

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

A bheil am facal ‘siùcar’ anns a’ Bhìoball? (2)

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.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 932. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 628 corresponds to Litir 932.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an t-seachdain sa chaidh nach eil am facal *siùcar* a’ nochdadh anns a’ Bhìoball Ghàidhlig. **No ma thà, chan aithne dhomh e.**

Ach tha iomradh no dhà ann air a’ *chuilc chùbhraidh*. Mar eisimpleir ann an Leabhar Ieremiah, thathar ag ainmeachadh a’ *chuilc chùbhraidh o dhùthaich fad-às*. Gu litreachail, *the sweet-smelling cane from a distant land*. Thathar ag eadar-theangachadh sin, ge-tà, mar *sweet cane from a distant land*. An e sin cuilc an t-siùcair? No cuilc de sheòrsa air choireigin eile?

Ann an Isaiah 43: 24, tha seo ann: *Cha do cheannaich thu dhòmhsa le h-airgead a’ chuilc chùbhraidh, ni mò lion thu mi le saill d’ ìobairtean ...* Ann am Beurla: *You have not bought me sweet cane with money or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices...*

Tha *cùbhraidh* a’ dèanamh tuairisgeul air fàileadh seach blas. Mar sin, chan eil e cinnteach gur e cuilc an t-siùcair a thathar a’ ciallachadh le ‘cuilc chùbhraidh’. Tha cuid de sgoilearan dhen bheachd gur e cuilc Innseanach a bh’ ann às an tàinig ola ungaidh. *Anointing oil*. Ola ungaidh. Gu dearbh, bhiodh fàileadh *cùbhraidh* air a leithid. Chan urrainn dhomh a ràdh cò tha ceart is cò tha ceàrr air a’ cheist seo.

Mura robh siùcar aithnichte ri linn sgrìobhadh a’ Bhìobaill, an robh facal ann airson *sweet*? Uill bha, agus seo e ann an Leabhar Iob, Caibideil 20: *Ged robh an t-olc milis na bheul, ged fholaich se e fo a theangaidh...* Agus sin agaibh am facal airson *sweet – milis*. Tha e stèidhichte air *mil* a tha a’ ciallachadh *honey*. Ged nach robhar eòlach air siùcar **anns an fhìor sheann aimsir**, bhathar eòlach air mil. Agus air blas na meala.

Ged as e *mil* a lorgar anns na faclair airson *honey* ann an Gàidhlig, chan e sin a chanadh m’ athair nach maireann. ’S e Gàidhlig na Comraich a bh’ aige agus chanadh esan *mel*. *Mel* airson *honey*, *meilis* airson *sweet*. Tha sin inntinneach oir ’s e *mel* a th’ aca ann an Laideann. Tha faclan mar *mellifluous* ann am Beurla stèidhichte air an Laidinn *mel*. Agus thathar an dùil gur ann bhon Laidinn a thàinig *mel* – no *mil* – a-steach don Ghàidhlig.

Agus seo e anns a’ Bhìoball ann an Taisbeanadh Eòin, Caibideil 10, Rann 10: *Agus ghlac mi an leabhran à làimh an aingil, agus dh’ith mi suas e; agus bha e nam bheul milis mar mhil; agus an uair a dh’ith mi e, rinneadh mo bhrù searbh.* Ann am Beurla: *I took the small book out of the angel’s hand and ate it; and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey; and when I ate it, my stomach was made bitter.* Nam bheul bha e milis mar mhil.

'S iomadh turas a tha am facal *mil* – agus am buadhair *milis* – a' nochdadh anns a' Bhìoball Ghàidhlig. Agus tha an aon rud fìor mu bhàrdachd Ghàidhlig. Eadhon anns an dàn ainmeil le Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair – Allt an t-Siùcair – tha am facal *milis* a' nochdadh grunn tursan. Chan eil *siùcrach* no *siùcaireach* a' nochdadh idir. Tha 'blas na meala' nas snoige na 'blas an t-siùcair', nach eil?!

* * * * *

Faclan na Litreach: cuilc an t-siùcair: *sugar cane*; Gàidhlig na Comraich: [*the*] *Applecross* [*dialect of*] *Gaelic*; Taisbeanadh Eòin: *The Book of Revelation* [*to John*]; bàrdachd: *poetry*; nas snoige: *nicer*.

Abairtean na Litreach: tha iomradh no dhà ann air a' *chuilc chùbhraidh*: *there are one or two mentions of the sweet-smelling cane*; cuilc de sheòrsa air choireigin eile: *cane of another type*; a' dèanamh tuairisgeul air fàileadh seach blas: *describes smell rather than taste*; a thathar a' ciallachadh: *which is meant*; cuilc Innseanach às an tàinig ola ungaidh: *Indian cane from which anointing oil came [was extracted]*; chan urrainn dhomh a ràdh cò tha ceart is cò tha ceàrr: *I can't say who is right and who is wrong*; mura robh siùcar aithnichte ri linn sgrìobhadh a' Bhìobail: *if sugar wasn't known at the time of the writing of the Bible*; ged a tha an t-olc milis na bheul: *although evil is sweet in his mouth*; agus e ga fhalach fo a theangaidh: *and he hides it under his tongue*; blas na meala: *the taste of [the] honey*; chan e sin a chanadh m' athair nach maireann: *that's not what my late father would say*; thathar an dùil gur ann bhon Laidinn a thàinig *mel*: *it's thought that mel came from Latin*; 's iomadh turas a tha am facal *mil* – agus am buadhair *milis* – a' nochdadh anns a' Bhìoball Ghàidhlig: *the word mil 'honey' – and the adjective milis 'sweet' appear in the Gaelic Bible on many occasions*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **No ma thà, chan aithne dhomh e:** *or, if it is, I'm not familiar with it. Remember the use of is aithne dhomh/chan aithne dhomh for knowing, being familiar with – it can make for a snappier phrase or response than using the verbal noun as in tha fios agam air or tha eòlas agam air. It's also good for an introduction eg an aithne dhut Màiri? 'do you know Mary?' The reply will be 's aithne 'yes' or chan aithne 'no'; and you can then make the appropriate introduction or comment. Dialectally you will also hear an aithnich thu Màiri? This is a future form of the verb aithnich and the response will be aithnichidh or chan aithnich.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Ged nach robhar eòlach air siùcar **anns an fhìor sheann aimsir**: *although sugar wasn't known in ancient times ['really old times']*.

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