

‘More of your fancy kiss-my-hand’

A Further Note on Brian O’Nolan’s *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*

Adrian Naughton

University College Dublin

This article is intended to supplement my earlier 2011 article, ‘*Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge* and Flann O’Brien’s Fiction.’¹ It reiterates something of that argument by providing more evidence to support it, and it humbly hopes to suggest or inspire further uses for the thesis among O’Nolan scholars. In a requiem piece for Osborne Bergin, former Professor of Old and Middle Irish at University College Dublin, Myles na gCopaleen speaks of penetrating to the heart of the Irish language, of reaching a ‘philological Antarctica.’ Those who have done so, and Myles includes himself in this exalted company, paradoxically find themselves ‘inarticulate, gagged.’² *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge* is a poor piece of scholarship and seems at times, for me personally, to form something of a barren, icy tundra of its own, one that too engenders silence or inarticulacy. O’Nolan himself, in the guise of Myles, would later also take a dim view of the thesis. Condemning Professor Alfred O’Rahilly, who signed himself ‘M.A.’ in a confrontation with Myles, Myles declared: ‘An M.A., by Gob? I, too, am an M.A. of the same wretched university and can prove documentarily (by producing the preposterous thesis) that the degree, like the university is a fake.’³ I outline similar responses to the thesis in my 2011 article, but I also argue there that while responses to the thesis are primarily negative, and that it is very important to acknowledge the very poor quality of the first, failed attempt, there are yet in the thesis ideas that are potentially valuable to Flann scholars. This article is a last attempt to squeeze the remaining worth from the thesis and is also a useful opportunity to provide further translations from the thesis for those who might desire them.

It is important to acknowledge at the outset however, that there are two M.A. theses in existence, the one I am using here, housed in the James Joyce Library, University College Dublin, which was the first thesis that O’Nolan submitted and that was failed, dated 1934. A second successful thesis that is now housed with other O’Nolan papers in the Burns Library, Boston College, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge: Tráchtas maraon le duanaire*, is dated 1935. Louis de Paor’s 2004 essay, ‘*An tsídheoig is an scian dochtúra: Flann O’Brien agus seanlitríocht na Gaeilge*,’ makes use of this second,

revised thesis, and de Paor suggests the value of accessing this, which unfortunately I have been unable to do to date, in his assertion that even though O'Nolan claimed to his friends that he added nothing to the thesis, there is 'remarkable progress' or '*dul chun cinn suntasach*' noticeable in the second document.⁴

The first thesis opens with a rather vague history of Celtic civilisation and culture, then moves to show the extent of the interest that the old Gaels possessed 'in the beauty of the world and in the power of the firmament,'⁵ anticipating similar diction in *An Béal Bocht* perhaps, though a sober, largely unengaging postgraduate tone is generally maintained throughout. O'Nolan then very quickly tries to establish that distinction I have outlined in my previous article between two types of nature poetry; the first, for which O'Nolan himself has a clear preference, consisting of 'an exact, direct account of the world, without any mention of the poet himself or of any human desire or hope,'⁶ and the second type consisting of 'poetry in which Nature is a mirror on which the poet's mind is jotted, the world is sad with the sadness of the poet, joyous with the pride of the poet, or poetry that draws the thought of the poet from the richness and beauty of the world to the power of the god who created it.'⁷ He goes on to explain:

Except for a couple of poetic fragments here and there, especially poetry written after the period of Old Irish when alien ideas were slipping into the country and leaving their mark on the literature, it is in the first division of these that Irish nature-poetry sits. The Gaels did not mix philosophy and nature-poetry, and that is the first literary trait of the Celts that is seen in Irish.⁸

O'Nolan then discusses early nature-poetry in Welsh and Scots-Gaelic for a number of pages and argues that this poetry is also characterised by direct, bare accounts of the natural world without any intrusion of the poet's personality. The longest sections of commentary are subtitled 'Irish nature-poetry down to 1100 AD' and 'Irish nature-poetry from 1100 AD,' the two sections explicating in more detail the division between the two types of poetry already stated. Somewhat at odds with the student narrator's manifesto in *At Swim-Two-Birds*, that 'The entire corpus of existing literature should be regarded as a limbo from which discerning authors could draw their characters as required,'⁹ in a concluding section on poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, O'Nolan is particularly critical of *aisling* poetry:

The poets have natural images in abundance, particularly in the *aisling* poems, but it is the same images that they use from poem to poem, and it is not

necessary to read more than a dozen poems before we see that they are clichés and that true nature-thought, even any thought, is not behind them.¹⁰

O'Nolan's thesis too contains clichés, but his rejection of these political verses of millenarian Jacobitism and seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Irish nationalism is an interesting point in itself that perhaps reflects something of his post-Independence, post-Revivalist thinking.

In '*Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge* and *Flann O'Brien's Fiction*,' I noted O'Nolan's application of the modernist aesthetic theories of T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound to this poetry, the theory of impersonality and Pound's Imagism. The thesis is most likely to be of use to those still concerned with debates regarding O'Nolan's status as a modernist or postmodernist and to those with an interest in Irish modernisms more generally. O'Nolan's application of the idea of impersonality in the thesis is unambiguous, displaying a clear preference for what he identifies as impersonality in the early Irish nature-poetry written before the twelfth century, its directness and simplicity, suggestive of a detached eyewitness account. O'Nolan includes the well-known lyric, 'The Little Blackbird Has Whistled':

The little blackbird has whistled
from point of beak bright yellow
sends a cry over Loch Laig
blackbird form branch in wooded plain.¹¹

The simplicity of the adjectives and the absence of any conjunction convey a sense of self-sufficient brevity, precision and concreteness. O'Nolan's own commentary on this verse is a little simplistic, yet it sufficiently reiterates the refrain of the thesis:

It would be hard to better this small stanza for cleverness, for accuracy of account or for sweetness of poetry. The whistle of the black bird, his yellow mouth and the leafy tree above the lake; the powerful, strong colours mentioned by the poet in this picture are noted. Every necessity is there and without anything else more than that, and the whole is great poetry.¹²

Again, it appears that Pound's cautions are being observed according to the dissertation, that a poet should not use an expression such as 'dim lands of *peace*' as 'It dulls the image. It mixes an abstraction with the concrete. It comes from the writer's not realising that the natural object is always the *adequate* symbol.'¹³ The later Irish nature-poets move towards abstraction and a more circumlocutious approach, and a

verse by Seán Ó Neachtain quoted in *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge* forms a stark contrast with 'The Little Blackbird Has Whistled':

I would go to the forest with you, virgin of the golden hair,
I would look at the birds and listen to their beak-music
A maiden of the wood will have a fiddle, the thrush will have a pipe,
A blackbird putting poems to a harp tunefully.¹⁴

O'Nolan writes: 'It is noticed in this poem that the succinctness of speech is gone and that the poet is becoming tiresome and verbose; he has little respect now for the "half-word" that [Kuno] Meyer found as a principal sign for nature-poetry.'¹⁵ He admits Ó Neachtain's poem is not without its own merits; hyperbole is cleverly used,¹⁶ a device O'Nolan himself will employ in his novels. However, even though he believes it is possible to compose poetry without any association with nature, he feels one has to admit that a great decline occurred in Irish poetry when interest in nature was lost: 'The majority of the poetry of the eighteenth century, it is nothing but wayward words and adroitness of pen, a *tour de force* without meaning, without effect.'¹⁷

Early Irish nature-poetry was largely the product of monasteries, or of men who chose a life of exile and asceticism in praise of God. In his section dedicated to Irish nature-poetry before the twelfth century, O'Nolan notes a number of lyrics attributed to St Colmcille. Although he acknowledges 'that the saint heard "the voice of God in the voice of the wind" and the Lord's power in the sound and in the crashing of the waves,'¹⁸ O'Nolan perceives that 'nature for its own sake alone is a matter of wonder for the poet'¹⁹ and that this is 'true nature-poetry of the old style.'²⁰ Again, even though nature is something of a device for Donnchadh Mór Ó Dalaigh – 'He mostly conceived spiritual poetry and the praise for nature [...] acts as a praise for God'²¹ – O'Nolan admires his work and cites four stanzas of one poem. The first stanza translates as:

Sacred the unsettled weather
Sacred the dropping rain
Sacred the fair weather clear and bright
Sacred the stormy weather of the Creator.²²

The implication is that the poet's faith in God is unshakeable, and this faith resembles the nature-poet's attitude to language. As in John's gospel, the Word is God. The use of nature for Colmcille and Ó Dalaigh may be somewhat contrived, but it seems it is their faith in language, their lack of linguistic self-consciousness, that attracts O'Nolan.

The nature-poetry O'Nolan celebrates in his thesis therefore illustrates a unified sensibility. Eliot believed that a disassociation of sensibility occurred in the seventeenth century, when the unified self became self-conscious, when the poet became aware, that is, of ideas, images, and feelings as distinct from the objects that caused them. Thought and feeling, signifier and signified split apart, and this fracture lead directly to the promotion of the cult of the self. In his 1921 essay, 'The Metaphysical Poets,' Eliot lauds Donne and Herbert at the expense of Tennyson and Browning. Erudition must be incorporated into sensibility, which is what Eliot sees in Donne, 'a direct sensuous apprehension of thought, or a recreation of thought into feeling.'²³ Tennyson and Browning as poets are meditative, 'but they do not feel their thought as immediately as the odour of a rose.'²⁴ Eliot blamed Milton and Dryden for this disassociation of sensibility, the remedy for which is the famous doctrine of the objective correlative. In his 1936 essay, 'Milton 1,' he claims that Milton must be read first for the sound and then for the sense.²⁵ Significantly, O'Nolan is rather critical of Dryden in *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*; referring to Dryden and Pope he writes: 'They were writing worldly, clever, elegant poetry, poetry of the city, poetry without soul without depth of thought, poetry of the civilised world in which every old hint of nature was broken and lost; instead of celebration of birds as images of sweetness, an old Greek god was used.'²⁶

Relating to Irish nature-poetry after 1100, O'Nolan quotes a lyric attributed to Caoillte Mac Ronán,

High beautiful hill
Where the fair Fianna used to come to
There used to be a great stronghold
On you and a band of youths.

This was our part for enumeration,
We used to come to Máigh Mine (the smooth plain)
Beautiful berries, haws
Nuts of the hazels of Cantyre (headland).

Shoots of thorny brambles
Stalks of garlic without fault
Every May we used to eat
Pure stalks and enduring blossoms of watercress.²⁷

While O'Nolan does reserve some praise for the poem, he also remarks that the poet has little interest in the 'half-word' or '*leath-fhocal*,' in the 'short, sharp sentence' or '*abairt ghonta gairid*.'²⁸ Caoillte Mac Ronán and other poets of this period

started becoming talkative, a little bit cajoling, perhaps, and began to put wealth and abundance in their poetry with many words. The craft of the poet is 'to load every rift with ore' as Keats said, and it appears that the Irish nature-poet was moving in the same direction at the beginning of the twelfth century.²⁹

It seems that for O'Nolan, the poem is overly and unnecessarily detailed, as if there is no longer faith in a single noun or adjective or, indeed, in the 'half-word,' to portray richness and plenty, and that this anxiety has led to an overcompensation in the catalogue of food. The reference to Keats and its suggestion of Romantic individualism emphasises Eliot's influence on O'Nolan in his interpretation of nature-poetry in Irish. O'Nolan introduces Mac Ronán's poem as an account of 'the bliss of food instead of the bliss of intellect,'³⁰ and presumably what he means here is that fertility in nature is a metaphor for intellectual richness, similar to the idea of food for thought. The application of Eliot's theory of impersonality is supported by the simple footnote to the poem, 'Cf. Milton.' With lines cited from Milton's 'Sonnet 20' – beginning 'What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice' –, O'Nolan identifies a comparable analogy in Milton's poetry, poetry which Eliot alleges initiated the disassociation of sensibility.³¹

However, if Eliot's theory of impersonality is at all straightforward in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent,' it becomes contradictory or ambiguous in his later writing, for example in his 'Ben Jonson' and 'Yeats' essays. Indeed, the theory of impersonality resembles the Yeatsian idea that the poet is 'never the bundle of accident and incoherence that sits down to breakfast,' but also that the poet writes 'always of his personal life.'³² The poem has an entirely subjective origin and though the self is obscured and distanced in the poetic process, Yeats's belief that the artist is 'reborn as an idea, something intended, complete,'³³ suggests that the self is actually re-inscribed rather than extinguished, that it is made whole, or completed. Moreover, the fact that in the Romantic period there was also something of a doctrine of impersonality, that inspiration originates outside the poet and transcends his personality – or, for example, Yeats's suggestion that 'Ode to a Nightingale' pre-existed in the *Anima Mundi*, that Keats was 'nothing more than an accidental vessel through which the poem passed' – undermines Eliot and Pound's attack on Romantic individualism.³⁴ In *At Swim-Two-Birds*, O'Nolan's engagement with the notion of impersonality has also become more complex; he distrusts the kind of impersonality that can lead to a reinstatement of

absolute authority. Eliot's deference to a simultaneous order of history greatly underlines the impersonality of the tradition, but this espousal of discipline and canonicity also forms a translatable structure or a mould for authoritarian politics. While one observes an unequivocal, rather simple application of Eliot's and Pound's theories of impersonality to Irish nature-poetry in O'Nolan's thesis, in his first novel an ambiguity in this theory emerges.

I have alluded to O'Nolan's commentary in his thesis on those verses attributed to Mad Sweeney in my 2011 article, but here O'Nolan also discusses poetry attributed to Fionn and na Fianna. After 1100, O'Nolan argues, poets have little interest in the 'half-word.' O'Nolan includes the poetry of the Fionn Cycle in this section of his thesis dedicated to poetry after 1100, even though, he tells us, some of it was composed as early as the seventh century, though it was around the tenth century that the majority of the poetry available to us now was composed.³⁵ O'Nolan begins his commentary on these verses rather prosaically: 'The natural world makes the heart of the Fenian poet proud and happy. He spends all of his time outside and his love for nature is strong and vigorous.'³⁶ However, he goes on to make a slightly more significant distinction between the earlier nature poetry which focused with such precision on *minutiae* or '*mion rudaí*'³⁷ and the poetry of the Fionn cycle in which the poet is most often positioned, according to O'Nolan, between the mountain and the sea: 'His interest is in the big useful things in nature around him – the sea, the mountains, the glens, the oxen, the sound of the wind, the feat and tumult of the hunt. He does not see and does not heed "*int én bec gáires assin tsáil*".'³⁸

In the thesis O'Nolan clearly prefers a scaled-down poetic. He has no interest in anything approximating to the Romantic sublime, a representation of limitlessness accompanied by dread or melancholy. In his contribution to *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, James Longenbach sees many modernist poets reacting against Shelley's notion of the poet as an unacknowledged legislator of the world, and he takes up Auden's 'poetry makes nothing happen' as an example.³⁹ Longenbach sees this more specifically as Auden's reference to his own writing, the kind of poetry Auden himself was composing at the time and the need to redefine the limits of what he himself could achieve, what acts were proper to his own task. Longenbach terms this 'a poetry of strategically circumscribed ambition.'⁴⁰ It is also a 'diminished aesthetic'⁴¹; these poets are 'diminished romantics'.⁴² This description of a modernist aesthetic would appear to match O'Nolan's understanding of early Irish nature-poetry before 1100 in *Nádúir-fhíliocht na Gaedhilge*. Like the poetry of D.G. Rossetti, Thomas Hardy, and Robert Frost selected by Longenbach to illustrate his point, this early Irish verse focuses on the small object and on the particular, O'Nolan argues. There is no panoramic vision, instead there is a radical condensation, a minute precision; the small object which is carefully

detailed can then become knowable, relatively certain. Rossetti, Hardy, and Frost are all seen as refusing the pathetic fallacy⁴³ and again this is something O'Nolan observes in the best of the early Irish nature poems.⁴⁴ Though numerous other influences collided to produce Imagism, Imagist poems are the products of diminished romantics, says Longenbach.⁴⁵ However, typical of modernism's inherent ambivalences, it is Pound himself who almost from the beginning was 'impatient with Imagism's studiously miniature world.'⁴⁶ Pound was a hugely ambitious poet who saw poets as the antennae of the race, and Longenbach views him as the most self-consciously ambitious poet since Milton, noting his youthful boast that he would write the epic of the West.⁴⁷ *The Cantos* was his attempt to marry minute precision and direct treatment of the thing with the vast scale and ambitious scope of the epic. Yet, along with those poets already mentioned, Pound's own *Lustra*, Yeats's *The Wind Among the Reeds*, the war poetry of Wilfred Owen, the poetry of H.D. and Marianne Moore all exhibit this circumscribed sense of the poet's own knowledge and power. Interestingly, while Yeats had been inspired to much more 'aggressively ambitious' poems by the 1916 rising and the First World War, 'hatching universes as brilliantly as Shelley,' Wilfred Owen continued to write poetry out of a 'studiously diminished aesthetic.'⁴⁸ In the aftermath of the Battle of Magh Rath, Sweeney, according to his narrative, maintains a similar stance to the kind adopted by Owen; shell-shocked he retreats to the trees and focuses on his small, green world. This aesthetic is typical of early Irish nature-poetry, of the poet's objectives or ambitions, according to O'Nolan: 'No attempt was made to compose a great work of literature, a work that would be comparable with the work of Homer and Virgil,' with attention instead being directed towards the '*mion rudaí*' or 'minor things' of life.⁴⁹ In contrast to John Kerrigan's view of *Buile Shuibhne* as 'a national epic,'⁵⁰ we might therefore posit Sweeney's discovery of the sacred not as the discovery of the great epic journey, but instead as that occasioned by its failure.

Yet, O'Nolan also believes that the poem '*Miana Fhinn Mhic Cumhaill*' gives an 'accurate report' or '*tuairisc cruinn*'⁵¹ of the elements of the natural world enjoyed by the Fenian poet. He believes 'the natural true-note' or '*an fíor-nóta nádúrtha*'⁵² is exhibited in these Fenian poems: 'the poet mentions the sights and the sounds that are known to the person who spends his life out under skies.'⁵³ He is critical here of the formulaic aspects of some of the Fenian poetry, but a few pages later alludes to 'The life that the Fianna spent hunting and performing feats on hills and untilled fields'⁵⁴ and claims: 'It seems that they had precise information about the beauties and the wonders of the country from one side to the other, since there are few steps of the country not trodden or praised by the poets and the stories in the Irish Fiannaíocht.'⁵⁵ Again, he is drawn to the precision and accuracy of these accounts, but also to their

seeming first-hand, proximate knowledge of the natural world, though rather oddly seemingly believing also that the Fianna really wrote those verses attributed to them and that they recount real, lived experience. This notion corresponds to de Paor's specification that the descriptive accuracy in Irish nature-poetry that O'Nolan admires creates a faithfulness to life as it is.⁵⁶ This last point is a very important one for de Paor's essay, the significance of an empirical approach to writing, of direct experience and of engaging with the real world in order to protect against the dangers of solipsistic imagination in *At Swim-Two-Birds*. De Paor alludes to J.C.C. Mays's belief that Finn is the least satirised of the narrators of the three stories at the beginning of the novel.⁵⁷ Finn is privileged because 'he has seen more of the world than you or me, of course, that's the secret of it.'⁵⁸ He has direct, personal experience of life and he will only tell those stories of which he has direct, personal experience – narratives that recount events in which he himself partook. He is reluctant to speak on anything else.⁵⁹ De Paor explains Finn's willingness to tell Sweeney's story, one Finn has no part in, due to the precision of language in the Sweeney verses as outlined in O'Nolan's thesis and the ability of the verses to accurately represent reality. Finn does not trust words and is badly treated by them; the novel, according to de Paor, reveals Finn losing more and more control over language.⁶⁰

I have implied elsewhere that the weaknesses in O'Nolan's scholarship mean his thesis likely holds little of value for early Irish language scholars; however, it certainly has importance for those who favour a generally comparative approach to Irish writing in English and Irish language writing. The thesis may also hold significance for those with an interest in ecological modes of writing, despite the fact that O'Nolan is not primarily concerned with nature itself, rather with the aesthetic and linguistic aspects of these verses, with the exactness and accuracy of *descriptions* of nature. James Mc Elroy's 2011 historical outline of ecocriticism and Irish poetry must predictably begin with early Irish nature lyrics and Kuno Meyer.⁶¹ He collates commentary on this nature poetry from Kenneth Jackson, Seamus Heaney, Patrick C. Power, and Seán Ó Tuama. Jackson and Heaney, Mc Elroy explains, argue that Celtic literature largely escaped the influence of European culture. Jackson identifies a change in Irish literature after the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when it loses its 'earlier spontaneity' and Power also concurs that the huge significance of nature poetry in Ireland declines after the thirteenth century.⁶² Mc Elroy notes that for Ó Tuama the failure of Irish nature poetry occurs rather later, in 1601, coinciding for Ó Tuama with the collapse of the Gaelic order.⁶³ Mc Elroy can conclude therefore,

that such narratives provide a longstanding semiotic of nature discourse whereby the English imperium, not Roman Christendom or Europeanism, is

held responsible for negating Ireland's topographic realm and creating a divisive universe characterised by destructive agricultural practices, the systematic exploitation of natural resources (in particular, the felling of native tree), and, at the level of language, literature and culture an ongoing ideological representation of the Irish people as uncivilised others – wild, savage, etc.⁶⁴

O'Nolan's thesis sidesteps such oppositional thinking by focusing almost entirely on the growing cult of personality and authorship. Indeed, O'Nolan seems to see the 'national spirit' that arose due to the Norman incursion, more so than the foreign influence itself, as complicit in the downfall of the superior Irish nature poetry prior to 1100.⁶⁵

Much work remains to be carried out on O'Nolan's archives and unpublished materials; indeed, we have only scratched the surface so far. De Paor's work on the second, revised thesis is excellent, but his decision to write and publish in Irish necessarily limits the circulation of the contents of the second thesis among O'Nolan scholars. I feel I have exhausted the first copy of the thesis; perhaps more can be said of the second: even more of your fancy kiss-my-hand.

Notes & references

¹ Adrian Naughton, 'Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge' and Flann O'Brien's fiction,' in *Is it about a bicycle?': Flann O'Brien in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Jennika Baines (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011), 83-97.

² Flann O'Brien, *Further Cuttings from Cruiskeen Lawn*, ed. Kevin O'Nolan (London: Paladin, 1989), 80, 81.

³ Anthony Cronin, *No Laughing Matter: The Life and Times of Flann O'Brien* (London: Grafton, 1989), 66.

⁴ Louis de Paor, 'An tsídheoig is an scian dochtúra: Flann O'Brien agus seanlitríocht na Gaeilge', in *Cín Chille Cúile. Texts, Saints and Places: Essays in Honour of Pádraig Ó Riain*, ed. Máire Herbert and Kevin Murray (Aberystwyth: Celtic Studies Publications, 2004), 64.

⁵ Brian Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge* (MA thesis, University College Dublin, 1934), 1. 'i n-áille an domhain agus i gcomhacht na firmaiminte'. All citations are reproduced exactly as they appear in O'Nolan's thesis, whether spelling or the use of the 'fada' is correct or not. All translations are my own.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 2. 'cunntas glan dírecach ar chlár an domhain, gan trácht ar bith ar an fhile féin ná ar aon mhian nó dúil daonna.'

⁷ *Ibid.*, 2. 'filíocht 'na mbíonn an Nádúir mar scathán ar a mbíonn aigne an fhile breacaighthe, an domhan brónach le brón an fhile, luthghaireach le bród an fhile, nó filíocht a thairngeas smaoinemh an fhile ó shaidhbhreas agus áilneacht an domhain chuig comhacht an dé a chruthaigh é.'

⁸ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 2. 'Acht amháin cupla giotaí filíochta annso agus annsiúd, go h-áirithe filíocht a scríobhadh tar éis trath na sean-Gaedhilge, nuair abhí smaointeacha coimhghitheacha ag sileadh isteach 'sa tír agus ag fágáil a rian ar an litriocht, is 'sa chéad roinn dhibh siúd atá suidhe ar nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge. Níor mheasc na Gaedhil feallsamhnacht ar nádúir-fhilíocht, agus sé sin an chéad thréith liteadha de chuid na gCeilteach a chídhtear dúinn 'sa Ghaedilg.'

⁹ Flann O'Brien, *At Swim-Two-Birds* (London: Penguin, 2002), 25.

¹⁰ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 46. 'Bíonn samhlaoidí nádúrtha go fluirseach ag na filíbh, go h-áirithe ins na haislinge, acht siad na samhlaoidí céadna abhíonn i n-úsáid acu ó dhán go dán, agus ní gádh níos mó na doisiún dán a leigheadh sul a bhfeictear dúinn gur clichés iad agus nach bhfuil an fíor nádúir-smaoineadh, fiú amháin aon smaoinemh, taoibh thiar dóibh.'

¹¹ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 11. 'Int én bec ro-leic feit / do rind guip glánbuidi, / Fo-ceird faid ós Loch Láig / lon do chráib charrbuidi.'

¹² *Ibid.*, 11. 'Ba dheacar an ran beag seo a shárú ar chlisteacht, ar fhírinne thuairisce nó ar bhinneas filíochta. Fead an éin duibh, a ghob bhuidhe agus an crann duilleach ós cionn an locha; tugtar fa ndeara na dathanna tréana láidre atá luaidhte ag an fhile 'sa pheictiúir seo. Tá gach riachtanas ann agus gan aon ní eile thairis; agus is sár-fhilíocht an t-iomlán.'

¹³ Ezra Pound, 'A Retrospect,' in *The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T.S. Eliot (New York: New Directions, 1935), 5.

¹⁴ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 48. 'Rachainn fó'n gcoill leat, a mhaighdean na n-orfholt, / 'féachain ar éanlaith 's ag éisteacht a gceol-ghob; / biaidh fidil ag caoinche, biaidh píob ag an smólaigh, / londubh ag cur dánta le cláirsigh go ceolmhar.'

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 47. 'Tugtar fá ndeara 'sa dán so thíos go bhfuil an gontacht cainnte imthighthe agus go bhfuil an file ag éirghe fádálach agus focalach; is beag an meas anois ar an "leath-fhocal" a fuair Meyer mar phríomh-chomhartha ar an nádúir-fhilíocht i n-allód.'

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁷ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 48. 'Mór-chuid de fhilíocht na h-ochtadh aoise déag, ní'l ann acht sruth-saobhadh focal agus clisteacht pin, tour de force gan bhrígh gan éifeacht.'

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 25. 'gur chualaidh an naomh "guth Dé i nguth na gaoithe" agus neart an Tighearna i dtorann agus i dtreascairt na dtonn.'

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 25. 'Cúis iongantais do'n fhile an nádúir innti féin.'

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 26. 'Fíor nádúir-fhilíocht ar an sean-nós.'

²¹ *Ibid.*, 39. 'Filíocht diadha is mó a cheap sé agus tá moladh na nádúra [...] mar mholadh do Dhia.'

²² *Ibid.*, 40. 'Naomhtha na síona saobha / naomhtha an fhearhainn abraonta, / naomhtha an tsoinionn go nglé ngil / naomhtha doinionn dúilimh.'

²³ T.S. Eliot, 'The Metaphysical Poets,' in *Selected Essays* (London: Faber, 1951), 286.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 287.

²⁵ T.S. Eliot, 'Milton 1,' in *On Poetry and Poets* (London: Faber, 1957), 162.

²⁶ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 16. 'Bhíodh filíocht shaoghalta chliste chuanna da scríobhadh acu, filíocht na cathrach, filíocht gan anam gan doimhne smaoinighthe, filíocht na cathrach, filíocht gan anam gan doimhne smaoinighthe, filíocht an domhain shibhialtaigh a rabh gach sean-nod leis an nádúir briste agus caillte innti; i n-ionad ceilleabhar éan mar shamhlaoid ar bhinneas, baineadh feidhm as sean-dia Gréagach.'

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 28. 'A thulach árd aoibhindsí / ccas tigdís Fianna Fionda, /fa gnáth longphort lán-ádhbail / ort is gasraighe giolla. // Bah í ar gcuid re coimháirimh, / tigmís árd Máighi Míne / sméara sciamhda seochaire / cnó do collaibh cinn tire // Meathain drisi deilgnighe / gasáin creamha gan cinaidhh / do ratmis gach Bealtaine / buin dein bláithi buan birair.'

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.* 'Thosaigh an file ag éirghe cainnteach, rud beag bladarach, b'féidir, agus chrom sé ar shaidhbhreas agus líonmhaireacht a chur in a chuid filíochta le mórán focal. Ceard an fhile "to load every rift with ore" mar adubhairt Keats, agus is cosamhail gur ar an bhealach céadna a bhí an nádúir-fhile Gaedhealach ag díriú a chéime ag tus na dara aoise déag.'

³⁰ *Ibid.* 'aoibhneas bhiadhtachais in ionad [...] aoibhneas inntleachta.'

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² W.B. Yeats, *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan, 1961), 509.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Daniel Albright, 'Introduction,' in W.B. Yeats: *The Poems*, ed. Albright (London: Everyman, 1990), xxxvi.

³⁵ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 29.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 29. 'Cuireann an saoghal nádúrtha bród agus glionndar ar chroidhe an fhile féinne. Caitheann sé iomlán a chuid ama amuigh faoi'n spear agus is láidir fuinneamhach a ghrádh do'n nádúir.'

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 29–30. 'Is ar na neither móra foghanta 'sa nádúir mór thimpeal air is mó abhíonn a chúram – an fhairrge, na sléibhte, na gleannta, na dáimh, tuaim na gaoithe, gaisge agus gleo na seilge. Ní fheiceann sé agus ní airigheann sé "int én bec gáires assin tsáil".'

³⁹ James Longenbach, *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, ed. Michael Levenson (Cambridge: University Press, 1999), 102.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 106.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 104-5.

⁴⁴ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 13.

⁴⁵ Longenbach, *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, 106.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁴⁹ Ó Nualláin, 'Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge', 27. 'Níor dhearnadh aon iarracht ar obair mhóir litríochta a chumadh, saothar a bheadh ion-churtha le shaothar Homer and Vergilius'.

⁵⁰ Kerrigan, John, "Ulster Ovids". In *Chosen Ground: Essays on the Contemporary Poetry of Northern Ireland*, ed. Neil Corcoran (Bridgend: Seren, 1992), 237-69.

⁵¹ Ó Nualláin, 'Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge', 30.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 31.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 31. 'luadhann an file na radharcanna agus na fuamanna is feasach do'n té chaitheann a shaoghal amuigh faoi spéarthaibh'.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 34. 'an saoghal a chaitheadh an Fhian agus iad ag seilg agus ag gaisgidheach ar chnocaibh agus ar bhántaibh Éireann.'

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 34. 'Is cosamhail go rabh eolas cruinn acu ar áilneachtaí agus ar iongantasaí na tire ó thaoibh go taoibh, óir is beag céim de'n tír nach bhfuil siubhalta agus molta ag na filibh agus ag na scéaluighthe i bhfianaíocht na Gaedhilge.'

⁵⁶ De Paor, 66.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵⁸ O'Brien, *At Swim-Two-Birds*, 63.

⁵⁹ De Paor, 70.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ James Mc Elroy, 'Ecocriticism and Irish Poetry: A Preliminary Outline.' *Estudios Irlandeses* 6 (2011): 54.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Ó Nualláin, *Nádúir-fhilíocht na Gaedhilge*, 38.