

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Clann Lir (3)

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 859. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 555 corresponds to Litir 859.

Thairis air a’ cheala-deug a dh’fhalbh, bha mi ag innse dhuibh na seann sgeulachd thraidiseanta – Clann Lir. Bha a’ chlann fo gheasaibh a chuir an droch mhuime, Aoife, orra. Airson naoi ceud bliadhna bhiodh cruth ealachan orra, ge b’ oil leotha. Bha iad air a bhith air Loch Dairbhreach ann am meadhan na h-Èireann airson trì cheud bliadhna. Bha iad an uair sin air uisgeachan Sruth na Maoile, eadar Alba is Èirinn, airson trì cheud bliadhna. A-nise bha trì cheud bliadhna gu bhith aca ann an Innis Gluaise far costa taobh an iar na h-Èireann. Ach, airson a bhith saor bhon gheas, dh’fheumadh iad clag Crìosdail a chluinntinn. Nuair a rugadh iad, b’ e sin linn na pàganachd.

Thàinig seann duine chun an loch-mhara far an robh na h-ealachan a’ snàmh. ’S e duine naomh a bh’ ann. ’S e Mochua an t-ainm a bh’ air. Chunnaic e na h-ealachan agus bha e eòlach air an t-seann sgeulachd mu Chlann Lir.

Ged a bha iad ann an cruth ealachan, bha comas labhairt agus comas seinn aig Clann Lir fhathast. Nuair a chunnaic iad an seann duine air bruach an locha, dh’fhaighnich iad dheth gu dè an Dia a bh’ aige. ‘An Dia ùr,’ thuirt e, a’ ciallachadh Dia nan Crìosdaidhean. ‘An sibhse Clann Lir?’

Dh’aidich na h-ealachan gum b’ iad Clann Lir agus bha còmhraidh aca le Mochua. Dh’inns Mochua dhaibh mun Dia ùr thròcaireach aca agus mu Naomh Pàdraig a thug an creideamh a dh’Èirinn. Bha a’ chlann toilichte oir ’s e fuaim clag Crìosdail a bhriseadh an geas a bh’ orra. Dh’inns iad sin don t-seann duine.

Dh’fhuirich iad cuide ri Mochua airson grunn bhliadhnaichean. Chruinnich Mochua seann chloidheamhan airson an iarainn. Leagh e an t-iarann agus rinn e clag leis. Bha e an impis an clag a sheinn, airson Clann Lir a shaoradh bhon gheas, nuair a nochd gaisgeach. ‘Is mise Liargren, Rìgh Chonnacht,’ thuirt e. ‘Tha mo bhean ag iarraidh gum bi na h-ealachan aice. Thoir dhòmhsa iad!’ Mura faigheadh e na h-ealachan, thuirt e ri Mochua gun losgadh e an caibeal aige gu làr.

Thuirt Fionnuala gum falbhadh iad leis an rìgh. Ghabh Liargren iongnadh gun robh comas labhairt aice. Bha na h-ealachan air an cur ann an carbad. Mus do dh’fhalbh iad, sheinn an clag anns a’ chaibeal. Gu h-obann, dh’èirich ceò os cionn an locha. Chaidh e timcheall na cloinne mar a thachair naoi ceud bliadhna roimhe. Thàinig dathan a’ bhogha-froise air a’ cheò mus deach a sgaoileadh leis a’ ghaoith.

Bha an geas briste. An dèidh naoi ceud bliadhna, bha Clann Lir ann an cruth dhaoine a-rithist. Theich Liargren sa spot agus cha do thill e a-chaidh. Thòisich aois

air laighe air a' chloinn gu luath, ge-tà, agus thàinig **coltas bhodach is chailleachan** orra. Bhaistich Mochua iad uile mus tigeadh bàs orra. Bhuineadh Clann Lir do na seann aoisean nuair a bha diathan pàganach aig na Gàidheil. A-nise bha iad air bàs fhaighinn ann an linn na Crìosdachd.

'S e sin sgeulachd Clann Lir. Ma tha sibh nur pàrant, nach inns sibh do ur cloinn i? Nuair a chluinneas sibh fhèin, no iad fhèin, guileag na h-eala, 's dòcha gum bi sibh a' cuimhneachadh air na ceithir ealachan a bha beò fo gheasaibh airson naoi ceud bliadhna.

* * * * *

Faclan na Litreach: Loch Dairbhreach: *Loch Derravargh*; Sruth na Maoile: *The Straits of Moyle*; Innis Gluaire: *Inis Glora*; naomh: *holy*; leagh: *melted*; Rìgh Chonnacht: *the King of Connaught*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Thairis air a' cheala-deug a dh'fhalbh: *over the last fortnight*; bha a' chlann fo gheasaibh a chuir an droch mhuime orra: *the children were under a spell [lit. spells] that their bad stepmother cast on them*; bhiodh cruth ealachan orra, ge b' oil leotha: *they would be in the form of swans, whatever they desired*; dh'fheumadh iad clag Crìosdail a chluinntinn: *they would need to hear a Christian bell*; nuair a rugadh iad, b' e sin linn na pàganachd: *when they were born, that was the time of paganism*; thàinig seann duine chun an loch-mhara far an robh na h-ealachan a' snàmh: *an old man came to the sea loch where the swans were swimming*; comas labhairt agus comas seinn: *an ability to speak and to sing*; Dia nan Crìosdaidhean: *the God of the Christians*; mun Dia ùr thròcaireach aca: *about their new merciful God*; Naomh Pàdraig a thug an creideamh a dh'Èirinn: *Saint Patrick who took the religion to Ireland*; chruinnich Mochua seann chloidheamhan airson an iarainn: *Mochua collected old swords for their iron*; an impis an clag a sheinn: *about to ring the bell*; mura faigheadh e na h-ealachan: *if he didn't get the swans*; gun losgadh e an caibeal aige gu làr: *that he would burn his chapel to the ground*; ghabh X iongnadh gun robh comas labhairt aice: *X was surprised that she could speak*; dh'èirich ceò os cionn an locha: *mist rose above the loch*; chaidh e timcheall na cloinne mar a thachair naoi ceud bliadhna roimhe: *it enveloped the children as it had nine hundred years before*; dathan a' bhogha-froise: *the colours of the rainbow*; mus deach a sgaoileadh leis a' ghaoith: *before it was dispersed by the wind*; cha do thill e a-chaidh: *he never returned*; thòisich aois air laighe air a' chloinn: *[the effects of] age began to lie on the children*; bhaistich X iad uile mus tigeadh bàs orra: *X baptised them all before they died*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: thàinig **coltas bhodach is chailleachan** orra: *the appearance of old men and old women came upon them*. Bhodach and chailleachan are the indefinite genitive plural forms of bodach and cailleach. The lenition is incurred when the the article is not there. With the article we would get nam bodach 'of the old men' and nan cailleachan 'of the old women'.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Bha an geas briste: *the spell/charm was broken*.

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA