

Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire

le

Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill

Cór Ban Chúil Aodha

Saothar ceoil nuachumtha

le

Peadar Ó Riada

Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire

Réamhrá

Tá Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire ar an gcaoineadh is mó cáil sa Ghaeilge. Chum Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill (aintín le Dónall Ó Conaill – An Fuascailteoir) an caoineadh os cionn corp a fir chéile, Art Ó Laoghaire, a maraíodh ag deireadh na hochtú aoise déag. Caoineadh is ea é ina gcuireann Eibhlín Dubh beatha agus bás tragóideach Airt os comhair an phobail i bhfilíocht phearsanta shaibhir. Cé go bhfuil gnéithe traidisiúnta an chaointe le brath go láidir ar an saothar, is treise fós ar an mothú pearsanta tríd síos.

Mar ba ghnáth ardaíonn daoine eile a bhí láithreach a nguth chomh maith - driofúr Airt agus athair Airt. Tarlaíonn sáraíocht idir dhriofúr Airt agus Eibhlín Dubh. Cumadh formhór an chaointe le linn tórraimh agus sochraide agus cuireadh beagán leis nuair a deineadh Art a athchur i gCill Chré roinnt míonna ina dhiaidh san. Na ranna so a cumadh ar Art Ó Laoghaire, mhaireadar sa traidisiún béil go dtí gur ghlac Éamonn de Bhál i scríbhinn iad (c.1800) ó Nóra Ní Shíndile, bean chaointe ó Shráid an Mhuilinn, Co. Chorcaí.

Introduction

This late eighteenth century epic poem is one of the greatest laments and one of the greatest love poems of the Irish Language.

Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill - wife of Art Ó Laoghaire - composed this caoineadh which captures the life and tragic death of her husband Art at the end of the eighteenth century. The caoineadh is divided into five parts composed in the main over the dead body of her husband at the time of the wake and later when Art was re-interred in Kilcrea. The five parts denote the various settings of the poem and also the other contributors to the caoineadh i.e. Art's sister and Art's father.

The caoineadh, featuring many traditional motifs, survived over the years in the oral tradition until it was documented by Éamonn De Bhál (c.1800) from Nóra Ní Shíndile, a keening woman from Millstreet, Co. Cork.

Cúlra an Cheoil - le Peadar Ó Riada

Cumadh an ceol ag baint úsáide as foirmle atá gaolmhar le ceol dúchasach na hÉireann agus as roinnt de nathanna an cheoil chlasaiceigh Eorpaigh. Tá an bhéim ar an líne cheoil féin agus impleachtaí harmonic snoite ansan cé go ndeintear úsáid fhorleathan den nós polyphonic Eorpach mar mhaithe le malairt datha agus fuaimne.

Tá patrún ciorcalach na hÉireann dá úsáid mar bhunstruchtúr ionas, tar éis deireadh a bhaint amach gur féidir dul siar go tosach agus tosnú arís díreach, fé mar is leathchúpla don bheatha an bás. Úsáidtear gléasanna difriúla ceoil idir na príomhcharaictéirí agus nasctar móitífeanna éagsúla le pearsain agus le téamaí éagsúla tríd an gCaoineadh.

The music is composed using a formula based on the national music of Ireland and utilizing some of Classical European Music's manifestations. The emphasis is on the melodic line, depending on it often to supply the harmonic implications while the European custom of Polyphony is used as a means of colour and drama. The cyclical nature of Irish music is utilized so that one could start again at the beginning straight from the end of the piece just as death itself is the other half of life. Different keys are used to introduce the main characters and musical motifs are used in conjunction with different personalities or themes in the Caoineadh.

Cúlra Stairiúil

Art Ó Laoghaire 1747-1773

Rugadh 1747 ar Rath Laoich cóngarach do Magh Chromtha. Oileadh sa bhFrainc agus d'imigh isteach sna Hussars in arm Marie Therese na hOstaire. Bhain sé céim ard amach sarar fhill ar Éirinn. Thug sé an láir cháiliúil abhaile leis. Phós sé Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill (aintín do Dhónall Ó Conaill). Bhí tailte agus saibhreas aige agus chothaigh a chrógacht agus a uaisleacht formad i measc na nGall máguaird - go háirithe Abraham Morris, an tArdshirriam.

Born 1747 at Raleigh near Macroom he was educated in France and subsequently joined the Hungarian Hussars serving under the Empress Marie Thérèse. He achieved high rank for his valour on the field. He returned to Ireland bringing with him his favourite brown mare. On the 19th of December 1769, he married Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill and they enjoyed a high standard of living. Art had considerable property. He was high spirited and courageous. All of these attributes combined to excite the jealousy of Mr Abraham Morris, the High-Sheriff in the Macroom district, at that time.

There are various accounts of the events that lead to Art's death. All are centred on the bitter enmity that existed between Art O' Leary and Abraham Morris.

One story suggests that a bitter jealousy arose between them concerning a woman.

Art O' Leary's horse was certainly the cause of hostility between them. Art's brown mare led the field at the Muskerry Hunt (and/or at a race in Macroom in which Morris' horse was also involved). Morris was enraged at the display of a Catholic's horse leading the field. He demanded that O' Leary sell his horse for £5 - at the time the Penal Laws stated that a Protestant could demand to buy a horse from a Catholic for no more than £5. Art O' Leary refused and a brawl followed. A meeting of the magistrates was arranged and O' Leary was declared an outlaw. A notice was posted by Art in 1771 ... "whereas I have been charged with different crimes, by different persons, I give this public notice that I will be prepared to stand my trial at the next Assizes in Cork"

The details of the last day of Art's life are as follows: On the 4th of May 1773 Morris was at Drishane castle with a Dominic Harding and upon hearing this, Art was determined to meet him on his way home to try to settle the matter. Art visited a public house in Carriganima for a few drinks and then continued on his way to Drishane. Meanwhile a warning had reached Morris in Drishane – delivered by Seán mac Uaithne Uí Ríordáin, the proprietor of the public house – and a group of soldiers were quickly rounded up and sent to Carriganima where Art was fatally shot on his horse by a soldier under Morris' direct order.

Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill

Rugadh i nDoire Fhionáin timpeall na bliana 1743. B'iníon í do Mháire Ní Duibh agus do Dhónall Mór Ó Conaill agus b'aintín í do Dhónall an "Fuascailteoir". Bean chaointe cháiliúil ab ea a máthair agus mhaireadar cuid mhaith ar an smugaláil - tae, tobac, éadach breá agus ffonta. Cailín anamúil ab ea Eibhlín ach pósadh go hóg í le seanduine de Chonchúraigh Uíbh Ráthaigh. D'éag seisean sé mhí 'na dhiaidh san. Is sa bhliain 1767 agus í ar cuaird go dtí á driofúr i dTuath na Dromann a fuair sí radharc ar Art don chéad uair - chonaic sí é ar mhargadh Magh Chromtha. Phós sí é 19 Nollaig 1767 in ainneoin a muintire.

Born in Derrynane Co.Kerry c.1743, daughter of Máire Ní Duibh and Dónall Mór Ó Conaill, Eibhlín Dubh was aunt to Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator. Her mother, who was a keeper of old traditional ways, was a well known 'bean chaointe' in the area. She was also known to be a smuggler of fish, butter, meats and wool to France in return for tea, sugar, tobacco, fine clothes and wines. Eibhlín enjoyed a high standard of upbringing due to this way of living.

Eibhlín was married off to a much older man by the name of Connor of Iveragh (Na Foidhrí) in Kerry. Unfortunately, he died six months later and even though she was only fifteen or sixteen years of age, Eibhlín, in tune to the traditions of her upbringing, lamented his death in the traditional 'bean chaointe' fashion.

In 1767, Eibhlín, on a visit to her sister who was now married to James Baldwin, a landlord in Baile Bhúirne, Eibhlín spotted Art through the window of the town hall in Macroom and fell instantly in love with him. A notice was seen in the newspaper 'Married Mr.Art O' Leary, Macroom, to the Widow Connor of Iveragh' (19th December 1767). Eibhlín married Art against the wishes of her parents who had heard of some of Art's exploits since his return from Europe.

Cuid 1 / Part 1 – Samhradh 1773

Guth: Eibhlín Dubh

Cumadh i gCarraig an Ime agus sa tigh i Rath Laoi. Tosnaíonn Eibhlín an Caoineadh le cuimhní ar Art agus ar an saol a bhí aici ina theannta. Thuig sí gur scéal tubaisteach a bhí aici nuair a fhill an láir ar Ráth Laoich in éagmais Airt agus rian na fola uirthi. Cuireann sí síos ar an dturas uathásach thar n-ais go corp a grá ghil ar Carraig an Ime. Luann sí an bhuaire atá uirthi féin ina dhiaidh agus gur fágadh a mbeirt chlainne gan athair. Is mian léi an compord a thug Art di a chúiteamh anois leis agus cóir cheart agus leaba chluthar ina thigh féin a thabhairt do in inead na hinse fliche ina bhfuil sé caite.

Voice: Eibhlín Dubh

Composed: In Carriganima and/or Raleigh House during the wake.*

In the opening section of the lament, Eibhlín portrays her memories of Art Ó Laoghaire: where and how she met him; how he looked and the comfortable lifestyle he provided for her - a lifestyle she was accustomed to in Derrynane. She also recalls how she realised he was in fatal trouble when his blood-soaked horse returned to her. (introduced musically by pedal note and chromatic sequence followed by a loud clap in music) She recounts the horrific horse-ride she endured to find him dead and alone beside a furze bush in Carriganima, Co. Cork. She then expresses her personal loss and the loss he will be to her two sons Conchubhar and Fear. She dreams of bringing him home to his warm bed, to bring the heat of life back into him. (ripple motifs on piano)

**Art Ó Laoghaire was waked in Carriganima on the night of his death and was moved home to Raleigh House the following day where the wake continued. It is said that Eibhlín composed most of the caoineadh as the corpse was being waked.*

Cuid 2 / Part 2

(i) Sáraíocht focail idir dhriofúr Airt agus Eibhlín Dubh

(ii) Guth Aonair le Athair Airt

Tagann driofúr Airt ó Chorcaigh larnamháireach agus tosnaíonn sí féin agus Eibhlín ag iomaíocht sa chaointeoireacht. Tá an driofúr ag gearán i dtaobh Eibhlín a bheith sa leabaidh agus deir Eibhlín gur ghá san chun na leanaí a chur a chodladh. Nárbh í máthair na leanaí í? arsa Eibhlín. Labhrann athair Airt agus cuireann eascainí ar Mhorris, an fear a chreideann sé ba chúis le dúnmharú Airt. Deir Eibhlín go mb'fhearr léi an piléar a dhul ina croí féin. Deir driofúr Airt go

ndéanfadh sí sin féin an íobairt chéanna.

(i) Verbal Duel between Eibhlín Dubh and Art's sister at the wake.

(ii) Monologue by Art's father.

Here we hear Eibhlín and Art's sister trying to better each other. A change of key, tone and tempo denotes the arrival of Art's sister from Cork. She rebukes Eibhlín for having left Art's body alone downstairs while she slept upstairs on the night of his wake. Eibhlín immediately retorts, explaining that the children were very upset and that the only way she could settle them was to go to bed with them. She steadfastly defends her love for him; had she not married him and borne his children? Had she not stood by him against the odds, during the four frenetic years of their marriage?

Art's father then speaks the next section. (monologue over pedal notes) He curses Abraham Morris who he believes is responsible for the death of his beloved son, Art. Upon hearing this expression of love by a father for his son, Eibhlín regrets she wasn't shot in his place. Upon hearing this wish expressed, Art's sister amplifies Eibhlín's statement, by saying that she, also, would have willingly sacrificed her life for her brother. She finishes with melodically wistful lines.

Cuid 3 / Part 3

Guth: Eibhlín Dubh

Labhrann Eibhlín ar a briseadh croí. Tagraíonn sí don chuaird dheireanach, an 4ú Bealtaine 1773, nuair ar iarr sé uirthi aire a thabhairt don tigh agus don fheirm mar go mb'fhéidir ná fillfeadh sé féin. Shíl sí gur ag magadh a bhí sé ach tuigeann anois fírinne an scéil.

Meabhraíonn sí anois conas a bheadh an saol dá mbeadh sé 'na bheathaidh. (canta ag guth solo) Is beag léi na daoine móra a bhaineann léi agus an chrích a rug iad. (canta ag an dara guth solo) Cuireann sí síos ar shinsear Airt. (tutti)

An abrupt change of key and polyphony heralds Eibhlín's return. Here, Eibhlín reveals her grief and anguish at the death of her husband.. Her rant at Morris is expressed in the form of consecutive octaves. Polyphonic movement is again used as she talks of her now fatherless babies. She remembers his last visit with them on 4th May 1773 where he instructed her to take care of the house and farm, as he might not return. She thought he was saying this in jest as he often did so in the past He was leaving that morning to 'settle the score' with Abraham Morris. The first solo passage presents us with Eibhlín wishing Art alive again to continue their wonderful life together. The second solo tells us that the fate of her own noble relatives and the death of some of her children is little to her now compared to the death of Art. She traces his ancestry and names some of the places associated with them, believing Art to be invincible. Alas she was wrong! (tutti)

Cuid 4 / Part 4

Guth: Driofúr Airt

Freagra ó Eibhlín Dubh

Freagraíonn driofúr Airt ag moladh thigh Airt agus a chomhluadair. Gabhann sí leathscéal as a dhéanaí a tháinig sí de dheascaibh fiabhras agus galair eile a bheith i gcathair Chorcaí mar a raibh cónaí uirthi. Treasaíonn Eibhlín uirthi agus deir sí gur mó san bean a chuir dúil ina céile breá féin. Bagraíonn sí dlí agus dioltas ar "bhodach na fola duibhe" - Morris.

A passage over a special effect (associated with hand movement) and introducing a quartet heralds the return of Art's sister again, elaborating on what we have already heard from Eibhlín Dubh i.e. the praising of Art's home, his high standard of living, his fine sense of dress, what a dashing man he was and how other women admired him. She apologises for not bringing more of her people from Cork to the wake. Due to a fever (smallpox) and other illnesses, some of them died or were too ill to travel. Neither family had approved of the marriage – hence a degree of animosity and competitiveness.

The whole choir in polyphonic movement praises the generosity of Art's household and the fine hospitality to be found there. This is followed by a further dream sequence which includes a five note musical motif. Art's sister foretells his death in this dream sequence she claims to have had in Cork the previous night. A monodic tutti follows and then Eibhlín cuts in in her original key. The opening melody is echoed as she admonishes Art's sister by telling her that she was fully aware that Art had many admirers. She cries out dramatically to Jesus Christ and vows revenge on the one who took Art from her - "bodach na fola duibhe" (AbrahamMorris). recited in a whisper ... "A bhain díom féin mo mhaoin."

Cuid 5 / Part 5

Is cosúil gur cumadh na véarsaí seo ar ócáid(i) i ndiaidh an tórraimh ag críochnú le véarsaí a cumadh le linn do chorp Airt a bheith á athchur i gCill Chré (6 mhí i ndiaidh a bháis)

Guth: Eibhlín

Gabhann sí pardún le mná Charraig an Ime i dtaobh a bheith chomh dian orthu roimis sin. Cuireann sí in úil gur thug céile a driféar capall Airt ar láimh do lucht na dlí. Goilleann sí uirthi nár tháinig éinne dá muintir féin aniar ó Dhoire Fhionáin. Cé go leanann an saol ar aghaidh deir Eibhlín go bhfuil a saol féin múchta le bás Airt. Ordaíonn sí do sna mnáibh an caoineadh do chuir uathu anois agus deoch d'ól ar Art roim é chur sa Chill.

Voice: Eibhlín Dubh

It is most likely that these verses were composed after the wake, finishing with verses composed during the second burial in Kilcrea Abbey (six months later)*

In a reprise of the opening musical themes Eibhlín mourns the fact that none of her own family came from Derrynane to comfort her or to keen for Art. She praises the women of Carriganima (heard sung by the four soloists) who have now come to support her in her grief. Previously, she had rebuked them for not keening Art, on the night of his wake (previous May). Continuing the reprise of musical themes the choir in strong unison expresses Eibhlín as she curses the informer Seán mac Uaithne Uí Ríordáin who treacherously sent word to Art's enemies and was, therefore, an accessory to his murder. Seán was the proprietor of the public house in Carriganima where

Art stopped on his way to challenge Morris in Millstreet that fateful day. The movement climaxes with the last line “Gur boidichín fuail tu” being shouted by the choir.

Eibhlín goes on to say that she knows it was her ineffectual brother-in-law, James Baldwin, who had ultimately betrayed her - he had surrendered the horse to Morris after Art's death.

The second last movement has a tired Eibhlín saying she knows that the seasons pass. The work on the land must continue. However the life/light in Eibhlín has been choked, snuffed out since the death of Art, her true love.

The closing passage is sung in martial rhythm related to a contemporary Gaelic recruiting song still used as a rallying call in the Múscraí area. Eibhlín's text invites the women to stop keening before the re-interment of Art in Killcrea and to raise a glass in the name of Art Ó Laoghaire.

Her passion is now spent, as is the passion of her valiant and beloved husband Art – she finishes 'Ní hag foghlaim léinn ná port (Not learning scholarship nor music

Ach ag iompar cré agus cloch' (But bearing earth and rocks).

**Art was initially buried outside Kilnamartyra cemetery. Morris would not allow Art to be buried inside the cemetery grounds even though he was a Catholic - another slur against Art's name. Having been granted permission to bury Art on Catholic grounds six months later, Eibhlín had his body exhumed and re-interred at Kilcrea.*