** daen*n*a, gurab **uime** sin adeir B*ernardus* an tan guidheas neach Muire dā **chab*hair*** co *d*teith*eann* legion do d*heamh*naib*h* uadha __ _____ .

TC p. 5b14–28	P p. 15a1–15	R fol. 25ra1–17
⁊ adeir Iohanneis C*risto*somus: na hid*h*ain nach roib*h*i ar M*h*uire an aimsir br*eithe a meic* co rab*h*adar uirre an aimsir a c*h*ēsta _____ .	⁊ adeir Ioh*annes* C*risto*sosmus: na hidhain nach roib*h*i ar M*h*uire an aimsir **a m*eic* do b*h*reith** co rab*h*adar uirre an aimsir a c*h*ésta **an uair fār césad*h* hé.**	⁊ adeir Ioh*anne*s C*risto*somu*s*: na hidhain nach roib*h*i ar M*h*uire an aimsir **breithi a m*eic*** co rab*h*adar u*i*rre an aimsir a c*h*ésta _____ .

Figure 6: 'Homily on the Virgin Mary' comparison.

This comparison allows us to anticipate a conclusion drawn in the next section of this article which discusses Úa Ríghbhardáin's approach to word-for-word copying. In fact, though we might expect copies of a same text made by a same scribe to be almost identical, this is very often not the case in Úa Ríghbhardáin's works. This is better understood by examining his copy of *Gabháltais Séarlais Mhóir* and by comparing it with the three other copies of the same text written by other scribes during the same period, i.e. the late fifteenth century.

Features of Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy of *Gabháltais Séarlais Mhóir* (GSM-1)

Gabháltais Séarluis Mhóir (GSM-1) is one of three surviving Early Modern Irish translations of *Historia Karoli Magni*, also known as *Pseudo-Turpin*,[58] which survives in four manuscripts from the late-fifteenth century, namely: The Book of Lismore (L), written in Cairbre, Co. Cork, between 1478 and 1506 for Fínghean Mac Carthaigh Riabhach and his wife Caitilín Fitzgerald;[59] UCD Franciscan MS A 9 (F), which is dated by Grosjean to the fifteenth century;[60] BL MS Egerton 1781 (E), the part of which containing GSM-1 was written by a scribe who signs himself *fercanainm* and *mac .ccc.* and who copied at least part of the manuscript in the house of Niall Ó Siadhail in Lainn Eala, Co. Offaly, during the winter of 1484–5, but who was probably a member of the Mac Parthalóin family from Teallach nEachach, Co. Cavan;[61] and lastly,

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[58]For a brief discussion of the three independent Early Modern Irish translations of *Historia Karoli Magni* or *Pseudo-Turpin*, see A. Palandri, 'The Irish adaptation of Marco Polo's *Travels*: mapping the toute to Ireland ', *Ériu* 69 (2019), 127–54, at 150–3.

[59]For a summary of past scholarship on the patrons of this manuscript see A. Palandri, 'An Marco Polo Gaeilge agus Fínghean Mac Carthaigh Riabhach', *Celtica* 31 (2019), 191–214, at 191–7.

[60]P. Grosjean, 'MS. A. 9 (Franciscan Convent, Dublin)', *Ériu* 10 (1926–8), 160–9.

[61]The signature *fercanainm* occurs on fol. 150rbz and the signature *mac .ccc.* on fol. 149vb14. The second may represent *mac Parthalóin*, who arrived in Ireland three hundred years after the flood (see Palandri, 'The Irish adaptation', 151 n. 96). *Fearganainm* is attested as a first name during the early modern period, especially during the sixteenth century (*AFM* 1532.2, 1535.6,

the Trinity manuscript, discussed above and written by our scribe, Tadhg Úa
Ríghbhardáin, in 1475.

Unlike the many Old and Middle Irish texts of which we have copies from
this period, some of which were made by Úa Ríghbhardáin,[62] and unlike the
fifteenth-century Irish prose texts whose authors were emulating the linguistic
register of earlier Irish literature,[63] GSM-1 is written in a modest and unar-
chaised Early Modern Irish, of the kind found in medical texts, law tracts and
religious writings of the period.[64] As an Early Modern Irish text that survives
in four roughly contemporary copies and that is written in this unembellished
style, GSM-1 allows us to reduce both the variable of the pseudo-archaic liter-
ary register as well as the window of time between which our witnesses were
written. This affords us with a rare opportunity to study and compare how con-
temporary scribes from the late fifteenth century varied in their approaches to
an unadorned form of the written language.

While researching this article I made transcriptions of the same section of
c. 7000 words from these four surviving copies of GSM-1.[65] In the follow-
ing section I will present evidence gathered from this work that reveals Úa
Ríghbhardáin's unique approach to copying and some of his orthographical
conventions. I will conclude with a discussion of a number of linguistic details
found in his copy of GSM-1, which I suggest are probably traces of the regional
variety of Irish spoken by the scribe. In order to be able to analyse and refer-
ence this portion of text, and in the interest of reducing the clutter of hundreds
of folio references in this article, these transcriptions were divided and num-
bered into 55 corresponding paragraphs. The table provided in Appendix I can

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1541.8; also D. Ó Corráin and F. Maguire, *Irish Names* (Dublin, 1990), 97). This scribe's name
may have been Fearganainm Mac Parthalóin. For more on this manuscript see R. Flower, *Catalogue
of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1926; reprinted Dublin, 1992), 526–45.

[62] The language of the *Monastery of Tallaght*, of the *Aibbgitir Crábaid* and of the *Penitential of
Commutations* is mostly Old Irish. See Gwynn and Purton, 'The monastery of Tallaght'; Vernam
Hull (ed. and trans.), 'Aipgitir Chrábaid: the Alphabet of Piety', *Celtica* 8 (1968), 44–89; D. A.
Binchy (ed. and trans.), 'The Old-Irish Table of Penitential Commutations', *Ériu* 19 (1962), 47–72.

[63] See D. McManus, *SnaG* 335–7 for a general discussion on this phenomenon in Early Modern
Irish literature. Some examples of fifteenth-century texts of this kind are: the *Irish Marco Polo*, *Stair
Ercuil ocus a Bhás* and *Lorgaireacht an tSoidhigh Naomhtha*. The seventeenth-century text *Beatha
Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill* (see P. Walsh (ed. and trans.), *The Life of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill*,
ITS 42 and 45 (Dublin, 1948 and 1957)) is probably the pinnacle of this genre. Its pseudo-archaic
language has been discussed in D. McManus, 'The Language of the *Beatha*', in Pádraig Ó Riain
(ed.), *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh: The Life of Red Hugh O'Donnell: Historical and Literary Contexts*,
ITS Subsidiary Series 12 (London, 2002), 54–74.

[64] See for example W. Wulf, *Rosa Anglica seu Rosa Medicinae: An Early Modern Irish Transla-
tion of a Section of the Mediaeval Medical Text-Book of John of Gaddesden*, ITS 25 (London, 1929);
Fergus Kelly, *The Mac Egan Legal Treatise* (Dublin, 2020); Ó Maonaigh, *Smaointe Beatha Chríost*;
J. A. Geary (ed. and trans.), *An Irish Version of Innocent III's De Contemptu Mundi* (Washington
DC, 1931).

[65] Due to the fragmentary state of the Trinity manuscript only the section between the the fifth
and the fifteenth chapter of Hyde's edition can be used to make these comparisons (D. Hyde (ed.),
Gabháltais Shéarluis Mhóir, ITS 20 (London, 1917), from p. 16, line 9 to p. 60, line 25). For a
brief overview of the various Irish translatons of *Historia Karoli Magni* see Palandri, 'The Irish
adaptation', 150–3.

be used to trace the referencing system used in the rest of this study back to the manuscript page and to Hyde's edition.

Paraphrasing

In the introduction to his edition of GSM-1 Douglas Hyde remarks on Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy that it 'contains a text that varies from the other three much more than the other three do among themselves',[66] and indeed similar observations have been made by other editors and scholars of texts copied by this scribe. For example, in his edition of the Irish translation of *De Contemptu Mundi* from five manuscripts, Geary concluded that Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy in R was 'copied with considerable independence and some expansion' and found that his version stood alone against all the other copies the most.[67] Similarly, in her edition of the copies of the 'Homily on Almsgiving' found in TC and in the *Leabhar Breac*, McLaughlin found the Irish text of the *Leabhar Breac* to be 'more verbose' than that of TC, but suggested that this is likely to reflect additions in the *Leabhar Breac* rather than omissions in TC.[68] Whereas the specific case of this last text is not re-examined in this article, a comparison between the four contemporary copies of GSM-1 confirms Hyde's remark and yields similar results to those discovered in the comparison of Úa Ríghbhardáin's three copies of the 'Homily on the Virgin Mary' above. The pattern that emerges is one of a scribe who had a habit of rewording his texts more extensively than other copyists during the same period; he was a 'content-oriented' scribe as opposed to a 'form-oriented' one.[69] However, it must be also emphasised that Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy of GSM-1 closely follows the overall structure found in all the other copies and that it contains no changes to the order of events portrayed in the story. Yet, a substantial amount of paraphrasing appears to have happened in the text copied by our scribe compared to the subtler variations seen in the other three copies.

   This is exemplified in the following comparison (figure 7), in which I follow the same method of highlighting the differences between the copies as I did in figure 6 above. The only addition is that of purple to show where one of the other three copies, i.e. those not by Úa Ríghbhardáin, differs from the most commonly occurring reading.

   As figure 7 demonstrates, although a degree of paraphrasing and some copying errors are present in all these contemporaneous copies, the liberties Úa Ríghbhardáin took in copying this text are immediately noticeable when his copy is compared to the other three. By comparing figure 7 to the differences highlighted in the same scribe's three copies of the 'Homily on the Virgin Mary', and by taking into account the comments made by previous editors of

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[66]Hyde, *Gabháltais*, xi.

[67]Geary, *De Contemptu Mundi*, 19. Unfortunately this editor was unaware of Úa Ríghbhardáin's second copy in P.

[68]McLaughlin, 'Almsgiving', 127.

[69]For a description of this terminology see Simon Rodway, *Dating Medieval Welsh Literature: Evidence from the Verbal System* (Aberystwyth, 2013), 20 and also D. Stifter, 'The language of the poems of Blathmac', in Pádraig Ó Riain (ed.), *The Poems of Blathmac Son of Cú Brettan: Reassessments*, ITS Subsidiary Series 27 (London, 2015), 47–103, at 71–2.

Gabháltais Séarlais Mhóir [4](*ITS* 19, p. 18 lines 14–21)

L fol. 97vbz–98ra9	**F** p. 3b1–8	**E** fol. 21ra28–39	**Trinity** fol. 30rb4–10
⁊ **nī is mō inā mar as ēidir a indisi** do bhātar na sl*uaigh*-si*n* **ag ingantus** ar **m***h***ét** na mírb*huile*-si*n* do rō*ine* **Dia**.	⁊ **ní as mō nā mar as ēd***ir* **a innisin** do b*h*ād*ar* na sl*uaigh*-si*n* **agā ingantus méd** *na* merb*h*uile-si*n* do ri*n*ne **Dia**.	⁊ **ní 'sa mō nā 's ēidir a innsin** do b*h*ātar na sl*uaigh*-sin **ag ingantas mēt** na mírb*h*úile-si*n* do rinne **Dia**.	⁊ _____ _____ do b*h*ād*ar* na sluaigh-sin **ac indisin** ___ na mīrb*huil*i-si*n* do rō*ine* **Críst**.
⁊ do gerr*ead*h na gaithi-si*n* com*h*ard re tal*amh* ⁊ do f*h*āsatar croinn mhōra **a prēmhaibh na ngaithi-si*n*** gur bho phāirc m*h*ór.	⁊ do g*h*earrad*ar* si*at* na gaet*h*a-sin gonaird re tal*mhain* ⁊ do f*h*āsadar c*r*oind m*h*ōra **a prēm***haibh* **na ngaetha-sin** mar do b*h*eith pāircc m*h*ōr ann.	⁊ do g*h*erradar siat na gaeithi-si*n* com*h*ard re tal*amh* ⁊ do f*h*āsadar croinn mhōra ann _____ _____ _____ ___ .	⁊ do g*h*earrad*ar* na gaet*h*i-sin com*h*ard re talm*hain* ⁊ do fhāsadar croind m*h*óra **as a *b*prēmhaibh** _____ _____ ___ .
⁊ atāit ō s*h*in isin inad-si*n* gan losgad*h* **gan mhill***eadh* ⁊ **a ngnē fhuinnseog** atāit.	⁊ atāid ō hoi*n* 'san inadh-sin **gan mhilleadh** g*an* loisg*eadh* ⁊ **a** *n*gnē **fuin***n*seog atā*i*d.	⁊ atāit na croinn-sin ō s*h*in annsan inadh-sin ga*n* losgadh ga*n* g*h*err*adh* **gan mhill***eadh* ⁊ **a ngnē** ⁊ a *n*dath ⁊[70] a *g*cosm*hailius* **fuinnseoc**.	⁊ atāit ō s*h*in 'san inad-sin can losc*adh* ___ ___ ___ a *g*cosm*h*ailes **fui***n*dsind**.
⁊ in rét ingant*ach*-so gidh do b*h*í sē 'na **dhīd***h***bhāil dona corpuibh**, do bo mhór a **ghāirdiug***h***adh** do*n*a hanman*n*aibh.	⁊ i*n* rét íngant*ach*-so gē do bi sē a **ndīghbh***h***áil** do*n*a c*h*orp*aibh* do bud*h* mhōr a **ghāirdiug***udh* do*n*a hanmannaibh.	⁊ in rēt ingnatach-so cea' do b*h*ī sē a **ndībhāil** ⁊ a ndochar **dona corp***aibh*, do budh m*h*ōr i*n* **gāirdiug***udh* ⁊ i*n* sub*h*alt*aibh* do*n*a hanmannaibh ē.	⁊ an raet ingantach-so cid*h* do b*h*í sé ana **dhochar do c***h*orpaib*h*, do bo mhór an **tarb***h***a** do*n*a hanmannaib*h* hé.

Figure 7: GSM-1 comparison.

other texts copied by this scribe, a pattern emerges that suggests that Úa Rígh-bhardáin was not in the habit of copying his texts word for word. His changes include: 1) substituting a word with a variant form, such as *fuinneas* for *fuin-seog*; 2) substituting synonyms for one another, such as *dochar* for *díghbháil*, as well as words that cover a slightly different semantic range, such as *tarbha* for *gáirdiughadh* or *Críst* for *Dia*; 3) abbreviating sentences and slightly changing their meaning while retaining the main words, such as *do bhādar na sluaigh-sin ac indisin na mirbhuile* instead of *ní as mō nā mar as ēdir a innisin do bhādar na sluaigh-sin agā ingantus méd na merbhuile-sin*;[71] 4) omitting text, such as was done with *gan mhilleadh 7 a ngnē*. This last practice, i.e. omitting text, can also be measured by comparing the word count of the transcribed sections. These are: L, *c.* 7120 words; F, *c.* 7190 words; E, *c.* 7770 words; and the Trinity manuscript *c.* 6300 words. The same conclusions that can be drawn from figure 7 can also be drawn from these numbers, i.e., whereas the scribes of L and F remained more or less close to their original, the scribe of E had a habit of expanding and Úa Ríghbhardáin had a habit of summarising.

Having discussed and observed how these copies of GSM-1 can be used to describe how Úa Ríghbhardáin worked, a number of remarks can now be made regarding his orthographic conventions and how they compare to those of his contemporaries.

Orthography

An orthographic consistency found in this section of Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy of GSM-1 is his uniform spelling of the simple preposition *ag* 'at' as *ac*, following the earlier Irish spelling convention whereby intervocalic or word-final unvoiced consonants represented voiced consonants. While the same spelling convention is also adopted, though not as consistently, by the scribe of F for the simple preposition, Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy stands out from all the others as being the only copy in which *c* is used consistently throughout all the inflected forms as well, as can be seen in figure 8.

These examples suggest that Úa Ríghbhardáin used specific orthographic conventions for the copying of this text that distinguished him from his peers. Since medieval Irish writers were undoubtedly aware that unvoiced consonants in place of voiced consonants was a feature of older books,[72] the implementation of this spelling convention may be understood as being part of the same aesthetic decisions that, as was argued above, may have prompted Úa Ríghbhardáin's use of alternative script types. In his study of the Irish translation of *In Contemptu Mundi*, Geary found that Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy in R was the most conservative of all the five manuscripts he analysed in its use of voiceless stops to indicate voiced stops, and found that this scribe did so in 85% of

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[71] From F.

[72] See for example Míchéal Ó Cléirigh's introduction to *Foclóir nó Sanasán Nuadh* (1643), 4–5: *sgriobhthar go minic cuid dona consainibh ar son a cheile, mar ata, c, ar son, g, agas, t, ar son, d*. 'Some of the consonants are often written in place of one another, as in *c* for *g*, and *t* for *d*.'

ag (*at*)

	L	F	E	Trinity
Simple Prep.	**ag** (15 examples) [4; 8; 9; 16; 20; 27$^{\times3}$; 30; 31; 32; 34; 42$^{\times3}$;] **ac** (4 examples) [14; 22; 23; 27]	**ag** (2 examples) [27$^{\times2}$] **ac** (12 examples) [8; 14$^{\times2}$; 16; 20; 22; 23; 27; 28; 30; 41; 42]	**ag** (12 examples) [4; 8; 14; 16; 20$^{\times2}$; 22; 23; 27; 30; 32; 42] **ac** (3 examples) [27; 31; 41]	**ag** (0 examples) **ac** (13 examples) [4; 8; 9; 16; 20; 22; 23; 27$^{\times3}$; 29; 30; 42]
1sg				
2sg	[8] acat-sa; [23] acat;	[8] agad; [23] agad;	[8] agat; [23] agud;	[8] acad; [23] acat;
3sgm	[11] aigi; [20] aigi; [37] aigi; [38] –; [40] aigi; [44] aige; [46] aigi; [50] aigi; [50] aigi;	[11] aigi; [20] aigi; [37] aigi; [38] aigi; [40] aigi; [44] aigi; [46] aigi; [50] aigi; [50] aigi;	[11] agi; [20] – (ag Og.); [37] aige; [38] aige; [40] aige; [44] aige; [46] aigi; [50] aige; [50] aige;	[11] aici; [20] – (lais); [37] aici; [38] –; [40] –; [44] –; [46] aici; [50] aici; [50] aici;
3sgf				
1pl	[22] again*n*; [24] agai*n*d; [30] again*n*; [45] again*n*;	[22] agai*n*n; [24] agai*n*d; [30] agai*n*n; [45] again*n*;	[22] agai*n*n; [24] agai*n*n; [30] again*n*; [45] again*n*;	[22] acaind; [24] –; [30] –; [45] acai*n*di;
2pl	[23] aguibh; [23] acuibh;	[23] agaib; [23] agaibh;	[23] ag*aibh*; [23] ag*aibh*;	[23] –; [23] acaib;
3pl	[25] acu; [28] acu; [40] acu; [42] acu; [55] acu;	[25] – (do g*a*ch taeb); [28] acu; [40] aco; [42] ocu; [55] –;	[25] – (g*a*cha taebha) [28] a*qu*; [40] –; [42] –; [55] a*qu*;	[25] – (da ca*ch* taeb); [28] –; [40] –; [42] –; [55] –;
+ a (rel.)	[5] agár fhas; [11] aga mb*eth*;	[5] agar fas; [11] 'ga mb*eth*;	[5] agar fas; [11] aga *mb*eth;	[5] acar fas; [11] aca mbeith;

Figure 8: 'ag' comparison.

instances.[73] This supports the theory that Úa Ríghbhardáin distinguished himself throughout his career by stylising and archaising his orthography, as was suggested above.[74]

[73]Geary, *De Contemptu Mundi*, 32.
[74]See also the forthcoming article by Kobel on this topic.

His treatment of final unstressed *-e(a)ch* and *-igh* also requires comment. In the sentence in the Trinity manuscript *do dheisigh an taeisich sin hé fein*[75] the spelling *taeisich* must surely stand for *taeisech*, the spelling found only three lines earlier[76] for the same nom. sg. form. Úa Ríghbhardáin again uses this same spelling for final unstressed *-e(a)ch* in his copy of Mandeville in R, *mét anóra ⁊ tsaidhbhresa na mainistrich sin*,[77] another instance where the expected spelling is found only two lines later, *co dorus oiribir na mainisdrech*.[78] In all other plene examples of final unstressed *-e(a)ch* that I have noted by Úa Ríghbhardáin, the expected historical spelling is used. During the early modern period, a number of monosyllabic nouns had dative singular forms that were not commonly distinguished orthographically from their genitive singular forms. This is best exemplified in *IGT* II §63 'CEART [...] don chirt, méd an chirt, etc.' and §65 'FEAR, d'fir, mac fir, etc.'. The same statement is also valid for the nouns *rí* and *mí*, whose genitive and dative singular forms, g.sg. *ríogh*, d.sg. *rígh* and g.sg. *míos*, d.s. *mís*, are mostly indistinguishable in fifteenth-century orthography, i.e. *rígh* and *mís*.[79] Similarly, writing *-i-* to represent ə in unstressed position, where we typically find *-e(a)-* in later orthography, is often found in Early Modern Irish texts, for example *IGT* III, where we find spellings such as *cloisdina* and *cluinsina* in §3 'is fear cloisdina ⁊ claisdina ⁊ cluinsina ⁊ cloisdeachta ⁊ claisdeachta neith mé'. Although as far as I am aware, *IGT* does not discuss final unstressed *-e(a)ch* being written *-ich*, it is possible that the same orthographical convention used in *don chirt* and *cloisdina* influenced Úa Ríghbhardáin's decision to spell final əχ with *-ich*, instead of the more typical *-e(a)ch*. The presence of the following *-sin* in both examples, *an taeisich sin* and *na mainistrich sin*, may have also been a contributing factor in the scribe's policy, which however does not seem to have been widespread since Úa Ríghbhardáin's spellings are unique among the four copies of the GSM-1.

Also curious are the two *plene* examples of final unstressed *-igh* being written *-ich* that are found in Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy of GSM-1, namely: *dochum an eathaich*[80] and *atáit trí neiche sa chláirsich*,[81] besides the three *plene* examples of final unstressed *-igh* being spelled as expected, namely: *is annso* [*do*] *ordaigh cach duine*[82] and *sa teinig mharthanaigh*.[83] Úa Ríghbhardáin's occasional variation between these spellings distinguishes him from all the other

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[75]Trinity, fol. 32rb46–7.

[76]Trinity, fol. 32rb44.

[77]W. Stokes (ed. and trans.), 'The Gaelic Maundeville', *ZCP* 2 (1899), 1–63 and 226–301, at 258. R, fol. 66ra18.

[78]R, fol. 66ra21. In other copies of these texts *taeisech* and *mainistrech* are spelled with final *-e(a)ch*. See BL MS Egerton 1781, fol. 141v6 for this word in the other copy of Mandeville.

[79]B. Ó Cuív, 'A quatrain from "Liadan and Cuirithir" ', *Éigse* 5 (1945–7), 229–30, at 229 n. 1.

[80]Trinity, fol. 32va34–5.

[81]Trinity, fol. 33ra31–2.

[82]Trinity, fol. 31ra9–10. The *do* is found in all the other copies but omitted in Úa Ríghbhardáin's text.

[83]Trinity, fol. 32ra15.

scribes whose copies of GSM-1 survive.[84] That this was a characteristic of his orthographic style is further substantiated by three examples found in his copy of Mandeville, *co n-uicci an cathraich*[85] (twice) and *annsa cathraich*,[86] neither of which are found in the copy of the same text in E.[87]

This variation between final unstressed *-ich* and *-igh* is found in Old and Middle Irish manuscripts, such as Codex Sancti Pauli,[88] Rawl. B 502[89] and the Book of Leinster,[90] and Úa Ríghbhardáin may have incorporated it into his own style after encountering it in manuscripts from those periods, as he did with the many other aspects of his orthography discussed above. On the other hand, a comparison between four spellings in his copy of Mandeville in R and their corresponding spellings in the same sections in E suggests that there may be another layer to this orthographic variation, which, as far as I am aware, is not also found in manuscripts from the Old and Middle Irish period. In order to help clarify the precise meaning intended in the following passages from the Irish Mandeville, the original Middle English text from which the text was translated is supplied in the left column.

Ua Ríghbhardáin's first two examples from R in figure 9 are problematic. In the first one, *nemhchoimsigh* cannot be understood to be the archaic use[91] of the masculine plural of *coimsech*, not because archaisms are not common in texts copied by Úa Ríghbhardáin, but because it would be illogical to connect a plural predicative adjective to a singular noun that is not a collective, such as *anóir*. It must therefore either represent the singular *coimsech* 'seemly' or the quasi-synonymous *coimse* 'suitable' (from the past participle of OIr *con-midethar*), which is commonly preceded by various negative prefixes to indicate excessiveness, abundance and immensity in Medieval and Modern Irish.[92] As the comparison table shows, *coimse* is the form found in the corresponding section in E, and the phrase *is nemhchoimsi* X, 'X is excessive' or 'immense', occurs twice more in the text. It is also the meaning that best translates the Middle English *grete worschip*, i.e. 'the honour that the Saracens give to that church is immense.'

[84]For plene spellings of the gen. sg. of *eathach* in the other copies see L, fol. 101va26 (an agh*aidh* in aithig); E, fol. 25ra32 (cu*m* in fhathaigh). For *clairsigh*, all plene, see: L, fol. 102rb24; F, p. 8b15; E, fol. 25vb30.

[85]R, fol. 53ra3 and fol. 55ra22 (Stokes, 'Maundeville', 6 and 20).

[86]R, fol. 59rb23 (Stokes, 'Maundeville', 50).

[87]For the first (go n-uige in *cath*air) see E, fol. 129rbz; for the second (*co n*-uige in *cath*air) see E, fol. 131ra4; for the third (annsa cath*raigh*) see E, fol. 135vaz.

[88]For example: *Aue Muiredaich*. From Codex S. Pauli (*Thes*. 295.10). See also *GOI* §130.

[89]For example: *Erccán m. Déin a quo h-Uargalach m. Branduib m. Airnelaich m. Airdmessaig*. From Rawl. B 502, fol. 69va24. See M. A. O'Brien (ed.), *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae* (Dublin, 1962), 83.

[90]There are numerous examples of final unstressed *-ich* in *LL*. An example that displays this variation is *LL* 3790–4: *Nemnach .i. firthipra fil ocon tsíd i n-airthiurdesciurt na Temrach in glassi bec theit a **Nemnig** sair is fuirri atá in muilend cetadernad do Chiarnait chumail Chormaic. Lathrach tigi Mairisen fil on tsíd fri **Nemnaich** atuaid*. See also T. F. O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects Past and Present* (Dublin, 1932), 56.

[91]See L. Breatnach, 'An Mheán-Ghaeilge', *SnaG* 332 (III 14.4). Also, *GOI* 223 (§350).

[92]*eDIL* s.v. coimse (dil.ie/10281). Compare also Modern Irish *as*, *thar chuimse* (Ó Dónaill, s.v. cuimse).

Mandeville

Middle English	R	E
I do ȝow to wite þat Sarsynes do grete worschip to þe temple *domini*.[93]	is **nemchoimsigh** an anóir do-beritt na Serristtínig don eclais sin.[94]	is n*eamh*coimsi in anōir do-b*her*id na Serrsitinaigh don egl*ais* sin.[95]
þat londe is in somme place so colde þat þere may no man dwelle.[96]	ní bí duine 'sa tír sin cin luirg ⁊ ní **coimsich** d'feraib an domain a fúaire an geimhr*idh*.[97]	(omitted).[98]
and þerfore he haþ many children.[99]	is **nemchoimsi** a mbídh do cl*ainn* aicci.[100]	is n*eamh*coimsi a mbí do cl*ainn* aige.[101]
And þat abbey is grete and faire, and þer beþ many treez of dyuerse fruytes.[102]	is **nemchoimsi** m*ét* anóra ⁊ tsaidhbresa na mainist*r*ich sin.[103]	is n*eamh*coimsi mét anora na mainistrech sin.[104]

Figure 9: -ich, -igh, -i.

The second example, *coimsich*, could theoretically represent *coimsech* 'seemly', through Úa Ríghbhardáin's unusual convention of occasionally using -*ich* to spell final unstressed -*e(a)ch*, ex. *taeisich* for *taise(a)ch* in the discussion above. But it could equally represent *coimsigh*, since we have seen that final unstressed -*ich* can represent -*igh* in Úa Ríghbhardáin's writings, as shown above in *dochum an eathaich* and *sa chláirsich* from GSM-1, and in *co n-uicci an cathraich* (twice) and *annsa cathraich* from Mandeville. We have also seen that *coimsigh* may itself be a spelling for *coimse*, as in the previous example *nemhchoimsigh*, and it is again this word that best conveys the sense

[93]M. Seymour (ed.), *The Defective Version of Mandeville's Travels* (Oxford, 2002), 33, line 24.

[94]R, fol. 58vay. Stokes, 'Maundeville', 46.

[95]E, fol. 135ra17.

[96]Seymour, *Mandeville*, 56, lines 4–5

[97]R, fol. 61ra33. Stokes, 'Maundeville', 62.

[98]The sentence should appear at E, fol. 137ra32.

[99]Seymour, *Mandeville*, 84, lines 3–4.

[100]R, fol. 65rb2. Stokes, 'Maundeville', 252.

[101]E, fol. 140va27.

[102]Seymour, *Mandeville*, 90, lines 1–3. I have amended Seymour's text according to the footnotes in his critical edition in order to best reflect a Subgroup A text from which we know the Irish version was created. For a discussion of this, see J. Seymour, 'Sir John Mandeville', in idem et al., *Authors of the Middle Ages: English Writers of the Late Middle Ages* I (Aldershot 2016), 1–64, at 47–9.

[103]R, fol. 66ra18. Stokes, 'Maundeville', 258.

[104]E, fol. 141v6.

in the original Middle English text of 'a land so cold that no man can dwell there', i.e. 'the cold of its winter is *not suitable* for the men of the world'. Unfortunately, this sentence was omitted in E.

Although this section has presented evidence suggesting that Úa Ríghbhardáin's style of orthography drew from older sources and was noticeably more archaic than that of many of his contemporaries, in order to further investigate how final unstressed -*ich* and -*igh*, as well as probably -*i*, could be interchanged in Úa Ríghbhardáin's work, it is necessary to broaden this discussion to include a consideration of how features of the scribe's regional variety of Irish may have also been contributing to his spelling conventions.

Dialect

The phonological development by which final unstressed -*(a)ich*, -*(a)igh* and -*e/-a* (henceforth ɪ and ə) came to represent the same phoneme was found in the Modern Irish dialects of Leinster, North East Munster and to some degree is still reflected in the Irish of the Déise. In these dialects, as in the rest of Munster,[105] palatal *ch* was dropped in final position and reduced to **h** in medial position.[106] But unlike the Irish of Munster, where final -*igh* was delenited to -*ig* in most cases,[107] final -*igh* became ɪ and -*aigh* became ə in the Irish of Leinster, as well as probably in North and East Tipperary.[108] Noticeably, while mostly showing the same West Munster development of delenting final -*igh* to -*ig*,[109] the Irish of the Déise has a greater tendency to pronounce unstressed final -*igh* and -*aigh* as ɪ and ə than the more westerly dialects,[110] especially in the nominal inflection, for example *deireadh an tsamhraidh* **ən ˈtəũrə** and *ag sitrigh* **ə ˈʃitəʀə** in An Rinn, but **n ˈtɑurigʹ** and **ə ˈʃitʲʀigʹ** in Cúil Aodha.[111] The same reduction to schwa of final unstressed -*(a)igh* is also found in North Clare and is also the rule in South Connacht.[112]

[105] And to some degree also in South Connacht, see B. Ó Curnáin, *The Irish of Iorras Aithneach* (Dublin, 2007), 4 vols, i, 171–4 (§§1.114–16). See also D. Ó hÓgáin, *Duanaire Osraíoch* (Dublin, 1980), 27–8.

[106] O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects Past and Present*, 209; Ua Súilleabháin in *SnaG* 487 (VI 2.22); D. Ó Sé, *Gaeilge Chorca Dhuibhne* (Dublin, 2000), 29 (§23): R. B. Breatnach, *The Irish of Ring Co. Waterford*, (Dublin, 1947), 139 (§528): N. Holmer, *The Dialects of County Clare*, Todd Lecture Series 19, pt. 1 (1965), 70 and 114.

[107] There are of course a few notable exceptions to this rule, for which see N. Williams in *SnaG* 450 (V 2.7); Ua Súilleabháin in *SnaG* 485 (VI 2.17); O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects*, 53–4.

[108] O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects*, 54.

[109] Breatnach, *The Irish of Ring*, 133 (§499).

[110] Ua Súilleabháin in *SnaG* 485 (VI 2.17).

[111] *LASID* II, pt. 1 (An Rinn) and pt. 15 (Cúil Aodha), 905 and 26. See also g.s. of *biadh*, *bídh*: **bʹi** (An Rinn) and **bʹiːgʹ** (Cúil Aodha), 297b.

[112] Holmer, *Dialects*, 114 (§213): 'culaithe breaghdha éadaigh **kələhə brʹɑː eːdə**' from Finavarra. For the same development in South Connacht see Ó hUiginn in *SnaG* 555 (VII 2.33).

These phonological developments have not been accurately dated and are not described in any recognisable sense until much later.[113] The earliest evidence of which I am aware for confusion between final unstressed -*adh* and -*aidh/-aigh* in the Irish of Leinster, due to the reduction of both to schwa, is found in *Lucerna Fidelium*, from the seventeenth century.[114] On the other hand, the earliest description of which I am aware of the reduction of non-initial slender *ch* is that written by James Scurry of Kilkenny in 1820, who describes it as 'only a weak aspirate' when it is found at the end of a syllable.[115] The reduction of all these endings to schwa in the Irish of Kilkenny is observable in the writings of Seán Ó Doinn (1815–92), a school master and native of west Kilkenny who collected songs during the 1860s for John George Augustus Prim (1821–75),[116] who variously spelled the name of his county as *Cill Chainnich* and *Cill Chainne*, as well as spelling *Frannca* for nom. pl. of *Frannach*, and *beala'* for the gen. sg. form of the noun *bealach*.[117] If these dialect features had already developed by the fifteenth century in that region, they would help explain Úa Ríghbhardáin's spellings *nemhchoimsigh* and *ní coimsich* beside *nemhchoimsi* in R as well as *dochum an eathaich* and *sa chláirsich* in his copy of GSM-1 and would place the scribe within the geographical borders of such a phonological development, Leinster and North East and East Munster.

Another regional feature found in Úa Ríghbhardáin's copy of GSM-1, which would place him in the same geographical area as suggested above and distinguishes him from the scribes of the other three copies, is the form *ar* for both the 1st and 2nd pl. forms of the possessive pronoun, as displayed in figure 10:

This falling together of the possessives is found in *Lucerna Fidelium* written in the seventeenth century by an author from Offaly,[118] and it was also the situation in Kilkenny in the early eighteenth century.[119] O'Rahilly spotted the

[113] See O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects*, 53–4 and 209. Unfortunately, no sound conclusions can be reached from the many guides to reading Irish commonly found in printed books, mostly Catechisms, up until the nineteenth century, as the pronunciation of final palatal *ch*, *gh* and *dh* in Leinster or East Munster is rarely treated. For an overview of these see M. Hoyne, 'Brief rules for reading Irish found in printed books, 1571–1863', *Celtica* 31 (2019), 213–97.

[114] F. Ó Maolmhuaidh, *Lucerna Fidelium*, ed. P. Ó Súilleabháin (Dublin, 1962), xvi–xvii.

[115] *Cheithre Soleirseadha de'n Eagnuidheacht Chriostuidhe, tarraingthe o cheithre leursmuaintighthibh na siorruidheachta. Air na sgriobhadh go bunnudhasach ann Iottailis le Eoin Baptista Manni, dhe Chomhluadar Iosa, agus curtha a mBeurla Sacsanach le W. V. agus ionntoighthe o Shacs-bheulra, go Gaoidheilg le Seumas O'Scoireadh. Portlairge: ar na chur a gClodh le Eoin Bull. 1820*. xvii. See also R. Sharpe and M. Hoyne, *Clóliosta: Printing in the Irish Language, 1571–1871: An Attempt at Narrative Bibliography* (Dublin, 2020), 517. O'Scurry's *Introduction to the Irish Language* is reproduced in Barra Ua Cearnaigh, *Amhail Fuaim Chogair Bhig: Teangeolas Shéamais Uí Scoireadh*, Dán agus Tallann 17 (Dingle, 2011), 234–45.

[116] Ó hÓgáin, *Duanaire*, 14.

[117] Ó hÓgáin, *Duanaire*: for 'Cainnich' see manuscript readings on p. 94 (song 2), 97 (song 5), 133 (song 31); for 'Cainne' see p. 95 (song 3), 106 (song 11); for 'Franca' see p. 123 (song 25); for 'beala' see p. 99 (song 6).

[118] Ó Maolmhuaidh, *Lucerna Fidelium*, xvi–xvii: see also N. Williams, 'The Irish language in County Offaly', in William Nolan and Timothy P. O'Neill (eds), *Offaly: History and Society* (Dublin, 1998), 543–68, at 554–5.

[119] C. Quinn, 'A specimen of Kilkenny Irish,' *Éigse* 11 (1964–6), 107–12: 110. See also *LASID* I, 158 and *SnaG* 454 (V 3.12).

Possessive Pronouns in GSM-1 (1st and 2nd pl.)

	L	F	E	Trinity
1pl	[6] ar n-airm;	[6] ar n-airm;	[6] ar n-airm;	[6] ar n-airm;
	[21] a*r* ci*n*ed-ne;	[21] ar cin*ed*-ne;	[21] a*r* ci*nn*eadh-ne;	[21] ar ci*n*edh-ne;
	[22] a*r* ci*n*eadh-*ne*;	[22] ar ci*n*ed-ne;	[22] a*r* ci*n*eadh-ne;	[22] a*r* ci*n*edh-ne;
	[22] a*r* *n*dlig*hidh*-ni;	[22] ar ndl*ighi*d-n*i*;	[22] a*r* ndlighi-ne;	[22] a*r* ndlig*id*-ne;
	[23] a*r* ndligh*idh*-ne;	[23] a*r* ndl*ighi*d-ne;	[23] a*r* dlighi-ne;	[23] a*r* ndlig*idh*-ne;
	[23] a*r* n-a*n*man*n*a;	[23] a*r* n-an*man*na;	[23] ar n-a*n*man*n*;	[23] a*r* n-an*man*na;
	[23] a*r* ndligh*idh*-ne;	[23] a*r* ndl*ig*eadh-ne;	[23] a*r* ndl*igh*eadh-ne;	[23] a*r* ndlig*idh*-ne;
	[24] a*r* ndligh*idh*-ni;	[24] ar ndl*igi*d-ne;	[24] a*r* ndl*igh*in-ne;	[24] a*r* ndligh*idh*-ne;
	[27] saca*irt* a*r* re*acht*a-ne súd;	[27] saga*irt* a re*acht*ai-ne siud;	[27] saga*irt* a*r* rr*seacht*aine sud;	[27] sacairt a*r* re*acht*ane súd;
2pl	[8] cum bhar righ-si;	[8] cum bar righ-si;	[8] cum bar righ-si;	[8] docum ar rig-si;
	[22] i*n*a ba*r* ndl*ighidh*-si	[22] na b*ur* ndl*igi*d-si;	[22] na b*ur* ndl*ighi*-si;	[22] na a*r* ndlig*id*-si;
	[23] ba*r* ndlig*idh* fei*n*;	[23] b*ur* ndl*ig*id fei*n*;	[23] bur ndligh*eadh* fe*n*	[23] ar ndlig*id* fein;
	[23] bur n-a*n*ma*n*a-si;	[23] ba*r* n-an*man*n-sa;	[23] bur n-a*n*man*n*a-sa;	[23] a*r* n-an*man*na-si;
	[23] na bha*r* ndligh*idh*-si;	[23] na b*ur* ndl*ighe*d-si;	[23] na b*ur* dl*ighi*-si;	[23] na a*r* ndl*ighidh*-si
	[23] bur ran*n* ⁊ bur[120] sealbh;	[23] b*ur* ran*n* ⁊ b*ur* sealb;	[23] i*n* b*ur* ran*n* ⁊ i*n* b*ur* seilbh;	[23] –;
	[23] ba*r* nDia fei*n*;	[23] b*ur* nDia fei*n*;	[23] b*ur* Dia fen;	[23] ar nDia fein;
	[24] bhar ndl*ighidh*-si;	[24] b*ar* ndl*ig*id-si;	[24] b*ur* ndl*ighidh*-si;	[24] a*r* ndlig*idhi*-si;
	[37] b*ur* n-aib*ar*seora;	[37] b*ur* n-aib*ir*seora;	[37] –;	[37] –;
	Preposition *fó/fá* + possessive pronoun *ar*			
1pl (poss.)	[21] fa n-a*r* ndl*ighidh* fei*n*;	[21] – (fo*m* dl*ighidh* fei*n*);	[21] fo n-a*r* ndlighi-ne fe*n*;	[21] – (fom dlig*idh*);
2pl (poss.)	[22] fa bhar cin*eadh*-si	[22] fa n-a*r* cin*edh*-si;	[22] fa n-a*r* cin*eadh*-si;	[22] fo a*r* cinead-si.

Figure 10: 1st and 2nd poss. pron. in GSM-1.

[120]The form *bhúr* with a length mark is found in Ó Longáin's copy but it is not in the original manuscript.

use of *ar* for *bhar* in R, but not knowing the name of the scribe and assuming it was a Cork manuscript, due to its colophon in Cill Chréidhe, extrapolated from this that 'the two pronouns were confused in Munster Irish also, before the difficulty was solved by taking over *ár* and *úr* from compound forms.'[121] Although O'Rahilly's intuition that the modern Munster Irish forms of the possessive pronouns *ár* and *úr* are borrowed from such compound forms as *do ar* > *dár* and *in bhur* > *i n-úr* is probably correct, if R was the only manuscript used to draw the conclusion that the two pronouns were confused in Munster Irish prior to this borrowing, that statement requires reassessing, because, on the contrary, these examples from GSM-1 show that the tendency in L, written in Cork at the end of the fifteenth century, is to distinguish clearly between the two. Similarly, figure 10 shows that *ar* and *bhar* were clearly distinguished by the scribe of E, who was probably from Cavan, and by the scribe of F. Interestingly, it is only in the composition forms with the preposition *fó/fá* that these last two manuscripts replace *bhar* with *ar*.

Ua Ríghbhardáin's consistency in his use of *ar* for both the first and second plural possessives is distinctive of his orthography and is consistent with the Leinster and North East Munster variety of Irish that was identified above as possibly being relevant to the interpretation of the spellings *nemhchoimsigh*, *ní coimsich* and *nemhchoimsi*. Other clues that our scribe may have spoken this variety of Irish could be found in 3rd pl. prepositional pronoun forms *indtib* beside *indtu* in the Trinity copy of GSM-1,[122] where all other three scribes wrote *innta*,[123] the form *eistib*[124] beside *astu*[125] in his copy of Mandeville in R and in the spelling *cloidhmhe*[126] for *claidheamh* in the copy of *Stair Fortibrais* from the Trinity manuscript. Noteworthy also, given his consistency in spelling intervocalic **g** with a *c* in all the inflected forms of *ag*, are his spellings *cugaind* and *cugaibh*[127] in the inflected forms of the preposition *co* 'towards' in GSM-1, where all other inflected forms of this preposition use *c* intervocalically, as with *ag*.[128] This may indicate that he considered the intervocalic *g* of these forms to be lenited, and that he was representing **x´u:n´** and **x´u:v´** with pseudo-historic

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[121] O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects*, 216–17.

[122] Trinity, fol. 33rb8: ca*ch* ní atā indtib; fol. 33ra22–3: atait na p*er*sana sin uile comarthanach in*d*tu fein. For the historical development of this feature in the Irish of Leinster see O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects*, 80; Quinn, 'A specimen of Kilkenny Irish,' 111, 'it is difficult to be sure what is indicated by the spelling *orrthamh*.' The form *indtib* is the only form in *Betha Colmáin maic Lúacháin*, edited from R, and occurs four times, see K. Meyer (ed.), *Betha Colmáin maic Lúacháin*, Todd Lecture Series 17 (London, 1911), 8, 40, 44 and 76.

[123] [50] L, inta; F, unnta; E, inntu.

[124] R, fol. 69rb11: dochum dhighi dól eistib. Stokes, 'Maundeville', 284.

[125] R, fol. 53va29: co fasa*dh* ceithri gega astu. Stokes, 'Maundeville', 12.

[126] Trinity, fol. 20va4. See W. Stokes, 'The Irish version of Fierabras', *RC* 19 (1898), 14–57, 118–67, 252–91, 364–93, at 34. For the modern distribution of this form see *LASID* I, 265.

[127] Trinity, fol. 31va9 qgaind, and 31va.25, qgaib.

[128] All examples from the Trinity manuscript: 1st sg. cucam (31va33). 2nd sg. cucad (30va34; 33rb43); chucat (33va14). 3rd sg. m. cuici (31vb9; 31vb13; 31vb46; 32ra4; 32va25; 32va26). 3rd pl. qca (31vb7) qq (31vb10; 31vb35).

chughainn and *chughaibh*, instead of by analogy with *fúinn* and *fúibh*, as was and is done by many later writers of Modern Irish from the southern half.[129]

If these spellings are traces of Úa Ríghbhardáin's native phonology, they would hint at the area of North East Munster and Leinster, the same region that historical evidence also indicates was the home of this scribe.

CONCLUSION

Our scribe was probably a member of the Ó Righbhardáin family who were hereditary historians to the Uí Chearbhaill in Éile, a region covering the area now between north east Co. Tipperary and south west Co. Offaly.[130] During the course of his career Tadhg Úa Ríghbhardáin wrote and decorated a number of manuscripts, of which the surviving ones are all very similar in genre and style. Indeed, the fact that many of the same religious and devotional texts reappear throughout all these manuscripts suggests that he was being hired as a specialist in copying this material by a variety of patrons, probably in the capacity of a professional scribe and illuminator. Equally, the complete absence of bardic poetry, legal material and medical texts may suggest that Úa Ríghbhardáin was limited in the repertoire of texts that he could and would copy. If we combine all of his surviving manuscripts, 293 folios written in Úa Ríghbhardáin's hand survive,[131] making him one of the most prolific scribes that we can account for from this period. Among the texts that stray marginally from this scribe's core genre of devotional material we find Fínghean Ó Mathghamhna's translation of *Mandeville*, one of the three fifteenth-century Irish translations of *Historia Karoli Magni* as well as the Irish translation of the tale of Fierabras, all of which also deal heavily in religious themes albeit through the lens of ethnography, military conquest and romance respectively. In this regard, it is only his copy of the *Dindshenchas* that appears to fall outside the customary remit of this scribe.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to reconstruct a clear picture of who Úa Ríghbhardáin wrote these manuscripts for. Two of them, R and TC, appear to have been in the hands of legal families during the sixteenth century and after, the Síol Fhlannchadha and the Meic Aodhagáin respectively, but the absence of a patronage note or of any ownership note contemporary to our scribe makes it difficult to ascertain if these manuscripts were actually written for members of

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[129]O'Rahilly, *Irish Dialects*, 217. An excellent illustration of how the inflected forms of the prepositional pronouns tend to influence each other in Irish is found in Liam P. Ó Murchú, 'Forainmneacha réamhfhoclacha i nGaeilge Chorca Dhuibhne', in P. de Brún, S. O Coileáin and P. O Riain (eds), *Folia Gadelica: Essays Presented to R. A. Breatnach* (Cork, 1983), 160–9. See also Williams, 'The Irish language in County Offaly', 553. The forms *chúm* **hu:m**, *chút* **hu:d**, *chúinn* **hu:N´** and *chúibh* **hu:v´** also occur in the Irish of Teileann, Co. Donegal (H. Wagner, *Gaeilge Theilinn* (Dublin, 1959), 196).

[130]Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh, *Leabhar Mór na nGenealach*, ed. N. Ó Muraíle, 5 vols (Dublin, 2003), i, 168 (§6.1c): 'Muint*ir* Rioghbardáin in Ēle'. R. Gillespie, 'Scribes and manuscripts in Gaelic Ireland, 1400–1700', *Studia Hibernica* 40 (2014), 9–34, at 20. See also T. Venning, 'The O'Carrolls of Offaly: their relations with the Dublin authorities in the sixteenth century' in Nolan and O'Neill, *Offaly: History and Society,* 181–205.

[131]TC, 97 folios; P, 36 folios; Trinity, 35 folios; R, 125 folios.

these families. Some of these manuscripts may have originally been commissioned by particularly pious members of the Uí Chearbhaill,[132] for whom the Uí Ríghbhardáin would have traditionally worked, or by neighbouring families such as the Uí Cheinnéidigh or the Meic Aodhagáin, whose names appear in the margins of TC.

Kobel shows that Úa Ríghbhardáin's style was distinctively antiquarian in its palaeography and illumination, and it has been argued in this article that Úa Ríghbhardáin's imitation of earlier Irish manuscripts may have even extended to the point of him imitating relief scribes, so as to create the impression of a prestigious book that had been commissioned by a wealthy patron from a group of learned scholars, such as was the case with the Book of Ballymote. In doing so, Úa Ríghbhardáin may have been responding to an appetite for books that could be seen as recovering and continuing the language and artistic culture of an idealised stage in Gaelic history. The enthusiasm for such artefacts can be well imagined during the years of the Gaelic resurgence, especially among dynastic groups, such as the Uí Chearbhaill,[133] who managed to reclaim lordship over their ancestral lands during this period after having been expelled by the successive waves of Anglo-Norman conquest and settlement.

On the other hand, while wrapped in a coating of archaic Gaelic design, most of the texts copied by Úa Ríghbhardáin are not densely packed with pseudoarchaic language and his manuscripts contain evidence of the translation and transmission of theological texts from Italy, early romances from France and travel literature from England in fifteenth-century Ireland. In many cases, although few of the texts copied by Úa Ríghbhardáin have been examined this closely, the sources used to create such translations during the fifteenth-century in Ireland can be traced back to versions and adaptations made in England,[134] and the English connections of the old Anglo-Norman families may have acted as channels through which these texts arrived in Ireland.

The recurrence of the same texts in Úa Ríghbhardáin's manuscripts may also suggest that he had access to a nearby library from which he sourced material for his clients. The resemblances of a number of the texts copied by Úa Ríghbhardáin to the contents of the *Leabhar Breac* has been observed by Follett and McLaughlin,[135] and it is possible that our scribe used the Mac Aodhagáin family library to copy at least some of his texts. Culverwell's observation that one of the marginal poems found in the Trinity manuscript also occurs in the

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[132] R. Loeber, 'An architectural history of Gaelic castles and settlements, 1370–1600', in P. J. Duffy, D. Edwards and E. FitzPatrick (eds), *Gaelic Ireland* (Dublin, 2001), 271–314, at 301.

[133] K. W. Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the Middle Ages*, new ed. (Dublin, 2003) 15 and 197–8.

[134] S. Falconer (ed. and trans.), *Lorgaireacht an tSoidhigh Naomhtha* (Dublin, 1953), xxxi; F. N. Robinson (ed. and trans.), 'The Irish Lives of Guy of Warwick and Bevis of Hampton', *ZCP* 6 (1908), 9–180, 273–338, at 10; G. Quinn (ed. and trans.), *Stair Ercuil ocus a Bás: The Life and Death of Hercules*, ITS 38 (London, 1939), xxiv. For an overview of the Irish Marco Polo, all versions of *Gabháltais Séarlais Mhóir* and the Irish translation of Mandeville see Palandri, 'The Irish adaptation'.

[135] W. Follett, *Céli Dé in Ireland: Monastic Writing and Identity in the Early Middle Ages*, Studies in Celtic History 23 (Woodbridge, 2006), 102–3; Follett, 'Religious texts', 213–16 and 224–6; McLaughlin, 'Almsgiving', 113–83.

Leabhar Breac may further support this theory,[136] but unfortunately, given Úa Ríghbhardáin's tendency to paraphrase his sources while he copied, the task of identifying the precise versions of texts he used to produce these manuscripts may never yield conclusive results. On the other hand, there is also evidence that Úa Ríghbhardáin journeyed far to create copies of his texts for his clients, and the picture that emerges from the scribal colophon in R is one of a solitary scribe who had travelled to copy a text and was staying with an unfamiliar community whose strict observance of a fast was cause for a scribal comment. Such a comment would hardly seem appropriate if the client of the manuscript had been the local lord, Cormac Láidir Mac Carthaigh Múscraighe, a deeply religious man by all accounts. A similar picture transpires from Úa Ríghbhardáin's colophon in P, in which he asks the reader for a prayer for himself and for the person from whom he got the text, *ar anam an tí ō fúair*, which again indicates that he had consulted someone else's library to create that manuscript.

Certain spellings found in Úa Ríghbhardáin's texts, such as *ar* for *bhur* and perhaps the spellings *nemhchoimsigh, nemhchoimsi* and *coimsich*, would appear to be consistent with the phonology of the regional variety of Irish that emerged in North East Munster and Leinster during the late early modern and modern period, and it is likely that this region, where his probable kin group served as historians to the Uí Chearbhaill, was the scribe's home. The four manuscripts that have survived from him give us a snapshot of a prolific and probably professional scribe who flourished in this area during the 1470s, who travelled to retrieve newly-translated texts for his clients, and who specialised in, but did not entirely confine himself to, religious and devotional material.

R, fol. 6r 1

Appendix I

The following table can be used to trace the forms listed in figures 8 and 10 back to the original manuscript pages as well as Hyde's edition. The number in square brackets refers to a paragraph division made by the author in order to simplify the referencing system in the body of the article.

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[136]A. B. Culverwell, 'Quatrains from H 2. 12', *Hermathena* 17 (1912), 133–6, at 135.

	L	F	E	Trinity	ITS xx
[1]	fol. 97vb2–11	p. 3a15–22	fol. 20vb24–34	fol. 30ra16–24	p. 16.9–15
[2]	97vb11–23	3a22–33	20vb34–21ra9	30ra24–36	16.16–18.2
[3]	97vb23–37	3a22–b1	21ra9–28	30ra36–b4	18.2–14
[4]	97vb37–98ra9	3b1–8	21ra28–39	30rb4–10	18.14–21
[5]	98ra9–26	3b8–22	21ra39–21rb20	30rb10–26	18.21–20.11
[6]	98ra26–98rb12	3b22–37	21rb20–21va6	30rb26–43	20.11–29
[7]	98rb12–33	3b38–4a7	21va7–35	30rb44–30va20	22.1–18
[8]	98rb33–98va15	4a7–20	21va36–21vb20	30va20–39	22.18–24.5
[9]	98va16–34	4a20–35	21vb20–22ra8	30va39–b13	24.5–22
[10]	98va35–98vb4	4a35–9	22ra9–15	30vb13–19	24.22–7
[11]	98vb4–24	4a40–4b9	22ra15–37	30vb20–37	24.28–26.18
[12]	98vb24–99ra1	4b9–19	22ra38–22rb13	30vb37–31ra1	26.18–29
[13]	99ra1–24	4b20–39	22rb13–22va3	31ra2–20	26.30–28.18
[14]	99ra24–99rb16	4b39–5a10	22va4–22vb2	31ra20–41	28.19–30.15
[15]	99rb16–21	5a10–15	22vb2–9	31ra41–7	30.15–20
[16]	99rb21–99va1	5a16–29	22vb10–31	31rb1–17	30.21–32.8
[17]	99va2–10	5a29–37	22vb32–23ra3	31rb17–23	32.8–15
[18]	99va10–17	5a38–44	23ra4–16	31rb24–31	32.16–23
[19]	99va17–25	5a44–5b5	23ra16–27	31rb31–8	32.23–34.3
[20]	99va25–35	5b5–12	23ra27–40	31rb38–47	34.4–12
[21]	99va35–99vb6	5b12–17	23ra40–23rb8	31rb47–31va5	34.13–18
[22]	99vb6–13	5b17–23	23rb8–16	31va5–11	34.19–24
[23]	99vb13–31	5b23–37	23rb16–36	31va11–27	34.25–36.8
[24]	99vb31–100ra4	5b37–42	23rb36–23va4	31va27–33	36.9–15
[25]	100ra4–19	5b42–6a10	23va4–24	31va33–46	36.16–31
[26]	100ra19–32	6a10–20	23va24–37	31va46–b10	38.1–13
[27]	100ra32–100rb15	6a21–35	23va37–23vb19	31vb11–32	38.14–30
[28]	100rb15–35	6a35–6b3	23vb19–39	31vb32–32ra2	40.1–15
[29]	100rb35–100va15	6b3–15	23vb39–24ra12	32ra2–14	40.16–28
[30]	100va16–30	6b15–25	24ra12–29	32ra14–25	40.28–42.9
[31]	100va31–100vb16	6b26–39	24ra29–24rb18	32ra26–44	42.10–44.1
[32]	100vb16–29	6b39–7a3	24rb18–35	32ra44–b4	44.1–12
[33]	100vb29–101ra9	7a3–13	24rb35–24va11	32rb4–14	44.12–25
[34]	101ra9–21	7a14–23	24va12–29	32rb15–26	44.26–46.8
[35]	101ra22–101rb1	7a23–35	24va30–24vb8	32rb26–40	46.9–20
[36]	101rb2–21	7a36–7b3	24vb8–34	32rb41–va12	46.21–48.10
[37]	101rb21–6	7b3–6	24vb34–40	32va12–14	48.10–13
[38]	101rb27–101va8	7b7–18	24vb40–25ra18	32va15–29	48.14–50.1
[39]	101va8–21	7b18–27	25ra18–30	32va30–6	50.2–11
[40]	101va21–34	7b27–36	25ra30–25rb2	32va36–43	50.11–21
[41]	101va34–101vb13	7b36–8a1	25rb2–16	32va43–b12	50.21–52.2
[42]	101vb13–30	8a1–13	25rb17–36	32vb12–24	52.2–16
[43]	101vb31–102ra4	8a13–21	25rb36–25va6	32vb24–30	52.17–25
[44]	102ra4–14	8a21–8	25va6–21	32vb30–8	52.26–54.3
[45]	102ra15–26	8a28–36	25va21–34	32vb38–33ra3	54.3–12
[46]	102ra26–102rb7	8a36–8b4	25va34–25vb15	33ra3–17	54.12–26
[47]	102rb7–20	8b4–13	25vb15–27	33ra18–28	54.26–56.5
[48]	102rb20–36	8b13–25	25vb27–26ra3	33ra29–43	56.5–17
[49]	102rb36–102va11	8b25–9	26ra3–13	33ra43–b4	56.18–25
[50]	102va11–28	8b30–40	26ra13–31	33rb4–16	56.25–58.7
[51]	102va28–102vb2	8b41–9a3	26ra31–26rb3	33rb16–23	58.7–14

	L	F	E	Trinity	ITS xx
[52]	102vb2–10	9a4–12	26rb3–18	33rb23–30	58.14–22
[53]	102vb10–27	9a12–25	26rb18–41	33rb30–43	58.22–60.7
[54]	102vb27–103ra12	9a26–44	26rb41–26va36	33rb43–va22	60.7–25
[55]	103ra12–34	9a44–9b12	26va36–26vb24	33va22–41	60.26–62.18

ABBREVIATION

RIACat   T. F. O'Rahilly, K. Mulchrone, M. E. Byrne, J. H. Delargy, E. FitzPatrick, L. Duncan, W. Wulf, G. Murphy, A. I. Pearson and T. Ó Concheanainn, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy* (Dublin, 1926–70).

ANDREA PALANDRI

Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies