

DIVIDED GAELS
GAELIC SCOTLAND AND GAELIC IRELAND, 1200-1650 —
PERCEPTIONS AND CONNECTIONS

Wilson McLeod

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Ph.D.
University of Edinburgh

March 2000



ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on how the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland during the classical age (c. 1200-c. 1650) — on perceptions, attitudes, and outlooks. How did the Gaels of Ireland view Scotland and the Scottish Gaels? How in turn did the Gaels of Scotland view Ireland and the Irish Gaels? How prominent was Gaelic Scotland in the Irish Gaelic view of the world, and vice-versa?

The thesis begins with an overview of intellectual paradigms that have been applied to understand the cultural position of the late medieval Gaelic world. One standard view is that Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland formed a single ‘culture-province’, a region of unified, largely unvarying culture. Another suggests that Gaelic Scotland was the ‘poor sister’, systematically dependent upon the cultural leadership and dominance of Gaelic Ireland. The thesis explores these and other related viewpoints in detail.

Chapter 1 considers the historical background. Both Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland underwent significant change during this period, largely in reaction to de-Gaelicizing influences in the two countries, most notably in Scotland where the country became effectively divided into a de-Gaelicized ‘Lowland’ region and a Gaelic ‘Highland’ region. The political interactions between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland are discussed in detail, with particular attention to the role of Scottish Gaelic mercenaries in late medieval Ireland.

Chapter 2 focuses on the literary and intellectual culture of the time, exploring the ways in which the culture of Gaelic Scotland related to that of Gaelic Ireland. This culture was essentially ‘pan-Gaelic’, with a learned class that transcended borders. Particularly important was the role of the trained poets, who moved between the two countries.

Chapter 3 is a detailed study of the vision of the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland presented in the work of these trained poets. The worldview of the poets was a strongly Hibernocentric one, and the position of Scotland within it ambiguous and contradictory, sometimes included and sometimes overlooked.

Chapter 4 discusses the ways in which the close relationship of the late medieval period broke down over the course of the seventeenth century.

The conclusion brings together the principal findings of the thesis and discusses the ways in which they might be amplified by future work.

DECLARATION

Pursuant to Regulation 3.8.7, I certify that this thesis has been composed by me and that the work therein is my own.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Prefatory Note	v
Abbreviations	vii
Introduction: Paradigms and Explanatory Frameworks	1
Chapter 1: Political and Cultural Background	14
Chapter 2: Literary and Intellectual Culture in the Gaelic World	50
Chapter 3: Scotland and Ireland: The Vision of Bardic Poetry	106
Chapter 4: Separation and Breakdown	184
Conclusion	208
Table of Poems Cited	212
Bibliography	236

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the following for their assistance, which has facilitated my completion of this thesis:

- to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Edinburgh, for their award of a Faculty Group Scholarship (1997-98 and 1998-99) and Teaching Assistantship (1997-98)
- to the libraries of the University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow, University of Aberdeen, Trinity College Dublin, and University College Dublin; and to the National Library of Scotland, the Edinburgh City Library, the Mitchell Library, the Royal Irish Academy, the National Library of Ireland, the British Library, and the Bodleian Library
- to my thesis supervisors, Professor William Gillies and Mr. Ronald Black
- to Steve Boardman, Thomas Clancy, Barbara Hillers, Michael Newton, Máire Ní Annracháin, Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh, Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, and Alex Woolf

PREFATORY NOTE

The following practices — most of them compromises susceptible to reasonable criticism — have been adopted in this thesis with regard to nomenclature and quotation:

The term ‘Gaelic’ is used as a general label referring to the Goidelic language(s) of Ireland and Scotland. The term ‘Irish’ is used to refer to matters exclusively Irish: for example, the term ‘Irish bardic poetry’ refers only to bardic poetry composed in Ireland or for Irish patrons, and is not a general label for all bardic poetry composed in the Gaelic language, and the term ‘the Gaelic world’ encompasses both Ireland and Scotland.

English rather than Gaelic forms of placenames are used, with occasional exceptions, such as traditional Gaelic lordships with no precise or familiar English equivalents (e.g. *Tír Chonaill*, *Bréifne*).

Gaelic rather than English forms of personal names are used, not least because of inconsistency in the English forms. The underlying *Mac Domhnaill* yields *MacDonald*, *MacDonnell*, and *Macdonell*; *Mac Suibhne* yields *MacSween*, *MacSween(e)y*, and *MacSwiney*. Regularized Early Modern forms of names are used, thus *Mac Domhnaill* rather than present-day Irish *Mac Dónaill* or present-day Scottish Gaelic *Mac Dhòmhnaill*, *Ó Domhnaill* rather than earlier *Ua Domnaill*.

English rather than Gaelic plurals are generally used for kindred names, because using Gaelic plural forms raises a number of not insignificant problems for readers with little or no Gaelic. While *Ó Domhnaill* > *Uí Dhomhnaill* may be relatively straightforward, *de Búrca* > *Búrcaigh*, *Mac Gill-Eathain* > *Leathanaich*, and *Caimbeul* > *Caimbeulaich* (or *Duibhnich/Guibhnich*) are rather more challenging. The hybrid and not entirely appealing forms *Ó Domhnaills*, *de Búrcas*, and *Caimbeuls* are thus used here.

The distinction between lower-case *mac* (‘son of’) and upper-case *Mac* (kindred name) is consistently observed, thus *Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair Mac Domhnaill* rather than *Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair Mac Domhnaill*. Where a patronymic is combined with a *Mac* or *Ó* surname, the *Mac* or *Ó* remains in the nominative rather than genitive form, e.g. *Diarmaid mac Seáin Bhuidhe Mac Cárthaigh* rather than *Diarmaid mac Seáin Bhuidhe Mhic Cárthaigh*, as if the name were written with brackets or commas (*Diarmaid (mac Seáin Bhuidhe) Mac Cárthaigh*, *Diarmaid, mac Seáin Bhuidhe, Mac Cárthaigh*).

All surnames with *Mac* have a space between the *Mac* and the following patronymic, as in traditional, and present-day Irish, practice: thus *Mac Gill-Eathain* rather than *MacGill-Eathain*, as in present-day Scottish Gaelic practice. With a few exceptions (e.g. *Mac Mhuirich*, *Mac Fhionghuin*) names following both *mac* and *Mac* are unlenited, e.g. *Mac Domhnaill* rather than *Mac Dhomhnaill*, *Diarmaid mac Seáin*

Bhuidhe rather than *Diarmaid mac Sheáin Bhuidhe*. Exclusively Scottish Gaelic surnames are given in post-classical Scottish form, e.g. *Mac Griogair* rather than *Mac Griogóir*, *Mac Leòid* rather than *Mac Leóid*.

Square brackets are used to show changes to individual words or sentences only when their meaning has been altered or supplemented. Numerous quotations from Gaelic originals given within sentences, rather than as block quotations, have been changed from dative, genitive, or vocative forms to nominative forms as required by the syntax of the English sentence. For example, the vocative form '*a fhir Chola*' ('O man of Coll') has been changed to the nominative form '*fear Chola*' ('man of Coll'), and the dative form '*ar fhionnAlbain na n-iath mín*' ('on fair Scotland of the smooth lands') has been changed to the nominative '*fionnAlba na n-iath mín*' ('fair Scotland of the smooth bounds').

Quotations from poems cite to stanzas and lines within stanzas with the § symbol (e.g. § 4c refers to the third line of the fourth stanza). Line numbers are also given when these are provided in a printed edition. Poems are referred to by first lines but titles are also provided when they exist.

Published editions of poems are used when these exist, and any departures from the published text noted. When an edition of a poem is accompanied by the editor's translation, the translation used herein is that of the editor, unless otherwise noted. Where editions do not include translations, the translations used herein are my own. In several cases, working unpublished editions by W.J. Watson, J. Carmichael Watson, and Ronald Black have been used in the same way as published editions. Unedited or semi-edited poems have been given only the lightest of editorial revision here, i.e. capitalization of proper names and the silent addition of length markers.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AClon* *The Annals of Clonmacnoise*, ed. by Denis Murphy (Dublin: Dublin University Press, 1896)
- AConn* *Annála Connacht/The Annals of Connacht (A.D. 1224-1544)*, ed. by A. Martin Freeman (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944)
- AD* *Aithdioghluim Dána: A Miscellany of Irish Bardic Poetry*, ed. by Lambert McKenna, Irish Texts, 37, 40, 2 vols (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1939, 1940)
- AFM* *Annalá Rioghachta Éireann/The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland Compiled by the Four Masters*, ed. by John O'Donovan, 7 vols (Dublin: Hodges, Smith, 1856)
- ALC* *The Annals of Loch Cé*, ed. by William M. Hennessy, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1871)
- AU* *Annála Uladh/Annals of Ulster*, ed. by William M. Hennessy and B. MacCarthy, 4 vols (Dublin: HMSO, 1887-1901)
- BG* *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig: Specimens of Gaelic Poetry, 1550-1900*, ed. by W.J. Watson, 3rd edn (Stirling: An Comunn Gàidhealach, 1959)
- CW* Carmichael-Watson Collection, University of Edinburgh Library
- DD* *Dioghluim Dána*, ed. by Láimhbheartach MacCionnaith (Dublin: Oifig an tSoláthair, 1938)
- EB* *Eachann Bacach agus Bàird Eile de Chloinn Ghill-Eathain/Eachann Bacach and Other MacLean Poets*, ed. by Colm Ó Baoill, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 14 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1979)
- FFÉ* *Séathrún Céitinn, Foras Feasa ar Éirinn/The History of Ireland*, ed. by Patrick S. Dinneen, Irish Texts, 4, 8, 9, 15, 4 vols (London: Irish Texts Society, 1902, 1908, 1914)
- GC* *Gàir nan Clàrsach/The Harps' Cry*, ed. by Colm Ó Baoill (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1994)
- IBP* Osborn Bergin, *Irish Bardic Poetry*, ed. by David Greene and Fergus Kelly (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1970)

- LCAB *Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidhe*, ed. by Tadhg Ó Donnchadha (Dublin: Coimisiún Láimhscríbhinní na hÉireann, 1931)
- MIA *Miscellaneous Irish Annals (A.D. 1114-1437)*, ed. by Séamus Ó hInnse (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1947)
- MNAR *Òrain is Luinneagan le Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh/Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod*, ed. by J. Carmichael Watson, Scottish Texts, 9 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1934)
- NLS National Library of Scotland
- ÒIL *Òrain Iain Luim: The Songs of John MacDonald, Bard of Keppoch*, ed. by Annie M. MacKenzie, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 8 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1965)
- RC *Reliquiae Celticae: Texts, Papers, and Studies in Gaelic Literature and Philology Left by the Late Rev. Alexander Cameron, LL.D.*, ed. by Alexander MacBain and Rev. John Kennedy, 2 vols (Inverness: Northern Counties Newspaper and Printing and Publishing Co., 1894)
- RIA Royal Irish Academy
- SGS *Scottish Gaelic Studies*
- SHR *Scottish Historical Review*
- SVBDL *Scottish Verse from the Book of the Dean of Lismore*, ed. by W.J. Watson, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 1 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1937)
- TCD Trinity College Dublin
- TD *A Bhfuil Aguinn Dár Chum Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (1550-1591)/The Bardic Poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (1550-1591)*, ed. by Eleanor Knott, Irish Texts, 22 and 23 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1922, 1926)
- TGSI *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*

Introduction: Paradigms and Explanatory Frameworks

Fifteen centuries and more after the first Gaelic speakers arrived in Scotland from Ireland, the connections between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland remain palpable and significant, to the extent that neither can be fully and entirely understood without taking the other into account. Common origins and a shared linguistic heritage provide the basic foundation for these connections, but it is the continuing process of cultural and political interaction, sustained in a variety of ways over the course of many centuries, that has driven their development and reinforcement. These interactions have been much less than constant over time, however, for relations within the Gaelic world have, of necessity, been hugely affected by relations with a succession of outside forces — Pictish, Viking, Anglo-Norman, English. Most strikingly, the last three centuries have witnessed an unprecedented splintering of the Gaelic world, so that Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland have, to a great extent, developed separately and apart, with little involvement with each other.

To trace the myriad cultural and political interactions between Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland over the course of almost two millennia would be a monumental, if not effectively impossible, task. The purpose of this study is more limited and more focused. Instead of chronicling the minutiae of what was done by whom and when, the focus here is on how the relationship was understood — on perceptions, attitudes, and outlooks. How did the Gaels of Ireland view Scotland and the Scottish Gaels? How in turn did the Gaels of Scotland view Ireland and the Irish Gaels? How prominent was Gaelic Scotland in the Irish Gaelic view of the world, and vice-versa?

This study is also limited by time. Speaking very generally, four broad stages of the relationship can be seen: the period from c. 500 to c. 800, when the kingdom of Dál Riata, spreading outwards from Argyll, operated as a sort of Gaelic beach-head in Scotland and maintained a range of direct links to Ireland; the period from c. 800 to c. 1200, when a unified but hybrid Scottish kingdom emerged, largely dominated by the Gaels and Gaelic culture; the period from c. 1200 to c. 1650, when Anglo-Norman culture and institutions wrought a de-Gaelicization of the Scottish monarchy and a range of immense transformations in Ireland and the Gaels of Scotland and Ireland were drawn closely to each other; and the period from c. 1650 to the present, when

traditional Gaelic institutions and culture have been shattered and the two parts of the Gaelic world very greatly divided.

It is the third of these stages, sometimes known as the classical era, that will be considered here. The political and cultural situation of this era, when the learned classes shared a common, crafted literary language, and training and patronage of the learned arts allowed constant interaction between the Irish and Scottish Gaels, will be described in much greater detail below. The use of the term 'classical' — applied by modern scholars, and usually with regard to language and literature rather than more generally — is revealing in itself, for one of the prevailing understandings of this time is as a sort of Golden Age, when Gaeldom flourished despite adversity, and a dense network of connections was maintained and developed across *Sruth na Maoile*, the North Channel between Scotland and Ireland. This perception is both a modern creation and a reflection of older, remembered tradition. In Gaelic Scotland, for example, the period of the Lordship of the Isles, the dominant political force in Gaelic Scotland from c. 1150 to c. 1500, is recalled as *Linn an Àigh*, the age of joy (or prosperity).

Modern perceptions of relations in the Gaelic world tend to be clouded by nostalgia or nationalism. If nostalgia tends to yield exaggerations of previous connections, a harkening-back to the imagined unity of the past, nationalism works the opposite, denying the place of the other component of the Gaelic world. On the Scottish side, nationalistic distortions were probably at their strongest in the eighteenth century, when denial of linguistic and cultural connection to Ireland was convenient for a range of reasons, not least the politics of the emerging British state, while in Ireland, their impact has probably been most profound from the late nineteenth century onwards, when the Scottish dimension has been of little relevance to the project of imagining and building a nation and state, and of locating the Gaelic tradition within them.

These modern outlooks will make a constant backdrop to the present study, but its primary purpose is to excavate and investigate the actual outlooks and perspectives of the time. Yet any investigation of the cultural relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland during the late medieval period is hampered from the outset by the dearth of direct and explicit source material. Many Lowland Scots, Norman, and

English writers of the period — Giraldus Cambrensis, John of Fordun, John Major, Richard Stanihurst, and Edmund Spenser, to name only some of the more obvious figures — produced a wide variety of historical or political accounts replete with direct and explicit commentary — albeit profoundly biased and often wildly inaccurate — on many aspects of Gaelic culture and society during this era. Gaelic writings from this period, in contrast, are almost entirely devoid of anything even remotely in the nature of ethnographic analysis, and thus there is almost no material that presents Irish Gaelic perceptions of Gaelic Scotland or Scottish Gaelic perceptions of Gaelic Ireland in anything like the sorts of terms used to tackle such subjects today. In the same way, if for rather different reasons, there are surprisingly few assessments of the situation dating from more recent times, even among contemporary scholars.

A number of modern writers have offered metaphors or analogies in attempting to communicate the nature of the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland within the broader Gaelic world. The Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* has thus been compared to Ulster as one of the five ancient provinces of Ireland,¹ to an imaginary sixth province of Ireland,² to Northern Ireland within the present-day United Kingdom,³ to the nineteenth-century United States in relation to Britain, and to a colony of the former British Empire.⁴ More vaguely still, Ireland has been labeled the ‘big brother’,⁵ and the ‘mother-country’,⁶ Scotland the ‘poor sister’,⁷ an ‘extension’⁸ or ‘overflow’⁹ of Ireland. It is doubtful whether any of these analogies or metaphors really goes very far in illuminating or explaining the position.

¹Colm Ó Baoill, ‘Scotland in Early Gaelic Literature (600-1200 A.D.)’, *TGSI*, 48 (1972-74), 382-94 (p. 384).

²James Charles Roy, *Islands of Storm: Eileáin Anraidh* (Chester Springs, PA: Dufour Editions, 1991), p. 143.

³Mícheál Ó Mainnín, ‘An Tuiscint Ghaelach in Albain, c. 1200-1715’ (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University College Galway, 1987), p. 12.

⁴Aodh de Blácam, *Gaelic Literature Surveyed* (Dublin & Cork: The Talbot Press, 1927), p. 356.

⁵Nicholas MacLean-Bristol, *Warriors and Priests: The History of the Clan Maclean, 1300-1570* (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1995), p. 67.

⁶J.H. Delargy, ‘The Gaelic Story-Teller’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 31 (1945), 177-221 (p. 203); George Hill, *An Historical Account of The MacDonnells of Antrim* (Belfast: Archer & Sons, 1873), p. 239 fn. 82.

⁷Hugh Trevor-Roper, ‘The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland’, in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 15-41 (p. 16); Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh, ‘Place-names as a Resource for the Historical Linguist’, in *The Uses of Place Names*, ed. by Simon Taylor (Edinburgh: Scottish Cultural Press, 1998), pp. 12-53 (p. 14).

⁸Steven G. Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors 1447-1603: English Expansion and the End of Gaelic Rule* (London: Longman, 1998), p. 253.

More misleading still, the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland is often phrased as being 'colonial' in nature. The concept of a colony emerged in the context of the ancient Mediterranean and was long established by the time Irish Gaelic settlement began in Scotland; but even if the Irish-Scottish relationship, in either the sixth or the sixteenth century, could properly be considered 'colonial' within the ancient conceptual framework, the subsequent history of Ireland, and to a lesser extent that of Scotland, has been thoroughly infected with a profoundly different meaning arising from the English/British colonial enterprise of more recent centuries. The term 'colony' carries far too much baggage now, and its use can only be dangerous and distorting to any assessment of the late medieval situation.

The principal paradigm used by most writers, however, is that of the 'culture-province'. This label, based upon the somewhat dated German archeological and anthropological term *Kulturkreis*, evokes a distinctive, bounded region set apart from others by race, religion, language and habitat — an ethnic and cultural unity.¹⁰ This rigid theoretical framework has long since fallen out of favour among scholars in the fields in which it was developed, however, since the boundaries of language, culture, and social structure are rarely constant over time or, indeed, coterminous at any period, and the notion of unvarying unity throughout a wide area tends to be dangerously misleading.¹¹ In the context of the late medieval Gaelic world, the changing dynamics of interaction between the Gaelic and non-Gaelic worlds in different places and at different times preclude any interpretation of Gaelic culture as fixed, united, and unvarying.

The earliest statement expressing the 'culture-province' interpretation of late medieval Gaeldom appears in 1805 in the *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland Appointed to Inquire into the Nature of the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian*. Speaking in terms hardly different from several accounts offered by academics in the second half of the twentieth century, the Committee observed that 'Scotland and Ireland had anciently such constant communication and intercourse, as

⁹Trevor-Roper, p. 15.

¹⁰See Vincent Megaw and Ruth Megaw, 'Celtic Connections Past and Present: Celtic Ethnicity Ancient and Modern', in *Celtic Connections: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by Ronald Black, William Gillies, and Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1999), pp. 19-81.

¹¹Sián Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing identities in the past and present* (London:

to be considered almost one country,' 'having a community of manners and of language, as well as the closest political connexion'.¹²

A succinct and well known exposition of the 'culture-province' view was given by Kenneth Jackson, writing in 1951:

Until at least the end of the sixteenth century Ireland and the Highlands formed a single culture-province. The 'sea-divided Gael', as they were called, were closely linked not only by their language but also by their civilization, their customs and traditions, by intermarriage between their noble kindreds, and by their aristocratic social system which fostered the hereditary bardic families who practised and preserved the Classical Common Gaelic. Throughout this period there was a coming and going of the learned bards between Ireland and Scotland, and the interchange of cultural influences which this implies. It was not until the break-up of the Gaelic aristocratic order in the seventeenth century, and the removal of its powerful unifying influence, that the Gaelic civilizations of the two countries began to go each its own way, and new literatures composed in the now divergent popular dialects of Ireland and Scotland began to displace the old common literature.¹³

A modified version of the 'culture-province' view has recently been asserted by the historian Steven Ellis, who suggests that cultural and political outlooks in late medieval Gaelic Ireland may be best understood in pan-Gaelic, rather than more narrowly Hibernocentric, terms. Ellis contends that the Irish Gaelic intelligentsia of the late medieval period 'thought more in terms of a common Gaelic world surrounded by *Gaill* [i.e. non-Gaels] than an Irish polity threatened by Englishmen', and that 'the traditional concepts of Ireland [. . .] with a high kingship and a "national history" about its occupation and defence were by the fifteenth century no more than propaganda, displayed in poetry'.¹⁴ According to Ellis, only in the late sixteenth century, when 'Gaeldom' was 'partitioned between two foreign kingdoms of Ireland and Scotland' and the final English onslaught against Gaelic Irish independence forced a reanalysis and realignment, did the Irish come to develop a more exclusively Irish identity.¹⁵

Routledge, 1997), pp. 45-51.

¹²Edited by Henry MacKenzie (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1805), pp. 23, 47.

¹³Kenneth Jackson, *Common Gaelic: The Evolution of the Goidelic Languages* (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1951), p. 77.

¹⁴Steven G. Ellis, 'Nationalist Historiography and the English and Gaelic Worlds in the Late Middle Ages', in *Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism, 1938-1994*, ed. by Ciaran Brady (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1994), pp. 161-80 (p. 168); Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, pp. 250-54.

¹⁵Steven G. Ellis, "'More Irish than the Irish Themselves'?: The 'Anglo-Irish' in Tudor Ireland", *History Ireland*, 7, no. 1 (1999), 22-26 (p. 26).

Various other, more circumscribed 'culture provinces' have also been posited within this general framework. Hugh Kearney contends, for example, that during the fourteenth century, 'the north of Ireland fell within a sphere of influence whose centre was the lordship of the Isles', while Aidan Clarke makes the elusive claim that 'north-east Ireland, north-west Scotland and their hinterlands were part of the same ethos'.¹⁶ Perhaps the most extreme statement is Jane Ohlmeyer's, that Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland 'formed a single cultural, linguistic and even political entity since earliest times'.¹⁷

The extent of this shared culture may well have been rather more limited than would appear from sweeping statements of this kind. There are important questions of geographical spread: while an essentially common literary and intellectual culture seems to have prevailed throughout Gaelic Ireland (albeit most concentrated in specific parts of the country where patronage and other political factors best sustained its growth), the extent to which this culture spilled over into Gaelic Scotland — *all* of Gaelic Scotland — is not entirely clear. Equally important, this culture seems to have been sustained almost entirely by the learned classes attached to the aristocracy, and may not have borne much relation to the folk traditions of the period, although much literary and other cultural material generated by the learned classes in the first instance may later have come to pass into folk tradition.

Evidence of folk culture — surviving into recent times but rooted, at least to some extent, in an earlier period — shows substantial divergence between Gaelic Scotland and Ireland, and indeed different regions of the two countries, rather than a seamless web of continuity. It is widely recognized, for example, that there is very little overlap between the folk song traditions of Gaelic Scotland and Ireland — very few shared songs, or even lines of songs — and various important styles and subjects are found in one country's tradition that are entirely unattested in the other.¹⁸ Religious

¹⁶Hugh Kearney, *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 103; Aidan Clarke, 'The Plantations of Ulster', in *Milestones in Irish History*, ed. by Liam de Paor (Cork: Mercier Press, 1986), pp. 62-71 (p. 62).

¹⁷Jane Ohlmeyer, *Civil War and Restoration in the Three Stuart Kingdoms: The career of Randal MacDonnell, marquis of Antrim, 1609-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 7.

¹⁸Alan Bruford, 'The Sea-Divided Gaels: Some Relationships Between Scottish Gaelic, Irish and English Traditional Songs', *Éigse Cheol Tíre*, 1 (1972-73), 4-27; Colm Ó Baoill, Review of Angela Partridge, *Caoineadh na dTrí Muire: Téamaí na Páise i bhFilíocht na Gaeilge* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1983), *SGS*, 14, Part II (1986), 158-60 (pp. 158-59).

practice seems equally diverse; for example, much of the religious lore presented in Alexander Carmichael's *Carmina Gadelica*, although gathered principally in Catholic areas, is quite distinct in character from its Irish counterparts.¹⁹

Further, with regard to material culture, there are significant divergences from an early date with respect to matters like land tenure and the accompanying organizational structures.²⁰ Such differences can only have grown more marked over the course of the later medieval period, as Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland became assimilated, to varying degrees, to the political structures of two discrete feudal states, England and Scotland. Late medieval Gaelic Ireland demonstrates both evolution and variation in the systems of lordship and landownership, and a similar lack of uniformity is apparent for Gaelic Scotland.²¹

In the final analysis, however, the only surviving sources that give meaningful insight into *attitudes* and *perceptions* within the Gaelic world are the product of learned and aristocratic culture. Their ability to illuminate even these aspects of the Gaelic world is often limited, but they are the best materials there are. This study is primarily concerned with interpreting evidence of this kind, especially bardic poetry — the formal, metrically precise, learned poetry of the period, composed by trained professional poets. Differences relating to folk culture, to economic and material matters, to political institutions and structures, are not brought to the fore except when such divergences can be connected to a perceptible difference of outlook or perspective.

*

As an alternative to the 'culture-province' interpretation, various twentieth-century commentators have suggested a dynamic of cultural domination and dependence, with Ireland as the centre and Scotland playing a secondary and marginal role. These interpretations vary considerably in their approach to the evidence, however, and in their rhetorical intensity.

¹⁹Gerard Murphy, Reviews of Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica*, vol. IV (ed. by J. Carmichael Watson) and vol. V (ed. by Angus Matheson), *Éigse*, 3 (1941-42), 226-27 (p. 227), and *Éigse*, 8 (1956-57), 167.

²⁰David Greene, Review of Kenneth Jackson, *The Gaelic Notes in the Book of Deer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), *Studia Hibernica*, 12 (1972), 167-70.

²¹Katharine Simms, *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1987); Mary O'Dowd, *Power, politics and land: Early Modern Sligo, 1568-1688* (Belfast: Queen's University Institute of Irish Studies, 1991), pp. 143-44.

An extreme, glaringly uninformed view — most useful perhaps as a straw man one might otherwise have to stuff — was expressed by Hugh Trevor-Roper in an essay on what he described as the ‘invention’ of the Highland tradition:

Being a cultural dependency of Ireland under the ‘foreign’, and somewhat ineffective, role of the Scottish crown, the Highlands and Islands of Scotland were culturally depressed. Their literature, such as it was, was a crude echo of Irish literature. The bards of the Scottish chieftains came from Ireland or went thither to learn their trade. Indeed, we are told by an early eighteenth-century writer — an Irishman — that the Scottish bards were the rubbish of Ireland periodically cleared out of Ireland and deposited in that convenient dump. Even under the oppressive rule of England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Celtic Ireland remained, culturally, an historic nation while Celtic Scotland was, at best, its poor sister. It had — could have — no independent tradition.²²

Trevor-Roper’s interpretation of the nature of Scottish Gaelic tradition has been criticized by, among others, Donald Meek and Howard Gaskill, who emphasize his patent unfamiliarity with the pertinent literary evidence.²³ With regard to the specific charge asserted in the quoted paragraph — that an early eighteenth century Irish writer describes the poets of Gaelic Scotland as ‘the rubbish of Ireland periodically cleared out of Ireland and deposited in that convenient dump’, a provocative allegation indeed — Trevor-Roper’s distortion of the single source upon which he relied is equally evident. The writer in question was the Donegal virtuoso John Toland (1670-1722), and his discussion of the removal of poets from Ireland contains none of the lurid language used by Trevor-Roper. The reference has nothing to do with the literary culture of the late Middle Ages, moreover, but relates to essentially legendary events prior to the Convention of Druim Cett of 575, a political ‘summit’ involving Colm Cille and major Irish and Scottish kindreds.

According to Toland, the bards of Ireland during that period

became such a grievance, that several attempts [*sic*] were made to rid the nation of them: and, which is something comical (what at least our present

²²Trevor-Roper, p. 16 (quoting John Toland, *A Collection of Several Pieces by Mr. John Toland* (London: J. Peele, 1726), I, 25-29).

²³Donald E. Meek, ‘The Gaelic Ballads of Scotland: Creativity and Adaptation’, in *Ossian Revisited*, ed. by Howard Gaskill (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), pp. 19-48 (p. 44 fn. 1); Howard Gaskill, ‘‘Ossian’ Macpherson: towards a rehabilitation’, *Comparative Criticism*, ed. by E.S. Shaffer, 8 (1986), pp. 113-48 (p. 118).

Poets would not extraordinarily like) the orders for banishing them were always to the Highlands of Scotland.²⁴

Although it would be mildly interesting to know exactly why banishment to Scotland would have been 'comical' to Toland, or would not have been 'extraordinarily liked' by eighteenth-century Irish poets, such information is of very limited relevance to an assessment of late medieval outlooks. Toland, was, in any event, a weak plank upon which to rest one's case. Although a native speaker of Irish, Toland wrote principally about matters entirely unrelated to Celtic studies, and his knowledge of Gaelic Scotland was evidently confined to what he had read second-hand from writers like Martin Martin; Alan Harrison concluded a review of his work and career with the dismissive comment that 'John Toland is not considered to be an important Celtic scholar, and rightly so'.²⁵ In contrast to the disdainful view presented by Trevor-Roper, however, Toland did comment that the Scottish Gaels 'are no contemptible [*sic*] part of the Celtic off-spring', a balanced and rather more realistic assessment.²⁶

Another established interpretation, rarely developed fully or expressed with the vigour of a Trevor-Roper, reflects Irish cultural nationalism such as it emerged from the late nineteenth century onwards. In this view, medieval Gaelic culture and the language used in its literature and scholarly work are to be understood as — to all intents and purposes exclusively — 'Irish'. Writing in 1927, Aodh de Blácam spoke in this idiom when he commented that 'Irish literary culture dominated Gaelic Scotland down to the middle seventeenth century.'²⁷ For de Blácam, the Scottish manuscripts from the sixteenth century or earlier are 'virtually all recensions of Irish literature, written in standard Irish', and the Book of the Dean of Lismore, the invaluable manuscript poetry collection of the early sixteenth century, 'shows us Gaelic Scotland as cherishing Irish classics in the same way that the British colonies cherish English

²⁴Toland, p. 28.

²⁵Alan Harrison, 'John Toland (1670-1722) and Celtic Studies', in *Celtic Languages and Celtic Peoples: Proceedings of the Second North American Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by Cyril J. Byrne, Margaret Harry, and Pádraig Ó Siadhail (Halifax, Nova Scotia: St. Mary's University, 1992), pp. 555-76 (p. 574).

²⁶Toland, p. 70.

²⁷De Blácam, p. 354; see also Robin Flower, *The Irish Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), p. 124 (contending that Scotland 'through the whole medieval period was in literary matters entirely under Irish domination').

classics'.²⁸ De Blácam's contemporary Seán Mac Guaire took the next logical step, describing the Hebrides 'as a remnant of our overseas empire, a region civilized with our Gaelic culture'.²⁹ The more common manifestation of this viewpoint does not yield outright expressions of this kind: Scotland is simply pushed to the margins of discussion, or ignored altogether.

An evocative, highly imaginative version of this view was given by David Mathew, writing in 1933. Here the Scottish Gaels — more specifically, the mercenary warriors and chiefs who played such a crucial role in late sixteenth-century Ireland, as discussed below — appear as ultra-Gaelic rustics, 'living ancestors' of a sort, and an embarrassment to their Irish counterparts:

They must have been appalled by that unrelieved and unchanging simplicity, for the newcomers had none of that subtlety which befitted a noble in sixteenth-century Gaeldom. . . . The occasional jarring effect of Sorley's [Somhairle Buidhe Mac Domhnaill (†1590)] false stresses and faulty mutations only marked the contrast more strongly between the prosody, careful and fine webbed, in which the last Earl of Tyrone had delighted, and the camp-fire songs of the Scots. True the language was a link between them, but for the Irish it was their own past calling, and from this they turned away; for the Ulster lords had their minds bent to the southward on the Great King [Philip II of Spain] and the Pope, while the Islanders still brooded on their legends which echoed back across the endless sea. Thus O'Neill . . . would be constrained, while a guest at Dunluce or the high rath of Macdougall, to stay with his host over the usquebaugh between the feast and the peat smooing, while the 'file', the island poet, chanted in long monotony and in the shadow stood the 'red shanks' [i.e. Scottish Gaelic mercenaries] with their long and flowing hair. . . . They were like the mists from which they came, nothing practical, nor solid, for they had none of the gains of more prosperous pirates of less empty channels. . . . To them any such tangible evidence of prosperity seemed infinitely far off and remote, as they drove their galleys in solitude to conflict under the guardian spirits of the sea [. . .] The islanders were destined to remain, just over the edge of all policies, unreal and phantom, in the state of Hy Brasil, timeless and protected by their solitary waters.³⁰

Notwithstanding purple passages of this kind, and Trevor-Roper's highly provocative claim that the Scottish Gaels were 'despised . . . by the Irish as their poor

²⁸De Blácam, pp. 355-56.

²⁹Seán Mac Guaire, 'Ireland and the Catholic Hebrides', *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 5th Series, 42 (1933), 345-64 (p. 350).

³⁰David Mathew, *The Celtic Peoples and Renaissance Europe: A Study of the Celtic and Spanish Influences on Elizabethan History* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1933), pp. 290-92.

unlettered kinsmen',³¹ there does not appear to be any evidence from the late medieval or early modern period that evokes any kind of condescension or contempt towards Gaelic Scotland on the part of Irish Gaelic commentators. Even in the seventeenth century, as the two halves of the Gaelic world were drifting apart, not least because of religious differences emerging in the wake of the Reformation, no such statements appear. Significantly, Irish intellectuals of the seventeenth century like Séathrún Céitinn and the Four Masters responded to the provocations of the Lowland Scottish writer Thomas Dempster — the so-called 'Saint Stealer', who attempted to appropriate for Scotland all the Irish 'saints and scholars' of earlier centuries by making a specious connection between Scotland and the Latin word *Scotus* (plural *Scotti*) meaning 'Gael' or 'Irishman' — by engaging in an affirmative defence of Ireland rather than a negative attack on Scotland.³²

It may be, however, that this deficiency of Irish evidence is to some extent a consequence of the kinds of Gaelic texts produced during the period in question. Condescending and superior statements from Irish authors do begin to appear in the late eighteenth century, against the backdrop of the Ossianic controversy, when national pride between Scotland and Ireland provoked various extreme contentions and theories, principally on the Scottish side, where strenuous efforts were made, notably by James MacPherson himself, creator/discoverer of the poems of 'Ossian', to deny entirely any Irish origins for Fenian literature. One vigorous Irish response came from the prominent antiquarian Charles O'Connor, in his *Dissertation on the First Migrations, and Final Settlement of the Scots in North-Britain* (1766):

In fact, since the Days of the *Bruces* and *Baliols*, the Inhabitants of the *Highlands* do not pretend that they kept any *Schools*, or *Academies*, for the Preservation of the Language: the *Irish* kept many, and the few *Manuscripts*, discovered lately in *Scotland*, are confessed . . . to be *Irish*, not *Erse* Compositions. In the Mother Country alone, has this Language been preserved in its classical Purity.³³

³¹Trevor-Roper, p. 18.

³²See Joseph Theodoor Leersen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael: Studies in the idea of Irish nationality, its development and literary expression prior to the nineteenth century* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1986), pp. 303-04. Céitinn does offer a mild correction, however: '*Bíodh a fhios agat, a léagthoir, gurab fíor-Éireannach Colum Cille do leith a athar is a mháthar agus nach Albanach, amhail adeirid cuid do na h-Albanachaibh*' ('Know, o reader, that Colm Cille was a true Irishman on both his father and his mother's sides and not a Scotsman, as some of the Scots say'). *FFÉ*, III, 102.

³³Charles O'Connor, *A Dissertation on the First Migrations, and Final Settlement of the Scots in North-*

A rather more provocative statement was made by Theophilus O'Flanagan in 1808, in connection with his translation of the Deirdre story in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*, where he commented that 'the elegant accuracy of the [Gaelic] language is now utterly forgotten by the modern Scots' and described the Scottish vernacular as a 'corrupt and debased dialect'. O'Flanagan went on to ridicule the 'awkward efforts at versification' of the Highland poets who met with the pioneering Welsh scholar Edward Lhuys during his visit to the Highlands in the early eighteenth century, contending that 'they had nearly forgotten the prosody of the language'.³⁴ The Scotsman William Shaw, a prolific contemporary commentator on the Ossianic controversy, expressed similar views in 1782 in asserting the primacy of Gaelic Ireland, contending that 'the Irish [was] the studied language, and the Earse only a distant provincial dialect'.³⁵ 'Whatever bards existed in the Highlands', according to Shaw, 'received their education at the Irish academies; and every stanza that is remarkably fine or obscure, is still called *Galic dhoimhan Eirionach*, i.e. *deep Irish*.'³⁶

As against these various ideological and rhetorical flights, Derick Thomson has presented a more moderate and realistic view of Ireland's dominant cultural role during this period:

The Scottish evidence suggests that there was a close correspondence with Ireland in the organisation of society, and especially in the organisation of the learned and literary orders, but that Gaelic Scotland leaned heavily on Irish initiative, periodically and consistently importing literary, medical, scribal and musical professionals from the *maior Scotia*, and even when these immigrants became thoroughly naturalised, continuing to send them back to Ireland to the springs of the native learning.³⁷

Britain (Dublin: George Faulkner, 1766), p. 46 (italics in original). 'Erse', although in origin simply the Scots word for 'Irish', had by this time come to refer to vernacular Scottish Gaelic.

³⁴Theophilus O'Flanagan, 'Deirdri, or the Lamentable Fate of the Sons of Usnach, An Ancient Dramatic Irish Tale, One of the Three Tragic Stories of Eirin; Literally Translated into English, from an Original Gaelic Manuscript, with Notes and Observations: To Which is Annexed, the Old Historic Account of the Facts on Which the Story is Founded,' *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*, 1 (1808), 218.

³⁵William Shaw, *An Enquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems Ascribed to Ossian* (Dublin: Pat Byrne, 1782), p. 121 (italics in original). Edmund Burt reported a similar attitude among the Highland gentry he encountered c. 1730, who reportedly commented of an Irish companion of Burt's 'that they never heard their language spoken in such purity before'. *Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland*, ed. by Andrew Simmons (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1998 [1754]), p. 230 (letter 22).

³⁶Shaw, pp. 126-27.

³⁷Derick S. Thomson, 'Gaelic Learned Orders and Literati in Medieval Scotland', *Scottish Studies*, 12

This study will consider this dynamic more closely, examining the Gaelic evidence of the time to assess whether and to what extent Ireland functioned as centre of the Gaelic world and Scotland as the periphery. The principal focus is on literary matters: the culture of patronage, training, composition, and preservation on the one hand, the substance of surviving poetry on the other, with its numerous statements and implications about the relative roles and perceptions of Ireland and Scotland. This evidence is fragmentary, contradictory, indeed in some respects paradoxical, and no clear and definitive picture emerges. Different interpretations and different emphases are possible depending on how this material is contextualized, and this study will therefore begin by setting out a general historical and cultural framework.

(1968), 57-80 (p. 75).

Chapter 1

Political and Cultural Background

To make sense of the cultural interactions and attitudes within Scottish and Irish Gaeldom during the late medieval period, an understanding of the changing political and cultural context within Ireland and, more important, within Scotland is essential. In particular, although Ireland underwent drastic changes during the classical period, it is the fundamental restructuring of Scottish Gaeldom and Scottish Gaelic identity that provides the backdrop for the cultural relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland during this era. To state the matter baldly, where once Gaelic political and cultural authority in Scotland had been centred in the Scottish court and in the south and east of the country, Scottish Gaeldom came to reorient itself towards Ireland and away from the south and east — what was becoming the *Galldachd* or ‘Lowlands’, most obviously as a result of the feudalization of the Scottish monarchy and the rapid language shift experienced in those districts from the end of the eleventh century onwards.¹ At the same time, the Norse presence in the Hebrides and adjoining western littoral, established from the ninth century onwards, faded steadily during this era, working a process of re-Gaelicization in what was becoming the *Gàidhealtachd* or ‘Highlands’. These developments meant that ‘Gaelic’ Scotland became a very different entity to what it had been at the start of the millennium, and the connection to Ireland reshaped accordingly.

Unfortunately, very little direct or contemporary evidence survives to show the Gaelic reaction to these broad developments, most crucially the slow de-Gaelicization of southern and eastern Scotland. From the sixteenth century onwards, however, a variety of sources, in Scots and English as well as Gaelic, suggest a strong resentment on the part of the Gaels, centred on a view that the nation was stolen by foreigners or betrayed by traitors who abandoned Gaelic language and culture, and it is reasonable to assume that such attitudes had been coalescing over the course of the preceding

¹John MacInnes, ‘The Scottish Gaelic Language’, in *The Celtic Connection*, ed. by Glanville Price (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1992), pp. 101-30 (p. 101); John MacInnes, ‘The Gaelic Literary Tradition’, in *Scottish Literature in the Secondary School* (Edinburgh: HMSO, 1976), pp. 56-67 (p. 57); Alan Bruford, ‘Oral and Literary Fenian Tales’, in *The Heroic Process*, ed. by Bo Almqvist, Séamas Ó Catháin, and Pádraig Ó Héalaí (Dún Laoghaire: Glendale Press, 1987), pp. 25-56 (p. 34 fn. 27).

centuries as the de-Gaelicization of the Lowlands proceeded.

Perhaps the most famous and powerful statement in this connection is that of the Carrick poet Walter Kennedy in William Dunbar's 'The Flying of Dunbar and Kennedie' (c. 1500):

*Thow lufis nane Irische, elf, I understand,
Bot it suld be all trow Scottis mennis lede;
It was the gud language of this land,
And Scota it causit to multiply and sprede,
Quhill Corspatrik, that we of tresoun rede,
Thy forefader, maid Irisch and Irisch men thin,
Throu his tresoun broght Inglise rumplis in,
So wald thy self, mycht thou to him succede.²*

Similar attitudes are expressed in eighteenth-century Gaelic poetry, as in Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's 'Gur h-ì as crìoch àraid' ('Moladh an Ùghdair don t-seann chànan Ghàidhlig'/'The Author's Praise for the Ancient Gaelic Tongue') (c. 1738),³ and, especially, in Maighstir Seathan Mac Gill-Eathain's 'Air teachd on Spáin, do shliochd an Gháoidhil ghlais' ('When the descendants of Gaidheal Glas came from Spain') (1707) where the poet complains that '*Reic iád san chúirt í, air cáint úir o Nde | 's do thréig le hair [i. tàir] budh nár leo ncán'mhain fein*' ('They sold it in the court for a new speech dating from only yesterday | and scornfully abandoned it: they were ashamed of their own language').⁴

Although explicit statements of this kind are only to be found from a relatively late period, what does seem clear from the earlier record is that the Gaels had long demonstrated significant alienation from what was becoming 'Lowland' Scotland. Although the political integration of northwestern Scotland into the Scottish kingdom became more important from the late thirteenth century onwards, following the formal

²Published in *The Poems of William Dunbar*, ed. by W.M. Mackenzie (London: Faber & Faber, 1932), pp. 5-20 (§ 44, ll. 345-52)).

³Published in *BG*, ll. 2602-2785 (§§ 11-14, ll. 2642-57)) and in *Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair: Selected Poems*, ed. by Derick S. Thomson, Scottish Gaelic Texts, Minor Series, 1 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1996), ll. 549-680 (ll. 589-604).

⁴Published in *BG*, ll. 4178-4229, and in *EB*, poem 17 (ll. 1192-93; translation amended). Also significant is the famous reference by Edmund Burt (1726) to the Highlanders' 'tradition, that the Lowlands, in old times were the possession of their ancestors'. Simmons, *Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland*, p. 192 (letter 19). For a discussion, see John MacInnes, 'The Gaelic Perception of the Lowlands', in *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig*, ed. by William Gillies (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), pp. 89-100, and John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry and Historical Tradition', in *The Middle Ages in the Highlands*, ed. by Loraine Maclean (Inverness: Inverness Field Club, 1981), pp. 142-63.

absorption of the Hebrides into Scotland pursuant to the Treaty of Perth (1266), the south and east of Scotland, and with it ‘Scotland’ or ‘Alba’ as some kind of entity, seem to become steadily less prominent in the Scottish Gaelic worldview during this period, and cultural reconnection to Ireland becomes paramount.⁵ As discussed in Chapter 4, ‘Lowland’ Scotland is almost completely invisible in late medieval Gaelic poetry, and Ireland functions as the touchstone of all historical and cultural prestige.

Yet there are only very occasional hints in contemporary Gaelic sources that communicate any recognition of the new division in Scotland and a dissociation from the de-Gaelicized south and east. The Irish poet Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, composing in the early fifteenth century, suggests that the Gaels of Scotland should return home to Ireland — a common theme in the poetry, as discussed below — but speaks in terms of the Hebrides only, as if the Scottish mainland (or at least the Lowland portion thereof) is already lost to Gaeldom:

*Mithidh dhóibh dlúthaghadh rinn;
is é a n-adhbhar a hÉirinn
na sluaigh a hinnsibh Alban
a sinnsir uainn d’ionnarbadh.*

’Tis time for the folk in Alba’s isles
to join us; the reason for their not
being in Ireland is that their ancestors
were driven forth from us.⁶

In general, however, partly due to its very nature and partly due to its essentially Irish orientation (an orientation explored in detail in Chapter 4), Gaelic poetry of the period has very little to say about the growing cultural fissure in Scotland, and indeed ignores its existence almost entirely. There are no ready expressions to communicate the distinctiveness of Gaelic and non-Gaelic areas of Scotland, although there are some isolated usages in prose sources: the seventeenth-century Irish cleric Proinsias Ó Maolmhuaidh speaks of ‘*Alba bhocht na nGaoidheal*’ (literally ‘poor Scotland of the Gaels’, referring to the weak state of the Catholic faith there),⁷ for example, and his

⁵Bruford, ‘Oral and Literary Fenian Tales’, p. 34 fn. 27; MacInnes, ‘Gaelic Poetry and Historical Tradition’, p. 145. The parallel disassociation of Lowland Scottish identity and imagination from Ireland has probably been more studied. See, e.g., Dauvit Broun, ‘The Birth of Scottish History’, *SHR*, 76 (1997), 4-22 (p. 13).

⁶‘Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh’ (‘I have received a present I sought not’) (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, before 1448), § 18 (published in *AD*, poem 29). The next stanza of the poem (quoted in chapter 3, p. 171) makes clear that *inis* has the meaning ‘island’ here rather than ‘meadow’, but it is worth emphasizing that the poem is focused not on Scottish Gaeldom as a whole but on Clann Domhnaill, whose principal base was in the islands.

Proinsias Ó Maolmhuaidh, *Lóchrann na gCreidmheach* (Rome: Typis Sacrae Congreg. de Propaganda Fide, 1676), p. 11 (introduction reprinted in Colm Ó Lochlainn, *Tobar Fíorghlan Gaedhilge: Deismireachta na Teangadh 1450-1853* (Dublin: Three Candles, 1939) (p. 163) and in Ó Maolmhuaidh, *Lucerna Fidelium*, ed. by Pádraig Ó Súilleabháin, Scríbhinní Gaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr, 5 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for

contemporary, the Galway genealogist Dubhaltach Mac Fírbhisigh, uses the form *Alba Sgot*.⁸ This omission marks a clear contrast to the poetry's treatment of Ireland, where the relationship between *Gaedheal* and *Gall* (Gael and non-Gael) is one of the principal themes, even if this conflict is rarely phrased or conceptualized in geographical or territorial terms. Significantly, the words *Gàidhealtachd* and *Galldachd*, the ubiquitous later terms for the Gaelic and de-Gaelicized portions of Scotland, are almost never used either in bardic or early vernacular poetry. If it remains less than fully clear how, when, and why the concept of 'Lowlands' and 'Highlands' first 'entered the minds of men'⁹ — an entry, it seems safe to say, that occurred in the Lowlands in the first instance — the matter is all the murkier still on the Gaelic side.

The term *Galldachd* appears (in its Irish form *Galltacht*) in a variety of Irish sources from the mid-fourteenth century onwards, and is used to convey a range of meanings: principally those of 'the Englishry'¹⁰ or 'foreign ways'¹¹ rather than 'the Pale' or 'the territory of the *Goill*' (foreigners), which appears only occasionally despite the palpable reality of foreign control over distinct portions of Irish territory.¹² The first use of the term *Galldachd* in relation to Scotland does not occur before the early seventeenth century, in Séathrún Céitinn's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, where Céitinn uses it repeatedly in discussing the de-Gaelicization of 'Lowland' Scotland:

Advanced Studies, 1962)).

Introduction to *Book of Genealogies* (1650) (introduction published in *Genealogical Tracts I.*, ed. by Toirdhealbhach Ó Raithbheartaigh (Dublin: Coimisiún Lámhscríbhinní na hÉireann, 1932), pp. 1-106 (p. 33)).

⁹G.W.S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of the Scots: Government, Church and Society from the eleventh to the fourteenth century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), p. 362.

¹⁰'Leaghadh don Ghalltacht gnaoi Néill' ('Destruction of the *Galldachd* is Niall's satisfaction') (Tadhg Ó Domhnalláin, to Niall Mág Shamhradháin (†1362)) (published in *The Book of Magauran/Leabhar Méig Shamhradháin*, ed. by Lambert McKenna (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1947), poem 33); 'Briathra cogaidh con chath Laighnech' ('Words of war in the Leinster battle-host') (Seithfín Mór, to An Calbhach Ó Conaire Failghe (†1458)), ll. 5-7 (published in Osborn Bergin, 'On a Warlike Prince', *Studies*, 9 (1920), 416-20 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 40)); *AU* 1375; *AFM* 1432. See Terence McCaughey, 'Bards, Beasts and Men', in *Sages, Saints and Storytellers: Celtic Studies in Honour of Professor James Carney*, ed. by Donnchadh Ó Corráin, Liam Breatnach, and Kim McCone (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1989), pp. 102-21 (p. 107).

¹¹'A fhir ghlacas a ghalldacht' ('O man who follows foreign ways') (Laoiseach Mac an Bhaird, c. 1580(?)) (published in Osborn Bergin, 'Courtier and Rebel', *Irish Review*, 2 (1912-13), 471-73 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 9); *The Tribes and Customs of Hy-Many*, ed. by John O'Donovan (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1843), p. 136 [written c. 1418?]; *The Genealogies, Tribes and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach*, ed. by John O'Donovan (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1844), p. 106 [written c. 1650?].

¹²*AFM* 1398 (recording the death of Ó Briain Maol 'is in nGalldach' ('in the *Galldachd*')); *AU* 1430; 'Briathra cogaidh con chath Laighnech', ll. 19-20.

An fhuireann is foigse do Shacsuibh díobh ag ar díbreadh lé hUilliam Concúr tar teorainn na Sacsan i nAlbain iad, agus go bhfuilid a sliocht diaidh i ndiaidh ag sealbhughadh Galldachta na hAlban, ní do Ghaedhalaibh iad acht do shliocht na Sacsanach [. . .] Agus ré tilleadh i nAlbain dó [.i. Uilliam Leomhan, rí Alban (†1214)] [. . .] rug leis mórán d’ógaibh uaisle na Sacsan, ó n-a bhfuair caidreamh muinnteartha ré linn a dheoraidheachta, go hAlbain, is tug iomad críoch is fearann dóibh agus dá sliocht da n-éis, go bhfuil mórán díobh ag áitiughadh i nGalldacht na hAlban aniu. Ag seo cuid do shloinntibh na druinge do chuaidh leis an tan soin atá ag áitiughadh i nAlbain aniu, agus is díobh ghairmthear Galldacht na hAlban, ag so cuid do na sloinntibh sin: Baliol, Brus, Souilly [. . .]

(The portion of them that are nearest England who were driven by William the Conqueror over the English borders into Scotland, and whose posterity have continuously inhabited that *Galldachd* of Scotland, these are not of the Gaels but of the race of the Saxons . . . Then, when he [King William the Lion (†1214)] was returning . . . he took with him a large number of young English nobles from whom he had received friendly attentions during his captivity; and he gave much land and territories to them and to their descendants after them; and many of these are in possession of the *Galldachd* of Alba at this day. Here are some of the surnames of the people who went with him at that time who inhabit Scotland at present, and it is they who are called the *Galldachd* of Scotland; here are some of these surnames: Baliol, Brus, Souilly . . .)¹³

Here the third use of the word has the principal Irish sense, with the reference being to people, but the first two uses certainly appear territorial in implication, as in later vernacular Scottish usage.

The earliest example discovered from Scotland itself, meanwhile, dates from no earlier than 1651, when it appears in Eachann Bacach Mac Gill-Eathain’s vernacular poem beginning ‘Gura h-oil leam an sgeul seo | a dh’éisid mi Di-dòmhaich’ (‘The news I heard on Sunday grieves me’) (‘Òran do Shir Eachann’/‘Song to Sir Eachann’), where the poet says of Sir Eachann that ‘ghabh iad tlachd dhuit air Ghalldachd’ (‘in the Lowlands they were attracted to you’).¹⁴ This is an isolated reference, and the term does not thereafter become commonplace until the eighteenth century; it is not used at all in surviving bardic poetry from Scotland.

¹³FFÉ, II, 386; McCaughey, ‘Bards, Beasts and Men’, p. 107.

By the same token, the term *Gàidhealtachd* does not appear in any bardic poetry, Scottish or Irish, and is not attested in either country before the turn of the eighteenth century, when it appears in a range of Scottish texts of the era, on each occasion referring to the Scottish Highlanders or Highlands. The earliest of these is the title-page to Robert Kirk's edition of the New Testament (1690), which asserts that the work is intended '*ar mhaithe choitcinn Ghaoidhealtacht Albann*' ('for the general good of the *Gàidhealtachd* of Scotland');¹⁵ the first example in poetry occurs in Mairearad nighean Lachainn Nic Gill-Eathain's poem beginning 'Gun d'fhuair mi sgeul 's cha'n aicheam e' ('I have got news and I shall not deny it') ('Òran do Shir Iain Mac-Gilleain'/ 'Song to Sir Iain Mac-Gilleain'), composed some time after 1702.¹⁶ The term then becomes commonplace in eighteenth-century Scottish Gaelic poetry, especially in Jacobite songs composed in connection with the Rising of 1745-46.¹⁷ Equally, the term *Garbhchríocha* (*Garbhchríochan* in the Scottish vernacular) (literally 'Rough Bounds'), which becomes another important label for the 'Highlands' in later literature, is almost completely absent from bardic poetry and other sources from

¹⁴Published in *EB*, poem 6 (§ 9d, l. 447).

¹⁵*Tiomna Nuadh ár dtighearna agus ár slanuigheora Josa Criosd, ar na tharuing go fireannach as Greigis go Gaoidheilg . . . le R. Kirke, M.A.* (London: R. Ebheringtham, 1690). Another early reference, not precisely datable but probably a few years later than Kirk's Bible, occurs in Niall Mac Mhuirich's account of the Montrose wars in the *Red Book of Clanranald*. *RC*, II, 180.

¹⁶Published in A. MacLean Sinclair, *Na Baird Leathanach: The MacLean Bards*, 2 vols (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island: Haszard & Moore, 1898), I, 187-89, and in A. MacLean Sinclair, *The Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765* (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island: Haszard & Moore, 1892), pp. 86-88 (§ 6f).

¹⁷As in 'Air Allt Ghartan ghlacas bradan' ('On Allt Ghartan I caught a salmon') ('Òran d'a chèile nuadh-phòsda'/ 'Song to his newly married spouse') (Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair, c. 1727), § 7b (published in Thomson, *Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair*, pp. 51-53 (l. 150)); 'Nach goirid o'n a ghabh sinn air | Eoin Cop am Prestonpans?' ('Did we not beat, but recently, John Cope at Prestonpans?') ('Fuirgeall'/ 'A Fragment') (Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair, 1746), § 9a (published in *Highland Songs of the Forty-five*, ed. by John Lorne Campbell (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 2nd edn 1984), poem 11 (ll. 65-66)), and 'N ulaidh phriseil bha uainne' ('The valuable treasure that we desired') (anonymous '*té mhuinntir Lochabar*' ('woman of the people of Lochaber'), 1745), § 10e-f (published in *Comhchrúinneacha do dh'òrain taghta, Ghaidhealach*, ed. by Paruig Mac an Tuairmeir (Edinburgh: T. Stiubhard, 1813), pp. 182-86). '*Gàidhealtachd*' and '*Galldachd*' are used contrastively, in the same sentence, in Niall Mac Mhuirich's account of the Montrose wars, written c. 1700. *RC*, II, 180. *Gaeltacht* first appears in Irish sources about the same time, apparently first attested in a tract on the Ó Ruaircs written by a Leitrim scribe for 'Captain Thady Roark' in 1714, where the writer recounts how Brian na Múrtha Ó Ruairc (†1591) was sheltered by '*Mac Domhnaill 7 dream eile dá chardibh [i] nGhaeltacht [sic] Alban*' ('Mac Domhnaill and some others of his friends in the *Gàidhealtachd* of Scotland'). James Carney, 'A Tract on the O'Rourkes', *Celtica*, 1 (1946-50), 238-79 (p. 244). The first known usage of the term with reference to Ireland occurs in Fearghas Mac Bheatha's elegy for the Oriel poet Pádraig Mac a Liondain (†1733) beginning 'A sheanchríoch Fáil, is gnách gach léan ort' ('O ancient bounds of Ireland, suffering all woundings is customary for you') (published in *Pádraig Mac a Liondain: Dánta*, ed. by Seosamh Mag Uidhir (Dublin: An Clíochomhar, 1977), pp. 1-3 (ll. 9-10)).

before the middle of the seventeenth century.¹⁸

The slow emergence of the *Galldachd* concept in Scotland prompts the further question of when the Gaels first began to view and conceptualize the inhabitants of southern and eastern Scotland — the emerging ‘Lowlands — as *Goill* (singular *Gall*), that is, as ‘foreigners’ or ‘non-Gaels’. In Irish usage, Anglo-Norman incomers were often initially labelled *Saxain* (‘English’) or *allmhuraigh* (‘foreigners’ or ‘people from overseas’) and only received the label *Goill* — an older word originally connected to Gaul and then usually associated with the Vikings and Hiberno-Norse — at a somewhat later date.¹⁹ In the Scottish context, the term *Gall* is applied to thirteenth-century Hebridean chiefs in eulogies composed by Irish poets,²⁰ but is used only rarely to mean ‘Lowland Scot’ in poetry composed before the seventeenth century, when this usage becomes ubiquitous, often communicating considerable bitterness and hatred.

There are, however, a few interesting earlier examples. In a poem for Alún, first Earl of Lennox († c. 1200(?)), dating from the early 13th century — the earliest extant bardic poem composed for a Scottish chief — Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh addresses the river Leven and tells how it got its name in the distant past, suggesting that *Goill* — apparently the Anglo-Norman magnates identified by Céitinn — had come to the area in the meantime:

Dob annamh céim catha Gall
fat imlibh uaine, a abhann . . .

Rare was the tramp of troops of *Goill*
around your green banks, o river . . .²¹

¹⁸The only apparent example is found in the anonymous seventeenth-century Caimbeul poem beginning ‘Triath na nGaidheal Giolla-easbuig’ (‘Giolla-easbuig is the lord of the Gaels’) (§ 6b) (published in W.J. Watson, ‘Unpublished Gaelic Poetry — IV., V.’, *SGS*, 3 (1931), 139-59 (pp. 142-51)), although the similar phrase ‘*crích gharbh na nGaidheal*’ appears in the earlier Caimbeul poem ‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaidheal’ (‘A good charter is the headship of the Gaels’) (anonymous, c. 1580(?)), § 16c (published as appended poem A to W.J. Watson, ‘Classical Gaelic Poetry of Panegyric in Scotland’, reprinted and supplemented from *TGSI*, 29 (1914-19), 217-22). The various usages of the term, which is particularly prominent in literature of the eighteenth century, are discussed in detail in Wilson McLeod, ‘*Galldachd, Gàidhealtachd, Garbhchriochan*’ (forthcoming in *SGS*).

¹⁹F.X. Martin, ‘Introduction’, in *Medieval Ireland: 1169-1534*, A New History of Ireland, 3, ed. by Art Cosgrove (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. xlix-lxii (p. li).

²⁰‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’ (‘Purchase your father’s poem, o Aonghas’) (anonymous, c. 1250), § 15b (published in Osborn Bergin, ‘An Address to Aonghus of Islay’, *SGS*, 4 (1934-35), 57-69 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 45); ‘Domhnall mac Raghnaill, rosg mall’ (‘Domhnall mac Raghnaill, languid eyed’) (anonymous, before 1247), § 13c (unpublished; NLS Adv. MS 72.2.2, f. 16).

²¹‘Saor do leannán, a Leamhain’ (‘Noble is your lover, o Leven’), § 9a-b (published in *AD*, poem 42). I have adjusted the translation substantially from that provided by the editor, Lambert McKenna. Note that Thomas Owen Clancy interprets the reference to *Goill* here as meaning the Norse rather than the Anglo-Normans. *The Triumph Tree: Scotland’s Earliest Poetry, 550-1350*, ed. by Thomas Owen Clancy (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1998), p. 259. A similar discussion of *Goill* around Assaroe — without question referring to the Anglo-

In another early poem, Artúr Dall Mac Gurcaigh's 'Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne' ('An arranging of a fleet against Castle Sween') (c. 1310), the poet says of Eóin Mac Suibhne's sword '*maolaighthear leis guailne Gall*' ('the shoulders of *Goill* are stripped by it') (§ 24d), a reference interpreted by the poem's editor Donald Meek as relating to 'Lowlanders like the Stewarts of Menteith [rivals of the Mac Suibhnes], who are coming into Gaelic territories', though conceivably referring instead to Anglo-Normans encountered by Mac Suibhne in Ireland.²² A rather clearer statement is the reference in the *Annals of Connacht* to the Battle of Harlaw in 1411, described as '*maidm mór le Mac Domnaill na hAlpan for Gallaib Alpan*' ('a great victory by Mac Domhnaill of Scotland over the *Goill* of Scotland'); but annal entries are not necessarily contemporaneous, and it is not certain whether this entry actually reflects the terminology or outlook of the early fifteenth century. An entry in the same annals from 1540 states the division in plain terms: the king of Scotland (James V) is described as having convoked the nobles of the Scottish race ('*an cinidh Albanach*'), both *Gall* and *Gaedheal* ('*itir Gall 7 Ghaóidel*'). The division was not absolute and clear-cut, however, as demonstrated by the common appellation *Gallda* ('Anglicized' or 'Lowlandized'), applied to many Gaelic aristocrats in both Scotland and Ireland during the late medieval period — Aodh Gallda Ó Ruairc (†1564), Eoin Gallda Mac Dubhghaill (†1376-77), and Domhnall Gallda Mac Domhnaill of Lochalsh (†1519), among many others — an indication perhaps that they were fostered with a Lowland or English family, perhaps because they had some facility in English or Scots.²³

It might be postulated that the initial application of the term *Goill* in the context of Lowland Scotland would have been as a label for the Anglo-Norman lords and their followers, rather than the mass of the ordinary population of the south and east. The mass of the 'Lowland' population would probably have remained culturally similar to ordinary 'Highlanders' — in using the Gaelic language, among various respects — much longer than these foreign and foreign-influenced aristocrats. An Irish observer

Normans — occurs in the slightly later poem by Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe beginning 'Do shlán uaim, a Áth Seanaigh' ('I accuse you, o Áth Seanaigh') (1247), § 6 (published in *The Poems of Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe*, ed. by N.J.A. Williams, Irish Texts, 51 (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1980), poem 4).

²²Published in Donald E. Meek, "'Norsemen and Noble Stewards": The Castle Sween Poem in the Book of the Dean of Lismore', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 34 (1998), 1-50, and in *SVBDL*, poem 2); see *id.*, p. 48.

²³Standish Hayes O'Grady, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, I (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1926), p. 414 fn. 1.

like Muireadhach Albanach, moreover, could readily draw a connection between the Anglo-Normans of southern Scotland and the Anglo-Normans who had come upon the Irish scene so dramatically in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and identified them both as *Goill*.

The bardic orders were intensely aristocratic in their outlook, of course, and would hardly have bothered themselves with assessing the characteristics of the ordinary 'Lowland' population and deciding whether they too should be classified as *Goill* along with their overlords. At some point, however, the entirety of the Lowland population evidently did receive such a classification: in the aristocratic vernacular poetry of the seventeenth century, for example, there are frequent expressions of group-based animus towards the ordinary agricultural population of the Lowlands — as *gallbhodaich* or Lowland churls, for example²⁴ — who by then were very definitely considered *Goill*.

The fragmentary nature of the evidence, and the renowned flexibility of the bardic poets in adapting to the immediate needs of their patrons, mean that it is impossible to reconstruct a fully coherent political vision incorporating and distinguishing all the relevant political and social groupings of the time. As such, one of the most sustained political statements in Scottish Gaelic poetry of this era is the anonymous poem beginning 'Ar sliocht Gaodhal ó Ghort Gréag' ('The race of the Gael from the land of Greece'), composed for the second Earl of Argyll (†1513) on the eve of the Battle of Flodden in 1513 — a battle between the monarchs of Scotland and England arising entirely from international, non-Gaelic politics.²⁵ This poem is also one of the most difficult to place into the Gaelic conceptual framework such as it appears in other works of that century, and indeed those preceding it, for it presents an astonishingly conservative view of pan-Gaelic solidarity against the English enemy, cast as *Goill*, with the entire Scottish nation, Lowland as well as Highland, portrayed as Gaels, and solidarity with Gaelic Ireland repeatedly invoked:

²⁴'A mhic an fhir ruaidh' ('O son of the red-haired man') ('Saighdean Ghlinn Liobhainn'/'The Arrows of Glen Lyon') (anonymous, c. 1600), § 21c (published in *BG*, ll. 6327-92 (l. 6392) and in *GC*, poem 9); 'Gur h-ì as crìoch àraid', § 11b (*BG*, l. 2643; Derick S. Thomson, *Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair*, l. 590).

²⁵Published in *SVBDL*, poem 20.

*Is dú éirghe i n-aghaidh Gall,
nocha dóigh éirghe udmhall;
faobhair claidheamh, reanna ga,
cóir a gcaitheamh go h-aobhdha.*

*Ré Gallaibh, adeirim ribh,
sul ghabhadar ar ndúthaigh;
ná léigmid ar ndúthaigh dhínn,
déinmid ardchogadh ainmhín,
ar aithris Gaoidheal mBanbha,
caithris ar ar n-athardha. [. . .]*

*Cuir th'urfhógra an oir 'an iar
ar Ghaoidhlibh ó Ghort Gáilian;
cuir siar thar ardmhuir na Goill,
nach biadh ar Albain athroinn.*

It is fitting to rise up against the *Goill*;
we expect no hesitant rising;
the edges of swords, the points of spears,
it is right to ply them gladly.

Against the *Goill*, I tell you,
before they have taken our native land;
Let us not give up our country,
let us make harsh and mighty warfare,
anxiously watching over our patrimony
just like the Gael of Ireland.

Send out your summons from east and west
to the Gael who came from Ireland;
Drive the *Goill* back over the high seas,
let Scotland not be divided again.²⁶

The fact that the poem was composed for a leader of the Caimbeuls, who managed successfully to negotiate the Highland/Lowland divide and to participate actively in two political worlds, is certainly of paramount significance in interpreting this poem and placing it in political context, but it is nevertheless difficult to square with other sources — Gaelic and otherwise — that evidence political perceptions of the time. The poem appears to be acephalous, thus compounding difficulties of interpretation; a thorough re-edition and re-examination might well be appropriate. Certainly, however, the assessment of Steven Ellis — that ‘given the greater cohesion of the Scottish kingdom’ in comparison to Ireland, this poem expresses ‘a more developed, political sense of national identity and the national territory among Scottish Gaeldom’ — does not seem a valid one.²⁷

This extraordinary poem notwithstanding, the general picture that emerges from the process of political and cultural shift in late medieval Scotland is that of a newly divided society, an effectively partitioned ‘Gaelic’ and ‘de-Gaelicized’ Scotland. While this dichotomy was much less than absolute and impermeable, the divide within Scotland meant that for Scottish Gaeldom, the imagined and actual connection to Gaelic Ireland became more meaningful, more immediate, and more fundamental than any link to ‘Lowland’ Scotland, and that this connection to Gaelic Ireland was central

²⁶*SVBDL*, poem 20, §§ 2-3, 10 (ll. 1489-98, 1523-26). I have used Kenneth Jackson’s translation here (Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson, *A Celtic Miscellany: Translations from the Celtic Literatures* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951), pp. 263-65), rather than Watson’s, except in Jackson’s use of the term ‘English’ for *Gall*; I have retained the original term, which speaks better for itself.

to Scottish Gaeldom's sense of cultural location and identity. Whether Irish Gaeldom perceived the Scottish connection in the same way, or, more precisely, with the same intensity, is much less clear.

*

The relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Scandinavia is another complex and important factor to be taken into account in assessing the terms of the connection between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland during the late Middle Ages. As with the process of de-Gaelicization in the Lowlands and its effect on cultural orientations, the general position is relatively easy to state, but the detail is largely impossible to reconstruct. The *Gàidhealtachd* — or at least what became its heartland in the Hebrides and adjoining littoral — emerged from a mixed Norse-Gaelic cultural and political environment in the first centuries of the millennium, and then underwent a sweeping re-Gaelicization and reconnection to Gaelic Ireland, roughly at the same time as southern and eastern Scotland was experiencing its de-Gaelicization. This process was probably slow and evolutionary, varying from district to district and from kindred to kindred, but the progress of this shift cannot be traced with any confidence, largely because there is so little surviving evidence concerning cultural attitudes and identities in the early part of the period, when Norse connections, and any accompanying 'atavistic longings', would surely have been stronger.²⁸

Significantly, this process of re-Gaelicization and turning away from Scandinavia was not simply a movement among the elite, but something that percolated through all levels of society, eventually producing a thoroughly Gaelic folk culture in Gaelic Scotland. This process of percolation may well have been slow, but the degree to which the re-Gaelicization of folk culture proceeded relatively more or less slowly in comparison to that of elite culture over several centuries cannot now be measured. Most likely, however, re-Gaelicization was largely a top-down process, driven by the shifting political outlooks of the aristocracy and by the intellectual culture of the learned classes. At some stages at least, these shifts must have been purposive and deliberate, Gaelic identity being consciously promoted and Scandinavian connections consciously disregarded.

²⁷Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, p. 262.

²⁸MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry and Historical Tradition', p. 146.

The intensity of this re-Gaelicization is immensely significant for an understanding of Scottish Gaelic culture from the late medieval period onwards, and especially for an understanding of Scottish Gaeldom's relationship to Ireland. Some Irish scholars, identifying the Norse background of Gaelic Scotland as an obvious factor differentiating it from Gaelic Ireland, have missed this point, placing far too much emphasis on the Norse element as an ongoing wedge of separation.²⁹ Although Scottish Gaeldom continued to be spoken of using ossified labels that communicated the Norse link, as discussed in Chapter 3, self-understanding and self-location within Scottish Gaeldom gives little weight to the Norse background. In recent centuries certainly, the Norse heritage has been very largely — if not quite completely — obliterated from Scottish Gaelic tradition. Although some stray scraps have survived in the poetry, song, and prose-tale traditions, Donald Archie MacDonald has noted 'the almost total loss of awareness in modern Gaelic oral tradition that there was at any time a powerfully established Norse-speaking or even bilingual Gaelic/Norse population in the Hebrides', with the dominant view confining 'the role of the Norse to that of a raiding and plundering enemy who were usually defeated'.³⁰ This viewpoint appears to be a fairly deeply rooted one. For example, Niall Mac Mhuirich's account (c. 1700) of the emergence of the Lordship of the Isles under Gille-Brighde and Somerled in the middle of the twelfth century is presented as something of a campaign of liberation from the Norse.³¹ Similarly, in 1805 Hugh MacDonald of Killepheder, South Uist, testified to the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland Appointed to Inquire into the Nature of the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian that '[g]ed thàinig Lochlanaich aris fada an deigh na Feinne, ghleidh na Gaidheil, sliochd na Feinne, duthaich, cànaile, agus deantanas an sinnsire' (translated — and substantially embellished! — as 'The Scandinavians (Lochlinnich) [*sic*] who invaded the Isles and Highlands, long after the times of the *Féinne*, were not able to change the language, or to destroy the monuments of our ancestors: for the descendants of these heroes maintained their independence on the main land, and retained the historical traditions

²⁹ Ó Mainnín, p. 27 and fn. 43; Dara Binéid, 'Saoldearcadh an Aosa Léinn ca. 1550-ca. 1650' (unpublished M.A. thesis, University College Cork, 1994), pp. 88, 95-96.

³⁰ Donald A. MacDonald, 'The Vikings in Gaelic Oral Tradition', in *The Northern and Western Isles in the Viking World: Survival, Continuity and Change*, ed. by Alexander Fenton & Hermann Pálsson (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1984), pp. 265-79 (p. 277).

³¹ *RC*, II, 154-55.

and poetry of their fathers over every part of our country').³²

This process of re-Gaelicization and turning away from Scandinavia does not mean that the Norse heritage is completely absent in Scottish Gaelic literature of the classical period, however. Although surprisingly few Scottish kindreds assert Norse origins — Mac Leòid and Mac Suibhne, Mac Asgail, Mac Amhlaigh, Mac Neacail — Norse heritage is occasionally noted in bardic and vernacular poetry, often by means of references to prestigious Norse ancestors. For example, Sir Tormod Mac Leòid of Berneray (†1705) is praised as '*maighre árdshroth na Beirbhe*' ('salmon of the noble stream of Bergen'), and his death is said to have brought distress '*ar fud laochruidhe Lochlann*' ('throughout the champions of Norway').³³ Very rarely, however, is there any palpable feeling of emotional or cultural *identification* with Scandinavia in these declarations of pedigree. I.F. Grant and Hugh Cheape interpret this absence as 'a significant indication of how deliberately the people discarded their Norse associations', noting 'the homogeneity of the culture of the Highlands between those districts where the Norse ruled for five hundred years and those where they never penetrated'.³⁴

The connection, or lack of connection, to the Norse past must surely have varied from region to region, however, with the impress of Norse presence being much greater in some areas, notably the northern Hebrides, and the cultural pressures working towards re-Gaelicization being correspondingly weaker. John MacInnes speculates, for example, that it might 'have become fashionable after the re-Gaelicisation of the Isles and the north in general to obscure direct Norse ancestry', and that at one time Lewis, and possibly other northwestern districts as well, might have been 'regarded by the southern Gaels as part of the greater 'Lochlann' — a Norwegian empire'.³⁵ The surviving literary evidence of the time, however, is heavily weighted towards more southern districts associated with the heartland of the Lordship of the Isles, so that it is not possible to make a comparative study between that literature and the poetry of, say, thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Lewis. The evidence presented above, suggesting that the Norse were seen as invaders and occupiers, is of more

³²MacKenzie, *Highland Society Report on Ossian*, pp. 42, 48-49.

³³'Do thuirn aoibhneas Innsi Gall' ('The happiness of the Hebrides has ended') (Donnchadh Ó Muirgheasáin (?), 1705), § 33d, a (published in *RC*, II, 264; improved edition in *CW* 137A, pp. 65-73)).

³⁴I.F. Grant and Hugh Cheape, *Periods in Highland History* (London: Shephard-Walwyn, 1987), p. 14.

southerly, Clann Domhnaill provenance; yet certain Lewis traditions do seem to present a similar view.³⁶

The most striking evidence of a Norse orientation is surely to be found in Artúr Dall Mac Gurcaigh's 'Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne', most obviously in its famous description of the Mac Suibhnes: '*Lochlannaigh is ármuinn iad*' ('Norsemen and noble stewards are they') (§ 3d). Nowhere else in the corpus are Gaelic chiefs or their followers — whether Scottish or Irish — ever labeled out-and-out *Lochlannaigh* (although, as discussed below, the term *Fionnghall* ('fair foreigner') is the single commonest label for Scottish Gaels in bardic poetry). This poem is fascinating in a number of respects, but also quite exceptional. First, it is very early in comparison to the bulk of the corpus of Scottish bardic poetry, being composed around 1310, and thus provides some insight into perceptions during that era, the end of the so-called 'Late Norse Period'. On the other hand, it may not be indicative of outlooks two centuries and more onwards, when re-Gaelicization was more complete. Second, it deals with the Mac Suibhnes, an unusual if important kindred. Originally strongly Norse in orientation, like the Mac Leòids, the Mac Suibhnes were squeezed out of their territories in Argyll during the thirteenth century and settled in Fánad in northern Tír Chonaill, where, as discussed below, they became one of the most prominent of the *gallóglach* families of late medieval Ireland, developing a close connection to the Ó Domhnaills, who were preeminent in Tír Chonaill. The Mac Suibhnes are thus at once exceptionally Norse and exceptionally Irish in comparison to other Scottish kindreds; and Meek suggests that the terminology of the poem, with its distinctively Irish-located praise-kennings, indicates that the Mac Suibhnes had already been 'naturalized' in Ireland by the time of its composition.³⁷ It is also significant that Norse feeling is entirely absent from the fairly substantial body of later poetry composed for the Mac Suibhnes in Ireland, a demonstration of the thoroughness of this 'naturalization' and of the more general process of Gaelicization. It would therefore be a serious misreading to take this poem as demonstrating the greater impact of the Norse legacy in Scotland as a factor differentiating Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland.

*

³⁵ John MacInnes, 'Clan Sagas and Historical Legends', *TGSI*, 57 (1990-92), 377-94 (p. 393).

³⁶ See Ragnall MacilleDhuibh, 'The Quern-Dust Calendar', *West Highland Free Press*, 15 January 1999.

A factor of paramount importance to be taken into account in assessing the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland is the relative poverty and underpopulation of the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*. Population figures for the late medieval period are notoriously difficult to estimate, but it is evident that the population of Gaelic Ireland during this era was substantially greater than that of Gaelic Scotland. Medieval Scotland reached its population peak — probably around one million — in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, before the onslaught of the Black Death.³⁸ Estimates for 1500 suggest a figure of 500,000-700,000 for all Scotland, of which at most a third, or 165,000-230,000, would have been in the *Gàidhealtachd*, compared to an overall figure of 750,000 for Ireland, with at least three-quarters of that, over 550,000, within the scope of Gaelic artistic and intellectual patronage.³⁹ Roughly speaking, then, Gaelic Ireland was perhaps two and a half to three times the size of Gaelic Scotland, a basic fact that must necessarily have coloured all aspects of the relationship between the two.

By the same token, Gaelic Scotland was much poorer in material terms even in comparison with the relatively less favoured parts of Ireland that remained in Gaelic hands. The climate was colder and wetter; the land rougher and more mountainous, almost all of it unsuited to the production of crops and most of it even to the grazing of animals.⁴⁰ Although much of Ireland's best land, in Leinster and Munster, was in the hands of Anglo-Norman landowners from the late twelfth century onwards,⁴¹ the districts that remained under Gaelic control nonetheless compared favorably in terms of their fertility and general economic potential to much of Lowland Scotland, let alone Highland Scotland. It is important to emphasize, moreover, that the so-called 'Highland Line' in Scotland was not so much a division between upland and low-lying

³⁷Meek, "Norsemen and Noble Stewards", p. 19.

³⁸Ian D. Whyte, *Scotland Before the Industrial Revolution: An Economic and Social History, c. 1050-c. 1750* (London: Longman, 1995), p. 38.

³⁹John Morrill, 'The British Problem, c. 1534-1707', in *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707: State Formation in the Atlantic Archipelago*, ed. by Brendan Bradshaw & John Morrill (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 1-38 and 273-81 (p. 273); Whyte, pp. 113-14. In 1600, the population of both countries was probably about one million. L.M. Cullen, 'Scotland and Ireland, 1600-1800: Their Role in the Evolution of British Society', in *Scottish Society, 1500-1800*, ed. by R.A. Houston and I.D. Whyte (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 226-44 (p. 228).

⁴⁰John Lee, 'A Biophysical Evaluation of Ireland and Scotland for Crop Production', in *Rural land use on the Atlantic periphery of Europe*, ed. by Alexander Fenton and Desmond A. Gillmor (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1994), pp. 25-38.

⁴¹Kearney, p. 104.

country as between agriculturally productive and unproductive land; the Highlands were impoverished by definition. In general — and of course there are small exceptions, like the various fertile straths throughout the Highlands, and larger ones, like Kintyre — the Gaelic-speaking community in Scotland became confined after the fourteenth century to areas of thin, unpromising acid soil, typically soaked with excessive rainfall, and centred on islands where the cool, ocean-controlled summers provide some of the most unreliable growing seasons in all of Europe.⁴²

Equivalent districts certainly existed in Ireland, of course, and indeed most of the areas that retain Irish as their community language today are of such a geographical character. Yet many of these areas were almost uninhabited during the late medieval period, and only became thickly settled during the Cromwellian era and thereafter:⁴³ ‘collectively they represented some of the poorest and most inaccessible parts of western Europe and it is certain that most of them only experienced close and permanent settlement by farming peoples at a very late date, and that these late colonizers were probably refugees evicted from adjoining more desirable regions’.⁴⁴ Most of inhabited Ireland, whether under Gaelic or Anglo-Norman control during the late Middle Ages, enjoyed better agricultural conditions than Lowland Scotland, let alone the Highlands and Islands.

For example, the Ó Domhnaill lordship of Tír Chonaill — one of the preeminent Gaelic lordships in Ireland during the late medieval period and perhaps the one most closely connected to Scottish Gaeldom, especially Clann Domhnaill — extended throughout almost all of present-day County Donegal, but was centred in the fertile lowlands in the east of the county.⁴⁵ In contrast, the barren western districts

⁴²G.W.S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of the Scots: Government, Church and Society from the eleventh to the fourteenth century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), p. 366; Ian Morrison, ‘Climatic Changes and Human Geography: Scotland in a North Atlantic Context’, *Northern Scotland*, 27 (1980), 1-11 (p. 5). Morrison points out that crops ripen more reliably in Alpine areas and in southern Sweden and Finland than in Scotland, and that the growing season at sea level in the Outer Hebrides is of no greater length than at 350 metres’ altitude (1150 feet) in the Grampian Highlands.

⁴³Kevin Whelan, ‘The modern landscape: from plantation to present’, in *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, ed. by F.H.A. Aalen, Kevin Whelan, and Matthew Stout (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997), pp. 67-103 (p. 82).

⁴⁴T. Jones Hughes, ‘Society and Settlement in Nineteenth-Century Ireland’, *Irish Geography*, 5 (1965), 79-96 (p. 93). A similar process occurred in the Highlands, albeit less intensely than in Ireland, as a result of population pressures in the 17th and 18th centuries. Whyte, p. 139.

⁴⁵Darren Mac Eiteagáin, ‘The Renaissance and the Late Medieval Lordship of Tír Chonaill, 1461-1555’, in *Donegal: History and Society — Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*, ed. by William Nolan, Liam Ronayne, and Mairéad Dunlevy (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1995), pp. 203-28 (p. 206).

most associated with Gaelic language and culture today, like Rannafast and Cloghaneely, were almost uninhabited at this time, and served primarily as reserves of various natural resources.⁴⁶

The now-familiar association between ‘Gaelicness’ and isolated, bleak districts — an association as familiar in Ireland as in Scotland — is a romantic one of very recent centuries that obfuscates the cultural dynamics of the late medieval period. An especially eloquent statement of this appealingly misleading interpretation was given by Daniel Corkery, locating his ‘Hidden Ireland’ of the eighteenth century:

Irish Ireland, then, while in a sense coterminous with Ireland itself, had its strongholds in sterile tracts that were not worth tilling. The hard mountain lands of West Cork and Kerry, the barren Comeraghs in Waterford, hidden glens in the Galtee and other mountains, the wild seaboard of the South and West, the wind-swept uplands of Clare, the back places in Connemara, much of Donegal — in such places only was the Gael at liberty to live in his own way.⁴⁷

For the late medieval period, however, it is best to think of materially impoverished places as impoverished places, pure and simple, with predictable political and cultural consequences.

*

In attempting to reconstruct the relationships between Scotland and Ireland during the late medieval period, it is often necessary to look beyond the relatively abstract ‘national’ level and consider links and connections between specific regions, districts, and kindreds. Most obvious and important, as discussed above, were the cultural divisions between the Gaelic and non-Gaelic parts of the two countries, but it is important to understand both that these divisions were not absolute and impermeable, and that important variations existed within the Gaelic regions, not least in the extent to which cultural and political links were maintained across *Sruth na Maoile*. There were also various connections between Gaelic Ireland and the Scottish

⁴⁶Mac Eiteagáin, p. 206; Kevin Whelan, ‘Settlement and society in eighteenth-century Ireland’, in *The Poet’s Place: Ulster literature and society — Essays in honour of John Hewitt, 1907-87*, ed. by Gerald Dawe and John Wilson Foster (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1991), pp. 45-62 (p. 54); Dónall P. Ó Baoill, Review of Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, *Dialects of Ulster Irish* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen’s University, 1987), *Celtica*, 20 (1988), 192-98 (p. 197).

⁴⁷Daniel Corkery, *The Hidden Ireland: A Study of Gaelic Munster in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: M.H. Gill, 1941), p. 8.

Galldachd, ranging from the political intrigue of the Bruce period, which culminated in Edward Bruce's invasion of Ireland in 1316, to diplomatic and related cultural contacts between the Scottish Crown and the native Irish aristocracy, most notably the Ó Domhnaills of Tír Chonaill.⁴⁸

The boundary between *Gàidhealtachd* and *Galldachd* in Scotland was much less than a rigid barrier, changing over time as the language shift away from Gaelic moved further north and west (in upland Fife and Carrick, among other districts), and, perhaps more important, serving as a zone of inter-cultural contact and exchange. Border areas on the southern and eastern edges of the *Gàidhealtachd*, from the Lennox up to Badenoch, were relatively peripheral within the pan-Gaelic cultural world — with its centre in Scotland being the Lordship of the Isles — and relatively little evidence remains of their cultural life during the late medieval period. Further north, though less influenced by the central Lowlands, a swath of territory north of a line from Inverness to Loch Alsh remained outside the scope of the Lordship of the Isles and thus probably did not experience the full benefit of the cultural interactions with Ireland that flowered under its auspices. Areas like northern Sutherland stood at the true periphery of the Gaelic world, benefiting little from the 'high-register' cultural traditions of the medieval period — a position later reinforced by the area's early conversion to Evangelical Protestantism, which brought an exposure to a range of new southern influences.

Areas in the south and east that bordered on the Lowlands experienced a different dynamic as a result of their contact and interaction with the Lowland world. One of the most important manifestations of the intellectual interaction between Highland and Lowland Scotland is the evidence that writing systems based on Middle Scots rather than traditional Gaelic orthography were coming into effect in 'border' areas during the late medieval period, particularly for official purposes such as the drafting of legal agreements. The most famous example of such Scots-based orthography is of course the Book of the Dean of Lismore, the great poetry collection

⁴⁸Mac Eiteagáin, p. 211; John Bannerman, 'The King's Poet and the Inauguration of Alexander III', *SHR*, 68 (1989), 120-49 (p. 136) (noting the visit of Ó Domhnaill's harper to the Scottish court in 1513 and an accompanying payment to him from the royal treasury); Colm Ó Baoill, 'Some Irish Harpers in Scotland', *TGSI*, 47 (1971), 143-71 (p. 145) (noting other payments to Irish harpers from the Scots royal treasury in 1490, 1505, and 1533-34). The annals (*AU*, *AConn*, *AFM*) note Ó Domhnaill embassies to the Scottish court in, for example, 1495, 1513, and 1523.

written at Fortingall in Highland Perthshire between 1512 and 1542, but it is also used to write Gaelic placenames and personal names on or in a range of charters, contracts, and gravestones, and, more generally, in later collections of Gaelic poetry like the late seventeenth-century Fernaig manuscript.⁴⁹ Derick Thomson comments of the Dean's system that 'many Argyllshire clerics of his day must have looked askance at the Dean's system, if they knew of it, and regarded him with disfavour as a Scotticised Perthshire innovator.'⁵⁰ This is a tempting speculation, but it is impossible to know to what extent, if any, such a concept of 'Scotticisation' existed within Scottish Gaeldom.

These apparent divergences within Scottish Gaeldom are also reflected in the writings of several Lowland authors of the period, who tended to draw a distinction between different kinds of Gaels within Scotland, speaking more harshly of those Gaels who maintained a stronger attachment to Gaelic culture. The historian John Major, writing in 1521, elaborated his now-familiar distinction between 'householding Scots' (Lowlanders) and 'Wild Scots' (Highlanders) with the following comment:

One part of the Wild Scots have a wealth of cattle, sheep, and horses, and these, with a thought for the possible loss of their possessions, yield more willing obedience to the courts of law and the king. The other part of these people delight in the chase and a life of indolence. [. . .] They live upon others and follow their own worthless and savage chief in all evil courses sooner than they will pursue an honest industry.⁵¹

The most famous statement asserting such a dichotomy is that of King James VI, who wrote in his tract on kingship *Basilikon Doron* (1599) that

I shortly comprehend them al in two sorts of people: the one that dwelleth in our maine land, that are barbarous for the most parte, and yet mixed with some shewe of civilitie: the other, that dwelleth in the Iles and are alluterlie barbares, without any sorte or shewe of civilitie.⁵²

⁴⁹Dòmhnall Eachann MEEK, 'Gàidhlig is Gaylick anns na Meadhon Aoisean', in *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig*, ed. by William Gillies (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), pp. 131-45.

⁵⁰Derick S. Thomson, 'Gaelic Learned Orders', p. 68.

⁵¹John Major, *A History of Greater Britain*, ed. and trans. by Archibald Constable, Publications of the Scottish History Society, 10 (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1892), p. 49.

⁵²*The Basilikon Doron of King James VI*, ed. by James Craigie, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Scottish Texts Society, 1944, 1950), I, 71; see Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, 'An Gaidheal, A' Ghàidhlig agus A' Ghàidhealtachd anns an t-Seachdamh Linn Deug' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1997), p. 46.

That the line should be drawn between mainland and islands is extremely interesting, for it is abundantly clear from a range of sources that the political and cultural centre of Scottish Gaeldom during this era lay in the Hebrides rather than the mainland, that it was in the islands that traditional Gaelic institutions, customs, and connections were most vigorously maintained.

Ireland, in turn, had its own cultural and political division, though different in its modalities, between Gaelic Ireland and Anglo-Norman Ireland. The border, or distinction, between the two was perhaps less clear than in Scotland, partially as a result of Ireland's different geography, whereby rich land and poor land tend not to be sharply separated as in Scotland but to run up against each other, partially as a result of the process by which many Anglo-Norman lords came to adopt Gaelic language and culture, becoming '*Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*' ('more Irish than the Irish themselves') to an extent not matched in Scotland, where de-Gaelicization, when it occurred, tended to be more permanent. Gaelic Ireland was thus perhaps as much 'a state of mind'⁵³ as a distinct physical identity; but by the early sixteenth century, when the area of effective English control had shrunk considerably from its maximum in the fourteenth century, 'Gaelic Ireland' was a territorial reality to the extent that Gaelic lords held 'almost the whole of Ulster; parts of the northern Midlands and north, west, and south-east Connacht; parts of west Cork and of Kerry; the central and south Midlands; and parts of Wexford and Wicklow.'⁵⁴

Beyond this fundamental distinction, there were also important differences from region to region. Ulster, in particular, was 'in many ways different from Munster, Leinster and Connacht', according to Katharine Simms, having 'experienced far less Anglo-Norman colonisation, far less contact with urban life';⁵⁵ and it was with Ulster, both physically and culturally closer than the rest of Ireland, that Gaelic Scotland maintained its primary political links. For some parts (geographical or sectoral) of Gaelic Ireland more than others, then, Gaelic Scotland must have been a more

⁵³Katharine Simms, 'Guesting and Feasting in Gaelic Ireland', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 108 (1978), 67-100 (p. 67).

⁵⁴G.A. Hayes-McCoy, 'Gaelic Society in Ireland in the late Sixteenth Century', in *Historical Studies IV*, ed. by G.A. Hayes-McCoy (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1963), pp. 45-61 (p. 46). Steven Ellis points out that the area of English control is often understated as a result of confusion between the inner *maghere* (< Gaelic *machaire*) and the larger Pale. Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, pp. 71-72.

⁵⁵Katharine Simms, 'Gaelic Lordships in the Later Middle Ages' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, TCD, 1976), p. 789.

important feature of material reality and cultural imagination.

The vitality of Gaelic intellectual culture also varied from region to region within Gaelic Ireland during this period. Within Ulster, for example, the centre of intellectual and literary activity was to be found in the west of the province, while south-east Ulster had very little poetic tradition during the late medieval period, but then suddenly emerged as an important and vital area in the seventeenth century.⁵⁶ In contrast, although Tír Chonaill eventually became an important area of cultural activity during the late medieval period under the patronage of the Ó Domhnaills, these men of letters (including such kindreds as the Ó Sgingíns, Ó Cléirighs, Mac an Bhairds, and Ó Duinnshléibhes) were almost all brought in from other parts of Ireland in the first instance.⁵⁷ This process of cultural development under the auspices of a politically powerful kindred can be compared to the role of the Lordship of the Isles as a centre of intellectual and cultural activity that effected the migration of learned professionals from other areas, most obviously various parts of Ireland. Cultural connections were not built between 'Ireland' and 'Scotland' but between a range of specific entities and institutions — the courts of major patrons, the leading bardic schools, and so on.

Substantial evidence remains to demonstrate the specific political links that developed across Sruth na Maoile between particular kindreds and chiefs. By far the most important political role for Scottish Gaels in relation to Ireland during this period was as mercenary soldiers, an involvement discussed in detail below. There were also significant linkages by way of intermarriage and fosterage, and fairly substantial migration between the two countries, especially from the southwest of Scotland to the northeast of Ireland.

As for cultural matters, relatively little evidence remains to pinpoint the precise links and connections between the literati of Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland (a subject tackled in more detail in Chapter 3). It is not known, for example, which particular bardic schools the scions of Scottish bardic families attended, or whether these patterns shifted over time in any way. One illuminating piece of evidence in this connection is the geography of the Irish poetry contained within the Book of the Dean

⁵⁶Tomás Ó Fiaich, 'The Political and Social Background of the Ulster Poets', in *Litríocht na Gaeilge*, ed. by Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, Léachtaí Cholm Cille, 1 (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1970), 23-33 (p. 27).

⁵⁷Katharine Simms, 'Late Medieval Donegal', in *Donegal: History and Society — Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*, ed. by William Nolan, Liam Ronayne, and Mairéad Dunlevy (Dublin:

of Lismore. Donald Meek has shown that the 22 poems in the Book of the Dean composed by professional Irish poets are strongly oriented towards the north and west of Ireland, centred on the area to the south and east of Sligo.⁵⁸ It is not possible to be sure, however, whether this axis was generally the strongest link, or whether this connection was in any way specific to the Dean and his sources; or, indeed, whether this snapshot of the early sixteenth century necessarily reflects the position of other times. The circulation of manuscripts also provides interesting clues about the connections between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland. The Book of the Dean of Lismore is remarkable for containing almost as many poems attributed to Irish authors as to Scottish, and of these Irish poems at least thirteen are not found in any Irish manuscript, including eight attributed to the prominent (though non-professional) fourteenth-century poet Gearóid Iarla, Earl of Desmond (†1398).⁵⁹

Despite such tantalizing scraps of information, it remains frustratingly difficult to reconstruct a general picture. What seems clear is that the connection between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland was created and sustained by a myriad of different links — political, familial, and cultural. How this mosaic was held together, and to what extent it was ever subjected to analytical or ideological interpretation, is much more difficult to determine than tracking the minutiae.

*

One of the most important aspects of the relationship between Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland in the late medieval period was the role of West Highland military power in buttressing the position of Ireland's Gaelic chieftains against the English. In the view of Eoin MacNeill and several more recent historians, Scottish Gaelic mercenary forces represented the decisive factor that delayed an all-out English conquest of Ireland for three centuries.⁶⁰ The presence of substantial Hebridean military forces from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards, and especially following the Scottish Wars of Independence in the early fourteenth century, redressed

Geography Publications, 1995), pp. 183-202 (p. 195).

⁵⁸Donald Meek, 'The Scots-Gaelic Scribes of Medieval Perthshire: An overview of the orthography and contents of the Book of the Dean of Lismore', in *Stewart Style 1513-1542: Essays on the Court of James V*, ed. by Janet Hadley Williams (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1996), pp. 254-72 (p. 266).

⁵⁹T.F. O'Rahilly, 'Indexes to the Book of the Dean of Lismore', *SGS*, 4 (1934-35), 31-56 (p. 32).

⁶⁰Eoin MacNeill, *Phases of Irish History* (Dublin: M.H. Gill, 1937), pp. 325-26; Andrew McKerral, 'West Highland Mercenaries in Ireland', *Kintyre Antiquarian & Natural History Society Magazine*, 9 (1981), 5-15 (p. 6).

the balance of power that had previously tipped in favour of the Anglo-Normans.⁶¹ Hebridean warriors were by no means confined to campaigns of resistance against the English, however: they often fought for one Irish chief against another, or even on behalf of the English.⁶² In these critically important military and political terms, then, Scottish Gaeldom was anything but unimportant or peripheral to Irish Gaeldom during the late medieval period.

G.A. Hayes-McCoy provided a useful three-part schema of the different movements from Scotland during the late medieval period:

There were during the period [c. 1250-c. 1600] three several migrations of Scottish forces to Ireland. The first was that of the gallóglaigh [i.e. hereditary Scottish mercenaries based in Ireland, discussed below]. There is no record of the arrival of any great numbers of these later than the Bruce period. The second was that of the mercenaries of the sixteenth century. These were never referred to as gallóglaigh, they remained distinct from the older gallóglach families, and they did not settle in Ireland. The third migration was that of a section of the Clan Donald South into Antrim. This took place between the time of the coming of the gallóglaigh and the period of the general arrival of the Scots mercenaries, and the result of it was the acquisition by the MacDonalds of extensive territorial possessions in that area.⁶³

To this schema might be added a fourth movement, less tangible from the historical record but nevertheless of considerable significance, by which many Scottish Gaels from Argyll and Galloway, bearing names like Mac Cailein (i.e. Caimbeuls; anglicized as MacQuillan) and Ó Gnímh (Agnew),⁶⁴ migrated across the narrow Sruth na Maoile

⁶¹James Lydon, 'The Scottish Soldier in Medieval Ireland: The Bruce Invasion and the Galloglass', in *The Scottish Soldier Abroad 1247-1967*, ed. by Grant G. Simpson (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1992), pp. 1-15 (p. 6); Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, pp. 248-50.

⁶²For example, Mac Domhnaills fought for Toirdhealbhach Ó Domhnaill in the succession struggle (1294-1303) with his brother Aodh, who had the backing of the Mac Suibhnes (Simms, 'Late Medieval Donegal', p. 187; *AU*, *AFM* 1290); Mac Domhnaills fought for Ó Néill in various campaigns against Ó Domhnaill, who was supported by the Mac Suibhnes (e.g., *AU* 1433, *AFM* 1435, *AFM* 1582); and different branches of Clann Domhnaill fought each other on behalf of different members of the Ó Néills (*AU*, *AConn* 1366.11, *ALC*, *AFM* 1366) or various Connacht and Leinster kindreds (e.g., *AFM* 1570.)

⁶³G.A. Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces in Ireland (1565-1603)* (Dublin: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1937), p. 12.

⁶⁴George F. Black, *The Surnames of Scotland: Their Origin, Meaning, and History* (New York: New York Public Library, 1946), p. 560; Brian Ó Cuív, 'The Family of Ó Gnímh in Ireland and Scotland: A Look at the Sources', *Nomina*, 8 (1984), 57-71; Hector McDonnell, 'Agnews and O'Gnímhs', *The Glynns: Journal of the Glens of Antrim Historical Society*, 21 (1993), 13-53; Brian Ó Cuív, 'Further Comments on the Ó Gnímh Family of Co. Antrim', *SGS*, 17 (1996), 298-304. Some 'MacQuillans', however, are Mac Uighilíns, connected to the Anglo-Norman Mandeville family who settled in Antrim in the thirteenth century. Seán de Bhulbh, *Sloinnte na h-Éireann/Irish Surnames* (Faing, Co. Limerick: Comhar-Chumann Íde Naofa Teo.,

to east Ulster, from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries.

Although West Highland military involvement in Irish affairs — usually in the form of raiding of one kind or another — had been more or less continual from the sixth century onwards, and especially during the later Viking period, the pattern of involvement changed significantly after the middle of the thirteenth century, when Scottish chieftains began to enter the service of Irish chieftains, acting as mercenaries of one kind or another. The first Scottish leader recorded as fighting for an Irish king in this fashion was Domhnall mac Raghnaill mhic Somhairle (eponymous ancestor of Clann Domhnaill), described in the annals as ‘*Mac Somurli rí Airir Goidil*’ (‘king of Argyll’), killed at Ballyshannon in Tír Chonaill in 1247 while fighting on behalf of Maoilsheachlainn Ó Domhnaill against the Norman lord of Sligo, Maurice Fitzgerald.⁶⁵ Maoilsheachlainn had previously been fostered with ‘Mac Somurli’ in Argyll; the military connection can be understood as a natural outgrowth of this kinship bond. The Ó Domhnaills’ Scottish links continued in the years that followed: in 1258 Domhnall Óg Ó Domhnaill (†1282) returned to Ireland, after having been fostered with Mac Suibhne in Argyll — a homecoming celebrated in Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe’s poem beginning ‘Do-fhidir Dia Cinéal Conaill | do chur in imshníomh tar ais’ (‘God knew that the Kindred of Conall was being brought back into anxiety’).⁶⁶

Reinforcing relationships of fosterage and intermarriage provided the foundations for military connections across Sruth na Maoile in subsequent centuries. Later in the thirteenth century, for example, several marriage-alliances between Irish and Hebridean chiefs — Ó Conchobhair and Ó Domhnaill on the Irish side, branches of the Mac Domhnaills and Mac Suibhnes on the Scottish side — were contracted, with retinues of Hebridean warriors provided as dowry.⁶⁷ Marriages of Irishwomen to

1997), p. 291.

⁶⁵Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 121; *AConn* 1247.7. It is not entirely certain that the reference is to this Domhnall, who is apparently the subject of the poem beginning ‘Domhnall mac Raghnaill, rosg mall’. The battle is described in Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe’s lament for Maoilsheachlainn, ‘Do shlán uaim, a Áth Seanaigh’.

⁶⁶Published in Williams, poem 7 (§ 22c); see *id.*, pp. 283, 287. Geoffrey Barrow suggests, however, that Domhnall Óg was fostered with Dubhghall Mac Ruaidhri of Garmoran. G.W.S. Barrow, *Kingship and Unity: Scotland 1100-1306* (London: Edward Arnold, 1981), p. 107.

⁶⁷Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, pp. 121-22. For example, Domhnall Óg Ó Domhnaill (†1282) married Caiteríona, daughter of Eoin Mac Suibhne, first of that kindred to settle in Ireland. *Leabhar Chlainne Suibhne*, ed. by Paul Walsh (Dublin: Dollard, 1920), p. xvii. Similarly, an Ó Conchobhair/Mac Domhnaill marriage is recorded in *AConn*, *AFM* 1259, and an Ó Domhnaill/Mac Domhnaill union noted in *AU*, *AFM* 1290.

Scottish chiefs were also arranged, notably the celebrated marriage (c. 1300) between Aonghus Óg Mac Domhnaill († c. 1329) and Áine, daughter of Cú-maige na nGall Ó Catháin of the Ciannachta (in modern Co. Derry), for which a number of learned men were provided as dowry (the so-called *tochradh nighean a' Chathanaich*), whose progeny went on to become some of the leading lights of late medieval Gaelic Scotland.⁶⁸

'By the last decade of the thirteenth century', according to Katharine Simms, 'the employment of Scottish auxiliaries was becoming general in the northern parts of Ireland'.⁶⁹ Following on their initial presence in Ulster, the first such soldiers in Connacht were recorded in 1259,⁷⁰ and from the fifteenth century onwards, they began to be used in Munster and eventually Leinster as well, though on a somewhat smaller scale than in Ulster and Connacht.⁷¹ Significant Scottish Gaelic involvement in Munster was largely confined to the sixteenth century. Settlement upon lands formally granted by Gaelic chiefs in the early part of the century was succeeded fairly rapidly by eviction at the hands of English incomers, pursuant to an edict of 1587 imposed following the crushing of the Desmond rebellion of 1579-83, and, in many cases, by the dispersal of the mercenaries northwards to Connacht and Ulster, whence most had come in the first place.⁷²

These Scottish Gaelic mercenaries were referred to as *gallóglai* (singular *gallóglach*), conventionally translated as 'foreign warrior', but better interpreted with the more specific meaning of 'Hebridean warrior'.⁷³ The principal meaning of the term *gall* at this time tended to refer not to Anglo-Normans or 'foreigners' in general but to peoples of Scandinavian descent, of whom those in Man and the Hebrides had the most contact with Gaelic Ireland. The heavily armed *gallóglai* operated as the elite element in the Gaelic Irish fighting unit, typically being placed at the rear of a raiding force, so as to provide a defensive shelter for retreating Irish troops and bar the way to

⁶⁸RC, II, 158; Grant and Cheape, p. 111.

⁶⁹Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 122.

⁷⁰Lydon, p. 7; *ALC* 1259.

⁷¹Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 123. Reference to Scottish mercenaries (Mac Domhnaills and Mac Sithighs) in Leinster is made, for example, in *AConn* 1522.7, *AFM* 1522.

⁷²Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, pp. 59, 180.

⁷³Seán Duffy, 'Ireland and the Irish Sea Region, 1014-1318' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, TCD, 1993), p. 173 fn. 60. A similar understanding is revealed in Osborn Bergin's translation of the term '*flaith Gall*' as 'prince of the Islanders' in 'Ceannaigh duain t'athar, a Aonghas', § 15b.

the force's pursuers.⁷⁴ Their tactical role, therefore, was crucial.

Although troops continued to be supplied directly from Scotland throughout the fourteenth century and thereafter, the prevailing pattern among the *gallóglaigh* was to settle permanently in Ireland itself, on hereditary lands supplied by the chiefs they served. Such relocation proved an attractive option to younger sons of Scottish chiefs, and especially to kindreds dispossessed through political setbacks. The first use of the term *gallóglach* in Irish sources appears in 1290,⁷⁵ and then becomes steadily more common over the course of the fourteenth century. This increasing presence has been attributed to the breaking of several Argyll families in consequence of their taking the wrong side in the Wars of Independence — most notably the Mac Suibhnes and Mac Dubhghaills — and their subsequent relocation to Ireland.⁷⁶ As Katharine Simms has explained, the Wars of Independence 'had the double effect of first training the Highland nobility to take part in international warfare and then disinheriting those who had fought in opposition to the victorious Robert Bruce'; as a result, these dispossessed warlords sought out new bases in Ireland.⁷⁷

From the mid-fourteenth century onwards, more permanent relationships came to develop between *gallóglach* kindreds and the Irish lords who hired them, in contrast to the more 'freelance' system that had previously been in effect. Throughout Ireland, intermarriage between native chiefs and *gallóglach* families became commonplace — a recognition of the warriors' important status in the Gaelic Irish polity.

The most important *gallóglach* families were the Mac Domhnaills and the Mac Suibhnes, each of which came to develop permanent relationships with leading Gaelic kindreds in various parts of Ireland. As the Mac Domhnaill Lordship of the Isles reached the height of its power in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the involvement of West Highland warriors in Irish military ventures grew steadily. The Lordship's surplus military power was deployed on all sides in the ceaseless Irish conflicts — fighting for the native Irish against the English, for the English against the Irish, for one Irish chief against another.⁷⁸

⁷⁴Katharine Simms, 'Gaelic warfare in the Middle Ages', in *A military history of Ireland*, ed. by Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 99-115 (p. 112).

⁷⁵*AConn, ALC, AU* 1290.

⁷⁶McKerral, p. 7.

⁷⁷Simms, 'Late Medieval Donegal', p. 187.

⁷⁸John Bannerman, 'The Lordship of the Isles', in *Scottish Society in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by Jennifer

Traditional accounts record that Clann Domhnaill *gallóglach* in Ireland were first established when the sons of Alasdair Óg Mac Domhnaill (†1299(?)) came to Ireland following their father's forfeiture by Robert Bruce; several other leading members of the family followed later in the fourteenth century. The principal line became established in service to Ó Néill of Tyrone, with their chief, known conventionally simply as 'Mac Domhnaill Gallóglach', receiving lands in north Armagh and south Tyrone, with their main seat at Knockinclohy (Cnoc an Chluiche), in Pomeroy, Co. Tyrone.⁷⁹ Several branches, descended from Somhairle, one of the sons of Alasdair Óg, took root in Connacht: one in Roscommon (Arkillene), in service to Ó Conchobhair Ruadh, two in Sligo (Rossly and Kilglass), and seven in Mayo, principally in service to the Mac Diarmadas.⁸⁰ Still another group settled in Leinster, based principally at Tinnakill, Coolbanagher, Co. Offaly, and with further power bases at Rahin, Co. Offaly and in Co. Wicklow, in service initially to the Earls of Kildare and, after 1534, to the English Crown.⁸¹

The Mac Suibhnes established their principal base in Tír Chonaill in service to the Ó Domhnaills. Three separate lines took root in different parts of Tír Chonaill: Fánad (the senior line), established by Eoin Mac Suibhne (subject of the important poem 'Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne', discussed above) in the late thirteenth century, Trí Tuatha, and Tír Boghaine.⁸² Other septs, descended from Murchadh Mear Mac Suibhne (*fl.* c. 1340(?)), expanded into Sligo, Roscommon, Clanricard, Thomond, Desmond, and Ormond, where they served the families of Ó Conchobhair Donn, Mac Donnchadha, De Búrca, Ó Briain, Mac Carrthaigh of Músgraihe, Mac Carrthaigh of Cairbre, and Butléir.⁸³

M. Brown (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), pp. 209-40.

⁷⁹ Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 26; A. MacDonald & A. MacDonald, *The Clan Donald*, 3 vols (Inverness: Northern Counties Publishing Co., 1896), II, 83-84, 88-92; Simms, 'Gaelic warfare in the Middle Ages', p. 112; *AFM* 1523. Note that sources disagree in identifying the precise lineage, and that the pedigrees of Clann Domhnaill in Tír Eoghain are exceptionally confused. Hayes-McCoy, p. 26; Walsh, *Irish Chiefs and Leaders*, pp. 88-98; *RC*, II, 158.

⁸⁰ Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 29; Fiona Anne MacDonald, 'Ireland and Scotland: Historical Perspectives on the Gaelic Dimension, 1560-1760' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Glasgow, 1994), p. 87. Mac Diarmada service is recorded in *AConn* 1398.24, *ALC* 1398; *AConn* 1405.15, *ALC* 1405; and *ALC* 1554.

⁸¹ *AFM* 1570; Kenneth Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages*, The Gill History of Ireland, 4 (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972), p. 89.

⁸² Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 30.

⁸³ Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, pp. 31-33; Walsh, *Leabhar Chlainne Suibhne*, pp. xxxvii, xl, xlii; *AConn* 1464.20, 1474.12.

Other important *gallóglach* families included the Mac Dubhghaills, another kindred of north Argyll origin, whose main connection was to the Mac Diarmadas in Roscommon,⁸⁴ but who also served the families of Mag Raghnaill, Ó Conchobhair Ruadh, and Ó Conchobhair Donn;⁸⁵ the Mac Ruairís, a branch of Clann Domhnaill, based in Connacht in service to, among others, the Ó Conchobhairs;⁸⁶ the Mac Síthighs, first attested in the north but based at Lisnacullia (Lios na Coille), Coonagh, Co. Limerick, after 1420, in service to the Earls of Desmond;⁸⁷ and the Mac Cábas, first attested in 1368, who were based in Fermanagh, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan, and Meath, and served, among others, the Mag Uidhirs, MacMahons, Ó Ruaircs, and Ó Raghallaighs.⁸⁸ Migration to Ireland was often wholesale: several of these families — most notably the Mac Cábas — appear to have left little or no trace in Scotland.⁸⁹

Significantly, even though in many cases no link to Scotland was maintained, these military families of Scottish origin generally did not assimilate entirely into Irish Gaelic society. The *gallóglach* families tended to preserve their distinctiveness as hereditary warriors — over the course of three centuries and more in some instances. The *gallóglach* retained their kinship structures and fought as a unit under their own chief, thereby avoiding the disciplinary problems that sometimes arose with native Irish troops.⁹⁰ The continuity of the martial tradition was striking: for example, during their more than three hundred years in Ireland prior to the English conquest of Ulster, the Mac Suibhnes always remained professional military commanders, and never shifted to a more conventional model of lordship.⁹¹ At the same time, however, *gallóglach* families came to have substantial importance within the political structures of Gaelic Ireland. The Mac Suibhnes participated in political councils in Tír Chonaill to the same extent as the local Gaelic lords like the Ó Baoills and Ó Dochartaighs, and the head of the senior branch of the family, Mac Suibhne Fánad, underwent inauguration by Ó Domhnaill himself at the Ó Domhnaills' traditional inauguration site of

⁸⁴ Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 66; Fiona MacDonald, p. 29; *AConn* 1520.9.

⁸⁵ *AConn* 1377.9, 1462.13, 1471.10, 1477.7, 1522.2, 1527.22; *AFM* 1528, 1570; *ALC* 1557.

⁸⁶ E.g. *AConn* 1316.3, *AFM* 1316; *AFM* 1342.

⁸⁷ Fiona MacDonald, p. 29; *AConn* 1367.7, *AFM* 1367; *AFM* 1600.

⁸⁸ Simms, 'Gaelic warfare in the Middle Ages', p. 112; *AConn* 1358.5, 1403.11, 1405.15, 1413.9, 1434.7; *AClon* 1394.

⁸⁹ Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 34.

⁹⁰ Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 121.

⁹¹ Simms, 'Late Medieval Donegal', p. 188.

Professional genealogists endeavoured to discover — an endeavour that tended to involve creativity and imagination as much as straightforward research — connections between the *gallóglach* families and illustrious Irish progenitors. Most families were thus tied to the Oirghialla, the prominent group of south Ulster kindreds purportedly descended from the great Colla Dhá Chríoch; the Mac Suibhnes were linked to the Uí Néill. This process brought about an important interweaving into Irish tradition that served to solidify the place of the *gallóglach* in Irish Gaelic society.⁹³ As discussed in Chapter 4, genealogy was also used to connect Scottish Gaels who remained in Scotland to ancient Gaelic tradition.

Unfortunately, there is little direct evidence that survives to show Irish perceptions of these Hebridean warriors. One of the most striking descriptions is relatively late, coming from Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh's early seventeenth century *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill* (Life of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill), in an account of the arrival in Derry of a thousand Mac Leòid and Mac Domhnaill warriors from Skye in 1594:

Ba suaichnidh on ietsomh hi tré chumuscc Fer Fene la saine a narm 7 a nerraidh a naladh 7 a nerlabhra ar asedh ba hédgudh dhóibh dianechtair breacbruit ioldathacha i forciupal gó nesccativ 7 oircnib a ccresa tara náirdnibh allamuigh dia mbrataibh drong dhoibh co ccloidhmhibh benndornchuir itiet móra mileta ósa fformaibh. Ba héiccen don laech a dhi laimh do thabhairt i naon fhabhall ind undurn a chloidimh an tan no benadh a béim de. Araill dhíobh fo bfíodhbhacaibh féthshnoightibh feidhmnertmhara go sreangshnáithibh secrighni siothchnáipe 7 go saighdibh srúibhgéra siainteacha.

(They were recognized among the Irish soldiers by the distinction of their arms and clothing, their habits and language, for their exterior dress was mottled cloaks of many colours with a fringe to their shins and calves, their belts were over their loins outside their cloaks. Many of them had swords with hafts of horn, large and warlike, over their shoulders. It was necessary for the soldier to grip the very haft of his sword with both hands when he would strike a blow with it. Others of them had bows of carved wood strong for use, with well seasoned strings of hemp, and arrows sharp-pointed, whizzing in flight.)⁹⁴

⁹²Simms, 'Late Medieval Donegal', p. 188.

⁹³Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 123.

⁹⁴*Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill as Leabhar Lughaidh Uí Chléirigh (The Life of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill transcribed from the Book of Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh)*, ed. by Paul Walsh, 2 vols, Irish Texts, 42-43

*Gallóglai*gh are occasionally mentioned in the poetry of the period describing chiefs' military campaigns.⁹⁵ A vivid and telling description is given in Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn's poem to Brian na Múrtha Ó Ruairc (†1591) beginning 'D'fhior chogaidh comhailtear síothcháin' ('To the warlike man peace is observed'), where Clann Domhnaill are enumerated in a list of allies who will accompany Brian to attack the English:

*Clann Domhnaill leis líon a dtionóil,
mar tiad dairghe ós doireadhaibh,
d'fhianaibh Fhódla, d'amhsain Íle
gasraidh shídhe shoineamhail.*

The Clann Domhnaill will be with him in their full strength, like oaks towering above the groves, a gay and wondrous band of the soldiery of Fódla, the mercenaries of Islay.⁹⁶

A different aspect of the *gallóglach* presence — the expense of their maintenance and its burdensomeness on both chief and tenant — is described in Niall Ó hUiginn's poem to Tomás Mag Shamhradhain (†1343) beginning 'Díoth cruídh coire Tomás' ('Devourers of wealth are the cauldrons of Tomás'):

*Do bhiathadh fhear n-Alban
is eachtrann n-iath n-Uladh
[biadh] gon chraoibh shuairc shuilbhir
n-a bruighnibh do bhunadh.*

For feeding the men of Scotland [*gallóglai*gh] and the strangers in Ulster's lands, this bright gay prince stores food permanently in his castles (§ 6)⁹⁷

Alan Bruford has suggested a different way in which the *gallóglach* presence in late medieval Ireland is manifested and re-imagined in literature — the motif of the *teach na n-amhus* or 'house of the mercenaries', which becomes a stock episode of the prose romances of the period. *Teach na n-amhus* provides the setting for an exaggerated, set-piece confrontation, with the hero eventually disposing of the mercenaries, who are conventionally depicted as '*milites gloriosi*' and 'ferocious savages'.⁹⁸ There is no doubt that the *gallóglai*gh were an expensive burden — a

(Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1948), I, 70-71.

⁹⁵E.g. 'Decair comhall don chumaidh' ('Sorrow is difficult to satisfy') (anonymous, c. 1464-99) (to Philip Hackett of Ballysheehan, Co. Tipperary), § 35a-b (published in Anne O'Sullivan and Pádraig Ó Riain, eds., *Poems on Marcher Lords from a sixteenth-century Tipperary manuscript*, Irish Texts, 53 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1987), poem 4).

⁹⁶Published in *TD*, poem 16 (§ 55).

⁹⁷Published in Lambert McKenna, 'Some Irish Bardic Poems', no. 65, *Studies*, 32 (1943), 116-21, and in McKenna, *The Book of Magauran*, poem 26 (ll. 3524-3655 (ll. 3544-47)).

⁹⁸Alan Bruford, *Gaelic Folktales and Mediaeval Romances: A study of the Early Modern Irish 'Romantic Tales' and their oral derivatives* (Dublin: Folklore of Ireland Society, 1969), p. 15.

burden borne by the mass of the population — and there is little reason to believe they were much loved.

*

The second stage of migration from the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*, according to Hayes-McCoy, began in the 1420s and 1430s onwards, and reached its height in the sixteenth century, when Scottish mercenaries began to be supplied directly from Scotland and deployed on a short-term basis, typically the summer period between the sowing season and the harvest.⁹⁹ The usual English term for these mercenaries was 'redshanks'; in the Irish annals they were usually referred to simply as '*Albanaigh*'.¹⁰⁰ Such warriors — who became more freely available still in the wake of the collapse of the Lordship of the Isles at the end of the fifteenth century — could be taken on in larger numbers since, unlike the more traditional *gallóglaigh*, they did not expect to receive lands in payment.¹⁰¹ This new wave of Scottish mercenaries, moreover, could often be hired on the shortest of notice, often by the expedient of lighting fires on the northern Irish coast as a signal to make the journey across.¹⁰² The flexibility of this new military resource meant that the use of these new mercenaries became a significant new element in Irish warfare of the period.

Intermarriage between Scottish and Irish kindreds continued, indeed intensified, during the redshank period, with contingents of Scottish soldiers being supplied as the standard dowry. Some 1,200 warriors (400-500 Caimbeuls, 700 Mac Domhnaills) were provided as dowry for the marriage in 1569 between Lady Agnes Caimbeul and Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill (†1595); even larger was the retinue provided in connection with the marriage that same day of Fionnghuala inghean Shéamais Nic Dhomhnaill, '*An Inghean Dubh*' ('the Dark Maiden') to Aodh Ó Domhnaill (†1600).¹⁰³ Leading Gaelic Irish kindreds also contracted important

⁹⁹ Simms, 'Gaelic Lordships in the Later Middle Ages', p. 591; *AFM* 1433.

¹⁰⁰ E.g. *AFM* 1433, 1461, 1522, 1524, 1528, 1534, 1537, 1540, 1542. The distinction between *gallóglaigh*, with an established base in Ireland, and *Albanaigh*, supplied directly from Scotland, is sometimes made explicit, as in *AConn* 1465 and *ALC* 1561 and 1562.

¹⁰¹ Hiram Morgan, 'The end of Gaelic Ulster: a thematic interpretation of events between 1534 and 1610', *Irish Historical Studies*, 26 (1988), 8-32 (p. 16).

¹⁰² Fiona MacDonald, pp. 41 and 90 fn. 75.

¹⁰³ Simms, 'Late Medieval Donegal', p. 189; Katharine Simms, 'Women in Gaelic Society during the Age of Transition', in *Women in Early Modern Ireland*, ed. by Margaret MacCurtain and Mary O'Dowd (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), pp. 32-42 (p. 35). In 1560 An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill (†1566) had married Janet, widow of Eachann Óg Mac Gill-Eathain and sister of Giolla-Easbuig, fifth Earl of

marriages during this period with the Mac Gill-Eathains, the third principal clan in the southern Hebrides.¹⁰⁴ The political aspects of such marriages were more immediately visible when the bride was Scottish, for warriors would be used as dowry, but several important marriages between Irish noblewomen and Scottish chiefs, whose political ramifications would be more in the nature of longer-term alliances, were also arranged.¹⁰⁵ By no means did these marriages have to be lifetime affairs; unions were readily dissolved, and it was common for a chief to take three or four wives during his lifetime, thus adding to the flexibility of marriage as an instrument of political and military strategy. As in previous centuries, moreover, fosterage also continued to be used to cement political alliances.¹⁰⁶ All these mechanisms served to reinforce the connection between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland in general, and, more specifically, between a number of the most prominent kindreds.

Intermarriage became far less common after the early seventeenth century, however, when the final conquest of Ireland obviated the established role of Hebridean military power, and it became more important to make links to the new political order. The various branches of Clann Domhnaill South appear to be the only kindred that continued to form Irish connections in this way, and even here the practice came to an

Argyll (†1575), with a dowry of 1,000 or 2,000 warriors (MacKechnie, p. 95, *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, 1509-1573*, ed. by Hans Claude Hamilton (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1860), p. 159 (March 8, 1560). Rather more tangled were the involvements of Seaán Ó Néill (†1567), who married Catriona, illegitimate daughter of Seumas Mac Domhnaill of Dunyveg, and in 1561 'captured' Catherine Nic Gill-Eathain, widow of the Earl of Argyll, who bore him three sons, one of them, Hugh Geimhleach, later fostered with his uncle Lachlan Mac Gill-Eathain of Duart. MacDonald, pp. 49-50.

¹⁰⁴E.g., *AFM 1577* (death of Meadhbh inghean Aodha Ní Dhomhnaill, first married to Mac Gill-Eathain).

¹⁰⁵For example, Somhairle Buidhe Mac Domhnaill (†1590) was married first to Máire (†1582), daughter of Conn Bacach Ó Néill (†1559), and then, shortly before his death, to a daughter of Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill; one of Somhairle Buidhe's sons was married to another of Toirdhealbhach Luineach's daughters in 1579, and another to Máire, daughter of Féilim Ó Néill of Clann Aodha Buidhe; Alice, daughter of Aodh Ruadh Ó Néill, first Earl of Tyrone (†1616) married Ragnall Mac Domhnaill, first earl of Antrim (†1636), and another of Aodh Ruadh's daughters married Ragnall's brother Seumas. Fiona MacDonald, p. 618; Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 343 (Genealogy II); *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1588, August-1592, September*, ed. by Hans Claude Hamilton (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1885), pp. 63-64 (October 27, 1588); *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1574-1586*, ed. by Hans Claude Hamilton (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1867), p. 163 (March 30, 1579); *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1596, July-1597, December*, ed. by Ernest George Atkinson (London: HMSO, 1893), p. 448 (November 12, 1597).

¹⁰⁶Among other fosterage agreements, Aonghas Mac Domhnaill of Dunyveg and the Glens fostered the eldest son of Aodh Ruadh Ó Néill, Earl of Tyrone from 1596 onwards (Atkinson, *Calendar of State Papers, 1596-1597*, p. 33 (July 10, 1596) and p. 249 (March 24, 1597)), and Gill-easbuig Fiacail mac Colla Maoil Duibh Mac Domhnaill, nephew of Somhairle Buidhe and father of the famous Colla Ciotach, was fostered with an Ó Catháin chief near Coleraine, and eventually married his daughter (Hill, p. 52).

end after the wars of the 1640s.¹⁰⁷ The dissolution of these kinds of links after several centuries' tradition is an important signal of the collapse of the traditional Gaelic order.

*

Although a *gallóglach* presence had been established earlier in the fourteenth century, the connection between Clann Domhnaill and Ireland took on a different aspect after the end of the fourteenth century, when territories in north Antrim were acquired by virtue of the marriage between Iain Mór Mac Domhnaill (son of Eoin, first Lord of the Isles († c. 1386) and brother of Domhnall, second Lord of the Isles († c. 1423)) to Máire Biséd (Marjorie Bisset), heiress of the Anglo-Norman Bisset family that had taken control of the area in the thirteenth century. These Irish lands increased in size and importance over time, particularly during the sixteenth century, as a result of the collapse of the Lordship of the Isles and successful campaigns of conquest and expansion by the Mac Domhnaills in northeast Ulster.

The breakdown of the Lordship of the Isles resulted in substantial migration from the Hebrides to Ulster from the late fifteenth century onwards, particularly to the north Antrim territories held by Clann Iain Mhóir. This development — the third stage in Hayes-McCoy's schema — had both a political and a material aspect. The breakup of the Lordship of the Isles had brought about instabilities and dispossessions, so that members of various branches of Clann Domhnaill, and of the many kindreds previously subsidiary to them, were eager to seek out new lands in Ireland. This process began in the wake of the forfeiture of Lordship lands in Knapdale, Kintyre, and Ross in 1476,¹⁰⁸ and intensified during the sixteenth century. As elsewhere in Europe, the Hebridean climate took a turn for the worse around 1550 onwards, ushering in an era of poor weather that lasted until the early nineteenth century. The Hebrides and West Highlands were economically and agriculturally marginal at the best of times, and this decline may well have made migration to Ireland, a somewhat more climatically and agriculturally favoured land, an attractive option.¹⁰⁹ Northeast Ulster was, moreover, the emptiest part of Ireland, which was at this time severely

¹⁰⁷Fiona MacDonald, p. 634. The only significant marriage contracted by a member of Clann Domhnaill North with an Irish family during this period was that between Ragnall mac Ailein Mac Domhnaill of Benbecula (†1636) and Fionnsgoth de Búrca of Galway, in approximately 1600.

¹⁰⁸Fiona MacDonald, p. 32 (citing Hill, pp. 27-32, 35).

¹⁰⁹MacLean-Bristol, p. 134.

underpopulated by European standards.¹¹⁰

This Mac Domhnaill consolidation in northeast Ulster was also manifested in territorial expansionism. Moving out from their base in the Glens, in the very northeast of Antrim, Clann Domhnaill acquired, during the 1550s, territory around the mouth of the Bann known as the Route (*an Rúta*), and made additional gains further south along the coast of Antrim and Down, lands formerly held by the Ó Néills of Clann Aodha Buidhe.¹¹¹

The increasing Scottish presence in northeast Ulster from the early sixteenth century onwards had a disruptive impact on Ulster politics, for it meant that a large number of trained troops were available on much shorter notice than before, a factor that contributed to a general intensification of militarization in the province.¹¹² An 'arms race' of sorts was particularly evident in Tír Eoghain, where the Ó Néills responded to the hiring of Scots mercenaries by their enemies by increasing taxes on their own subjects and redoubling their own military preparations.¹¹³

The scale of Scottish Gaelic military power is somewhat difficult to calculate. Estimates range as high as almost 50,000 Hebridean soldiers in Ireland in the late sixteenth century: 8,000 *gallóglaigh* in the service of Ó Néill, several thousand more *gallóglaigh* in service to other chiefs, and some 35,000 redshanks.¹¹⁴ This figure, however, seems grossly inflated, considering the size of the overall Hebridean population at the time, which totalled perhaps 45,000.¹¹⁵ The English government's espionage network estimated in 1593 that there were almost 7,000 men ready for war in the Western Isles, a number which did not, however, include further warriors in the adjacent mainland districts.¹¹⁶

By any reckoning, the leading Scottish kindreds were massively powerful forces in the military and political dynamics of the region — forces that certainly could not be ignored or marginalized. At the height of its power in the fourteenth and

¹¹⁰K.W. Nicholls, *Land, Law and Society in Sixteenth-Century Ireland* (O'Donnell Lecture, University College Cork, 1976), p. 9.

¹¹¹Fiona MacDonald, p. 35.

¹¹²Ciaran Brady, *Shane O'Neill* (Dublin: Historical Association of Ireland, 1996), p. 12.

¹¹³Brady, p. 13.

¹¹⁴Lydon, p. 12 (citing Donal Dorrian, "'The Cockpit of Ireland': Northwest Ulster 1540-1603" (unpublished B.A. thesis, TCD, 1985), p. 5).

¹¹⁵Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 357.

¹¹⁶Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, pp. 356-57; Allan I. MacInnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the*

fifteenth centuries, when it 'was far larger and stronger than any of the chieftaincies' of Gaelic Ireland,¹¹⁷ the Lordship of the Isles was an immensely important military and political force, as manifested not only by its turbulent relationship with the Scottish monarchy but by its direct involvement in diplomacy with the kings of England, who recognized its preeminence in the region.¹¹⁸ The Earls of Argyll in turn became the dominant military force in the region during the sixteenth century, capable of raising a force of 5,000 mercenaries, indeed more in a genuine emergency. Only the kings of Scotland and England could muster armies of such size, and indeed, when the fifth Earl of Argyll (†1575) offered the English government 3,000 men to assist with its Irish campaigns, that was twice the size of the English army stationed in Ireland at the time.¹¹⁹ A substantial inventory of heavy artillery backed up this land power, and the Caimbeuls' sea-power was especially impressive: the location of their fleet, and the design of its vessels, was such that they maintained effective control of the entire Irish Sea.¹²⁰

Although closely bound up with the Scottish crown, and committed to the Protestant faith from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards, the Caimbeuls nevertheless played an active role in providing military support to Gaelic Irish chieftains, perhaps most notably in supporting An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill in 1555 with a force of five hundred men, under the command of the son of the Earl of Argyll himself, together with a powerful cannon, the so-called 'Crooked Gun'.¹²¹ Much of this force thereupon remained in Ireland, entering into the service of the De Búrca

House of Stuart, 1603-1788 (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1996), p. 57.

¹¹⁷Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, p. 245.

¹¹⁸Hugh Kearney, *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 98 (diplomatic mission of Richard II, 1388); John Bannerman, 'The Lordship of the Isles: Historical Background', in K.A. Steer and John Bannerman, *Late Medieval Monumental Sculpture in the West Highlands* (Edinburgh: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, 1977), pp. 201-13 ('Treaty of Westminster-Ardtornish', 1462); *Acts of the Lords of the Isles, 1336-1493*, ed. by Jean Munro and R.W. Munro, Publications of the Scottish Historical Society, 4th series, 22 (Edinburgh: Scottish Historical Society, 1986), pp. 111-16.

¹¹⁹Jane Dawson, 'The Fifth Earl of Argyll, Gaelic Lordship and Political Power in Sixteenth Century Scotland', *SHR*, 67 (1988), 1-27 (p. 3).

¹²⁰Dawson, 'The Fifth Earl of Argyll', pp. 5-6.

¹²¹The arrangement is set out in a formal contract, memorialized in both Gaelic and Scots. See John MacKechnie, 'Treaty Between Argyll and O'Donnell', *SGS*, 7 (1953), 94-102. The embassy is also recorded in *AFM* 1555, and in the poem composed by Ó Domhnaill's *ollamh*, 'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg' ('It is fitting for an *ollamh* to journey on an embassy') (NLS Adv. MS 72.2.2 (unpublished; transcript in CW 137B, pp. 146-48, 132-38)).

family in Clanrickard.¹²² Later, Giolla-Easbuig mac Dubhghaill Caimbeul joined Mac Domhnaill leaders on a campaign in Connacht in 1586, which culminated in calamitous defeat at Ardnaree (in modern Co. Mayo).¹²³

As the Elizabethan conquest of Ireland progressed in the closing decades of the sixteenth century, West Highland military power continued to play a vital role in backing up the remaining independent Gaelic chiefs. Irish military service appears to have been a way of life throughout the Hebrides during this period, and not simply amongst the principal clans; members of subsidiary kindreds would often fight in Ireland under the leadership of the major clans. Clann Domhnaill South, for example, would hire not only members of the various branches of Clann Domhnaill North but also Mac a' Phìs of Colonsay, Mac Alasdairs of Loup, Mac Aoidhs of Kintyre, and Mac Néills of Gigha; the Mac Gill-Eathains would hire Mac Guaires of Ulva, Mac Néills of Barra, and Mac Fhionghuins of Strath and Mishnish.¹²⁴

Only the final breaking of the native Irish chiefs in the early years of the seventeenth century — a breaking marked out by the successive impact of the Battle of Kinsale (1602), the Treaty of Mellifont (1603), and the Flight of the Earls (1607) — coupled with the accompanying series of repressive measures, including the Statutes of Iona (1608), imposed by the newly joined kingdoms of England and Scotland, did this tradition of military service come to an end. The Plantation of Ulster, beginning in 1609, served as a wedge between Irish and Scottish Gaeldom, and mutual military involvements declined greatly from then onwards, with the notable exception of the 1640s. This political transformation was accompanied by a range of cultural separations, as discussed in Chapter 5. Before that process of breakdown is considered, however, the cultural dynamics of the classical period — which corresponds fairly closely with the era of Scottish Gaelic military involvement in post-Norman Ireland — will be discussed in detail.

¹²² Ó Mainnín, p. 6.

¹²³ *AFM* 1586.

¹²⁴ Fiona MacDonald, p. 41.

Chapter 2

Literary and Intellectual Culture Within the Gaelic World

One of the most basic problems that complicates the study of Gaelic Scotland in the late medieval period is the dearth of surviving Gaelic writings from Scotland, especially writings of a literary nature. This dearth of source material is obviously a significant obstacle to the study and interpretation of cultural outlooks; but at the same time the very fact of this lack is a hugely important issue in itself, demanding explanation. Possible explanations may, in turn, give valuable indicators of the nature of Scottish Gaelic culture and its place within the broader Gaelic world. This chapter will attempt to assess the dynamics of literary and intellectual culture in Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland, and to mark out the nature of their interaction.

The volume of Scottish bardic poetry is minuscule in comparison to the corpus surviving from Ireland, as is the extant pre-classical literary evidence from the earlier centuries of Gaelic settlement in Scotland.¹ Only about 160 items of bardic poetry from Scotland have been uncovered to date, with more than half of them dating from the period between 1450 and 1550, an imbalance resulting from the concentration of poems from that era contained in the Book of the Dean of Lismore.² Of these 160 items, only about half can be considered panegyric in nature — the rest being religious or broadly ‘miscellaneous’, and having little to say about matters of political or cultural relations — and more than twenty of these approximately eighty poems date from the second half of the seventeenth century or later, when political and cultural relations with Ireland were becoming severely frayed. In contrast, more than two thousand bardic poems from Ireland are known to survive, their weight falling somewhat later than the Scottish material, with only about half of the corpus dating from earlier than 1566.³ A great deal of work remains to be done in this field, however; many hundreds of poems remain unedited and unpublished, and the analysis presented here can only be

¹See Kathleen Hughes, ‘Where are the writings of early Scotland?’, in *Celtic Britain in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Scottish and Welsh sources*, ed. by David Dumville (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1980), pp. 1-21.

²Derick S. Thomson, ‘The Poetic Tradition in Gaelic Scotland’, in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by D. Ellis Evans, John G. Griffith, and E.M. Jope (Oxford: Jesus College, 1983), pp. 121-32 (p. 122 and endnote 5).

³Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 4.

tentative, based on the bare evidence of manuscript catalogues of various degrees of reliability and in various stages of completion.⁴

Even with the relatively later chronological distribution of the Irish material, the volume of Irish material is far greater at every stage of the classical era. The disparity is probably most striking with regard to the fourteenth century: well over seventy-five poems dateable from this era survive from Ireland,⁵ compared to only one known from Scotland — ‘Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne’ (c. 1310) — composed for a Scottish chief or by a Scottish poet. The imbalance between the surviving Scottish material and the Irish poems is a reflection of the broader imbalance in the classical Gaelic manuscripts that survive from the two countries — perhaps a hundred from Scotland compared to several thousand from Ireland.⁶

Without question, a huge quantity of poetry has been lost on both sides: James Carney estimated that a professional poet would compose at least ten poems a year, so that one might expect such a poet to have produced as many as four or five hundred poems over the course of a lengthy and successful career.⁷ In no case, however, do even a hundred poems survive from any single poet of the classical era. The best-represented may be Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird (*fl.* c. 1577-1618), from whom some sixty poems survive as the fruits of a lengthy career, and Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, murdered in 1591 at the age of forty or forty-one, but from whom some fifty poems survive. The pattern of what has survived is almost freakish. For example, the Book of the Dean of Lismore itself — without which the corpus of surviving panegyric poetry from Scotland would be diminished by almost half — was ‘discovered’, and possibly saved from oblivion, by James MacPherson in the late eighteenth century. Similarly, some of the work of Scottish bardic poets exists only in Irish sources,

⁴Simms estimates that approximately one-third of these Irish poems remain unpublished, Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 4, and the proportion of unpublished Scottish material is probably higher still.

⁵This figure includes the poems published in the following sources: Gearóid Mac Niocaill, ‘Duanairé Ghearóid Iarla’, *Studia Hibernica*, 3 (1963), 7-60 (30 poems); McKenna, *The Book of Magauran* (25); *DD* (3); *AD* (5); and *IBP* (3). There are a substantial number of unpublished poems as well, including eight attributed to Gearóid Iarla in the Book of the Dean of Lismore.

⁶Ronald Black, ‘The Gaelic manuscripts of Scotland’, in *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a’ Ghàidhlig*, ed. by William Gillies (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), pp. 146-74 (p. 168). Black gives a total figure of 138, which includes a substantial number that are partly or wholly of Irish rather than Scottish origin.

⁷James Carney, ‘Society and the Bardic Poet’, *Studies*, 62 (1973), 233-50 (p. 236). In contrast, the author of ‘Domhnall mac Raghnaill, rosg mall’ — only 18 stanzas in length — claims (§ 18c) that its composition took two entire seasons. This could be a mere rhetorical flourish, however, and the poet could of course have been working on other poems at the time.

sometimes in a single Munster manuscript: none of the seventeenth-century poet Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin's four surviving poems are to be found in Scottish manuscripts, but since these poems were composed in Ireland on behalf of Irish patrons or mentors this is perhaps not especially surprising. More remarkable is the preservation of Eóin Óg Ó Muirgheasáin's celebrated elegy for Ruairidh Mór Mac Leòid (†1626) beginning 'Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois' ('A ruination for the Gaels in the churchyard of Ross') only in three Munster manuscripts from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the later versions evidently copied from the first.⁸

This great imbalance necessarily means that bardic verse is a much less substantial source of insights into the history and culture of Gaelic Scotland than of Gaelic Ireland; yet a wide range of scholars have noted the significant limitations of the Irish material, hugely more extensive though it is. These problems are discussed in the next chapter, prefacing a detailed discussion of the images and ideas about Scotland and Ireland that appear in bardic poetry.

*

The disparity in the volume of material surviving from Ireland and Scotland is so striking that explanation must surely be required. Theories fall into three obvious categories: first, that the bulk of the Scottish material has been lost or destroyed; second, that bardic poetry was never composed in Scotland in a volume comparable to Ireland; and third, that bardic poetry in Scotland, although composed extensively in the first instance, was not preserved in manuscript form with the faithfulness of the Irish material.

Statements of the first view have been common for some time. As far back as 1805, the *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland Appointed to Inquire into the Nature of the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian* commented that

After the destruction of *Icolmkill* [Iona] [during the Reformation], Ireland sheltered and preserved that learning which Scotland in a great measure lost; and thence in Ireland are to be found numerous historical documents and records, which the antiquarian looks for in vain among any archives or collections of antiquities in Scotland.⁹

⁸Published in John MacDonald, 'An Elegy for Ruaidhrí Mór', *SGS*, 8 (1955-58), 27-52; see T.F. O'Rahilly, 'A Hiberno-Scottish Family (Ó Muirgheasáin, Morrison)', *SGS*, 5 (1942), 101-05 (p. 103). The manuscripts are RIA MS 23 N 12 (Mícheál Ó Longáin, Carraig na bhFear, Co. Cork, c. 1763), Maynooth Murphy MS 2 (3 C 2) (Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, Co. Cork, 1818), and RIA MS F i 12 (Peattair Ó Longáin, Co. Cork, 1820).

⁹MacKenzie, *Highland Society Report on Ossian*, pp. 47-48.

Some modern writers have made more extreme assertions and phrased them in more extreme terms. Mike Kennedy, for example, contends that ‘Protestant zealots’ burned ‘several wagon loads of Gaelic Christian manuscripts’ at Iona during the Reformation, and that Finlaggan, seat of the Lords of the Isles, was razed in 1493 ‘and all the Gaelic records destroyed in an effort to obliterate any sign that the Lordship ever existed’.¹⁰ Peter Berresford Ellis posits similar destruction of Gaelic manuscripts and libraries — in Skye and elsewhere — amidst what he describes as ‘the genocidal fanaticism of the Scottish Reformation’,¹¹ while Benjamin Hudson speaks of ‘the deliberate destruction of, and flight of Gaelic manuscripts from Scotland [. . .] after the failure of the Jacobite risings of the eighteenth century, when the possession of such materials would warrant a sentence of death’.¹²

Above and beyond any difficulties on points of detail, such a view is not particularly plausible as a general proposition. To succeed as an explanation, it must be shown not simply that destruction took place, but that this destruction was substantially more sweeping and devastating in Scotland than in Ireland. On this point the theory founders. The collapse of the old Gaelic order in Ireland happened considerably earlier and more violently in Ireland than in Scotland, where the traditional system of poetic composition and patronage survived, in vestigial form at least, into the eighteenth century. The upheaval of seventeenth-century Ireland would hardly have provided a healthy environment for the preservation of manuscripts and other antique materials; and in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the Irish language suffered a decline thirteen times more rapid in Ireland than that of Gaelic in Scotland, ‘Irish manuscripts, formerly held in high regard, were thrown out as rubbish, used to wrap groceries, cut up for tailors’ patterns, dismembered to provide

¹⁰Mike Kennedy, ‘Is leis an Tighearna an talamh agus an làn: the Scottish Gaelic settlement history of Prince Edward Island’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1995), pp. 80, 78. No evidence is cited to support these claims.

¹¹Peter Berresford Ellis, *The Celtic Revolution: A Study in Anti-Imperialism* (Talybont, Ceredigion: Y Lolfa, 1985), p. 40; Peter Berresford Ellis, *MacBeth: High King of Scotland 1040-57* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1990), pp. 18, 109, 113.

¹²Benjamin T. Hudson, *Prophecy of Berchán: Irish and Scottish High-Kings of the Early Middle Ages* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), p. 120. No evidence is cited to support this claim. While there was significant loss of manuscript material as a result of government repression following the Forty-five, no legal mechanism was put in place that would have allowed such ‘sentences of death’. See James A. Stewart, Jr., ‘Lost Highland Manuscripts and the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745-46’, in *Celtic Connections: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by Ronald Black, William Gillies, and Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1999), pp. 287-308.

ornamentation for scrap books, given to children to scribble on, and burnt in superstitious ignorance as books of black magic'.¹³ Indeed, as early as 1627, Conall Mac Eochagáin, translator of the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, complained that the scions of traditional learned families 'neglect their Bookes [. . .] in soe much that some of them suffer Taylors to cutt the leaves of the said Books (which their auncestors held in great accoumpt), and slice them in long peeces to make their measures off'.¹⁴ The dissolution of the Irish monasteries — which, unlike their Lowland Scottish counterparts, would certainly have held substantial collections of Gaelic material — in the sixteenth century also had a serious disruptive impact: the protestant Bishop of Ossory, John Bale, complained to Henry VIII that the new owners of monastic buildings used the library books to scour their candlesticks and rub their boots.¹⁵

On the other hand, the relatively earlier collapse of the Gaelic order in Ireland meant that strictly *cultural* repression in Ireland after the middle of the seventeenth century was less intense than in Gaelic Scotland, where the Gaelic chiefs continued to pose a major military threat to the British state until 1746. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the native Irish population was substantially assimilated to English control, and paradoxically, this meant that Gaelic culture, in the form of both new, popular literary activity and scribal initiative of different kinds, was not subjected to direct attack. In the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*, however, considerably more aggressive efforts were taken to 'root out' — as one of the preferred images of the time expressed it — Gaelic culture.¹⁶ This may have made a real difference in terms of breaking traditional learned culture in Scotland, and preventing its effective transmission beyond the middle decades of the eighteenth century, when scholars like Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair and Uilleam Mac Murchaidh were among the last in Scotland with a knowledge of the old Gaelic hand (*corra-litir*) and an interest in transcribing older

¹³Seán De Fréine, *The Great Silence*, 2nd edn (Dublin & Cork: Mercier, 1978), p. 73. De Fréine's wording is colourful but this statement does comport with a range of anecdotal evidence.

¹⁴*ACLon*, p. 8.

¹⁵Timothy O'Neill, *The Irish Hand* (Portlaoise: Dolmen Press, 1984), p. 59. A series of like claims — including claims of state repression and violence similar to those sometimes advanced in Scotland — is presented in Alice Stopford Green, *The Making of Ireland and its Undoing, 1200-1600*, 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 1909), pp. 384-85, 553.

¹⁶S.J. Connolly, 'Varieties of Britishness: Ireland, Scotland and Wales in the Hanoverian state', in *Uniting the Kingdom? The making of British history*, ed. by Alexander Grant and Keith J. Stringer (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 193-207 (p. 195); S.J. Connolly, 'Popular culture: patterns of change and adaptation', in *Conflict, Identity and Economic Development: Ireland and Scotland, 1600-1939*, ed. by S.J. Connolly, R.A.

literary material.¹⁷

None of this is to say that there is not considerable evidence of manuscript destruction in Scotland. The pioneering Celticist Edward Lhuyd, who travelled in the Highlands in 1699-1700, noted that John Beaton of Mull, a member of the famous medical family, had lost a number of important manuscripts as the result of a raid in 1683; and certain manuscripts seen by Lhuyd, such as those at Dunvegan Castle, have in turn disappeared since his time.¹⁸ The most famous evidence in this regard is the testimony of Lachlan MacMhuirich in 1800 '*gu faca e dha no trì dhiubh [i.e. làmh-sgrìobhainnean Chloinn Mhic Mhuirich] ag tàileirean ga 'n gearra sios gu criosaibh tomhais*' (that 'he saw two or three of them [i.e. MacMhuirich manuscripts] being cut down by tailors for measures').¹⁹

On the other hand, the breadth of the losses inflicted by Edward I's invasion of Scotland at the end of the thirteenth century and by the Reformation in the Lowlands appear to have been significantly overstated,²⁰ and it is doubtful that much, if any, Gaelic material from the classical period (or, indeed, much Gaelic material at all) would have been stored in the repositories in the south-east of the country that suffered the brunt of these attacks. In particular, oft-repeated contentions about damage suffered at Iona in the course of the Reformation have been largely dismissed by modern historians; the survival of high crosses on the island would appear to put the lie to the various claims of rampaging, indiscriminate destruction.²¹ Similarly, there is no evidence of any destructive raid on Finlaggan in the wake of the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles, and the Disarming Acts imposed after the Forty-five, whose scope is often exaggerated,²² certainly did not extend to the possession of Gaelic

Houston & R.J. Morris (Preston: Carnegie Publishing, 1995), pp. 103-13 (p. 105).

¹⁷Ronald Black, 'The Gaelic Manuscripts of Scotland', p. 167.

¹⁸J.L. Campbell and Derick Thomson, *Edward Lhuyd in the Scottish Highlands 1699-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. 41, 10. One might note in contrast to the Scottish situation, however, that Lhuyd provided direct evidence of explicit orders to a seventeenth-century Jesuit missionary in Brittany to destroy Breton manuscripts. Humphrey Lloyd Humphrey, 'The Breton Language: its Present Position and Historical Background', in *The Celtic Languages*, ed. by Martin J. Ball (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 606-43 (p. 619) (citing R.T. Gunther, *Life and Letters of Edward Lhuyd*, Early Science in Oxford, 14 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1945), p. 545).

¹⁹MacKenzie, *Highland Committee Report on Ossian*, p. 275.

²⁰See Kathleen Hughes, 'Where are the writings of early Scotland?'

²¹Steer and Bannerman, p. 82. Kennedy makes a typical contention of this sort, asserting that 'hundreds' of stone crosses were destroyed at Iona. Kennedy, p. 80.

²²The full text of the Disarming Act, which makes no mention of manuscripts (or of pipes, often believed to have been proscribed), is printed in T.B. Johnston and James A. Robertson, *The Historical Geography of the*

manuscripts. Reidar Th. Christiansen observed that in many cases, accounts of lost books and manuscripts were of a clearly fabulous character, offering the example of how the last Mac Néill of Barra was said to have taken all the books away with him when he left his native isle.²³ It is certainly arguable that the suspiciously numerous and unvarying accounts, from both Scotland and Ireland, of manuscripts being cut up by tailors fall into the category of the fabulous.

The more important explanatory factors, then, would appear to have been the second and third posited above: that the traditions of poetic composition and scribal transcription were both weaker in Scotland than in Ireland. The second issue, which is of profound significance in terms of the nature of Scottish Gaelic literary culture and the connection to Ireland, is discussed in detail below. What may be most significant as an explanation of the disparity between Scotland and Ireland, however, is the third factor, the maintenance of the scribal tradition in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially in Munster, after it had become essentially moribund in Gaelic Scotland. Only about 10% (some 400 of some 4,250) of the surviving Irish manuscripts were written before the middle of the seventeenth century.²⁴ Although there are important exceptions — most importantly, on the Scottish side, the Book of the Dean of Lismore — very few of the manuscripts written before 1600 contain bardic poetry;²⁵ in other words, almost all the bardic poetry that survives is contained in manuscripts written down after the collapse of the old Gaelic order in Ireland. It would seem more viable, then, to consider the greater vitality of the scribal tradition in Ireland during the eighteenth and even nineteenth centuries as the principal reason for the greater survival of bardic poetry in Ireland. If this is so, the fact that the Irish material outweighs the Scottish so heavily does not necessarily provide particular insight into the cultural dynamics of the late medieval period.

The principal gap in the evidentiary record for Scotland relates to the Lordship of the Isles. Remarkably, only four poems survive that were composed for any Lord of

Clans of Scotland (Edinburgh: W. & A.K. Johnston, 1873), pp. 30-39.

²³Reidar Th. Christiansen, *The Vikings and the Viking Wars in Irish and Gaelic Tradition* (Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1931), p. 72.

²⁴Pádraig de Brún, "'Gan Teannta Buid ná Binse": Scríobhnaithe na Gaeilge c. 1650-1850', *Comhar*, 31, no. 9 (1972), 15-20 (p. 16).

²⁵Brian Ó Cuív, 'Literary Creation and Irish Historical Tradition', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 49 (1963), 233-62 (p. 258).

the Isles prior to the forfeiture of the Lordship in 1493,²⁶ and none of them can be shown conclusively to have been composed by a member of the Mac Mhuirich family, apparent hereditary poets to the Mac Domhnaill Lords. This is a remarkable gap, in that the Lordship was a hugely powerful institution that brought political stability and cultural vitality to the *Gàidhealtachd* for two centuries and more, the so-called '*Linn an Àigh*' or 'Age of Prosperity'. It is also unusual in that the so-called 'Gaelic Revival' in Ireland, which had its peak at roughly the same time as the Lordship, that is, between 1350 and 1500, was accompanied by a great richness of surviving manuscripts, whose survival may have been aided by their storage in the stone castles and tower houses that were being erected in profusion at that time.²⁷ These material conditions would seem to have prevailed within the Lordship, indeed all the more strongly and more favourably than in Ireland. Explanation of this situation requires a deeper investigation of the literary culture of the time.

*

Although the diminution and repression of the literary tradition merit close study, the most difficult and important questions at issue here relate to the nature of poetic composition in Gaelic Scotland — the different kinds of poetry composed by different kinds of poets at different times — rather than its preservation. Investigation of this literary culture, however, involves a great deal more hypothesis than hard fact.

The complex processes of cultural re-orientation away from the southeast of Scotland, as that part of the country became de-Gaelicized, and re-orientation towards Ireland, had important ramifications in terms of Scottish Gaelic literary culture. During the high point of Gaelic culture in Scotland — a political and cultural entity, it bears emphasis, to which the Hebrides and West Coast, later to become the Gaelic heartland, were peripheral at best — around the end of the first millennium of the common era, when Gaelic was the language of the court, the Scottish court would have been at the

²⁶'Ceannas Gaoidheal do chloinn Cholla' ('The headship of the Gael is to the kindred of Colla') (Ó hÉanna) (to Eoin Mac Domhnaill, fourth Lord of the Isles (†1503)) (published in *RC*, II, 208, in *Alasdair Mac Colla*, ed. by Seosamh Laoide (Dublin: Gaelic League, 1914), pp. 50-51, and in W.J. Watson, *An Deo-Gréine*, 11 (1916), 54); 'Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill' ('Great is my praise of Mac Domhnaill') (anonymous) (to Eoin, fourth Lord of the Isles) (published in *RC*, II, 264 and in Laoide, p. 52); 'Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh'; 'Meisde nach éadmhar Éire' ('It's unfortunate that Ireland is not jealous') (Domhnall mac Briain Ó hUiginn, c. 1480(?)) (to Eoin MacDomhnaill, fourth Lord of the Isles) (unpublished; RIA MS 23 F 16, p. 178; British Library Egerton MS 111 f. 50 b col. 1).

²⁷James Carney, 'Literature in Irish', in *Medieval Ireland: 1169-1534*, ed. by Art Cosgrove, *A New History of Ireland*, 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 688-707 (p. 689).

apex of literary culture as the most important centre of literary patronage and activity. As the court became de-Gaelicized from the end of the eleventh century onwards, this apex was removed from the pyramid, as were the other levels of patronage immediately below the top — the great magnates of the kingdom attached to the court. As this hierarchy was disrupted, an evolution of the poetic orders seems to have occurred. The traditional structures of patronage changed, as the *filidh* (trained professional literary men; singular *file*), based in the east of the country and formerly attached to the kings and the great magnates of the kingdom, no longer found scope for their art, and underwent evolution of one kind or another, perhaps becoming poets of a different kind, perhaps turning to different kinds of intellectual activity.²⁸ Although historians have discovered important and interesting evidence about the survival of Gaelic intellectual activity in southern and eastern Scotland in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,²⁹ this information tells almost nothing about substantive literary work, or about any connections to literary culture as it survived and developed within the *Gàidhealtachd* in subsequent centuries. The de-Gaelicization of southern and eastern Scotland remains a very vaguely understood process, and very little is known about its sociological and cultural aspects, not least how these changes affected the Gaelic learned orders. It appears, however, that late medieval culture in the Highlands — in the West Highland ‘heartland’, at any rate — was not some vestigial remnant of this older, eastern culture, but is best understood as a new phenomenon fueled primarily from Ireland.

At the same time as this process was afoot in ‘Lowland’ Scotland, the cultural re-orientation to Ireland that occurred in the ‘Highlands’ had the effect of bringing about an affiliation with Irish literary culture, which was itself undergoing an important reorganization at roughly the same time. In Ireland, the new Anglo-Norman presence, from the last third of the twelfth century onwards, and a range of church reforms set in place during the twelfth century, appear to have prompted a range of important changes in literary structures; as in Scotland, the position of the *filidh* was altered as a result of political changes and accompanying disruptions to patronage and ceremony. In

²⁸ John MacInnes, ‘The Oral Tradition in Scottish Gaelic Poetry’, *Scottish Studies*, 12 (1968), 29-43 (p. 33).

²⁹ E.g., Bannerman, ‘The King’s Poet’, pp. 120-49; John Bannerman, ‘The Residence of the King’s Poet’, *SGS*, 17 (1996), 24-35; Dauvit Broun, ‘Gaelic literacy in eastern Scotland, 1124-1249’, in *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, ed. by Huw Pryce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 183-201;

particular, according to a now-familiar theory offered by Gerard Murphy, the *filidh* came to take over certain functions, notably the composition of panegyric poetry, that had formerly been associated with the lower order of poets, the *bards*. According to Murphy, the coming of the Normans meant that the breakup of earlier political structures of Gaelic Ireland: the most important political assemblies (*oenaige*) came to an end, and with their disappearance ended the need to compose and recite the kinds of compositions associated with these gatherings, which had previously attracted the greatest prestige: *tána, togla, tochmarca, dublaidi dindshenhasa*. Although the audience for the preeminent kinds of compositions associated with the *filidh* disappeared as a result of these disruptions, according to Murphy,

That for the bardic type remained, however, wherever a Gaelic king had succeeded in saving some part of his ancient lordship from the general ruin. Under the stress of circumstances the *filidh* of the end of the twelfth century seem to have turned what had hitherto been a secondary function into a primary function, so that the once neglected praise-poems (originally doubtless considered typical only of bards, or of *filidh* assuming bardic functions) began to be preserved and held in honour.³⁰

More recently, Katharine Simms has questioned Murphy's emphasis on the political disruptions of the Anglo-Norman presence and redirected attention on the new structures of church learning that developed during the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the new avenues for secular learning and art that opened up as a result.³¹

Whatever its precise causes, the process of adjustment and re-invention on the part of the *filidh* worked a new professionalization of the poetic orders, including important developments in the more technical aspects of their work, that is, in metrical and linguistic terms. It is probably most helpful to understand these developments as a gradual process, directed principally by the Ó Dálaighs, the preeminent bardic family of the era, rather than as the explicit programme of some 'unrecorded "synod of

Clancy, p. 184.

³⁰Gerard Murphy, 'Bards and Filidh', *Éigse*, 2 (1940), 200-07 (p. 207); Gerard Murphy, 'Warriors and Poets in Thirteenth-Century Ireland', in *Glimpses of Gaelic Ireland* (Dublin: C.J. Fallon, 1948), pp. 33-64 (pp. 34-35).

³¹Katharine Simms, 'Literacy and the Irish Bards', in *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, ed. by Huw Price, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literacy, 33 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 238-58.

poets”³²; but the Irish literary culture that flourished for the following four or five centuries can nevertheless be considered a specific package developed around the end of the twelfth century in response to specific circumstances. It was this package that was subsequently adopted to various degrees in various parts of Scotland.

Crucially, this reaffiliation with Ireland may not have taken root in all parts of Gaelic Scotland, especially in the southern and eastern margins of the Highlands, districts that bordered the de-Gaelicized areas, formerly the centre of high Gaelic culture in Scotland, that were coalescing as the ‘Lowlands’ and that were well removed both from the new Scottish Gaelic heartland of the Lordship of the Isles and from Ireland.³³ In Scotland, two consequences seem to have followed: in some areas, more ‘central’ in Gaelic terms, the Irish model seems to have been adopted to a substantial degree, with its *filidh* assuming the role of composing panegyric poetry, while in others, at once alienated from the now de-Gaelicized centres of power in Scotland and distant from the centres of evolving Gaelic culture, the *bard* may have retained responsibility for composing panegyrics, and there may have been little scope for the *file*. Where the Irish model — which tended to involve training in Ireland and absorption of an Irish-shaped traditional Gaelic worldview — did not take root, one can posit a rather different cultural relationship with the *maior Scotia*. As with theories about the process of de-Gaelicization in the Lowlands, however, lack of evidence means that matters here do not progress much beyond mere positing of possibilities. Nevertheless, the possibility that a substantial section of Scottish Gaeldom did not ‘reaffiliate’ with Ireland as the western *Gàidhealtachd* did is of immense importance, not least for its consequences to the ‘culture-province’ theory discussed above.

John MacInnes has outlined a provocative scenario to explain some of the differences between the Scottish Gaelic and Irish Gaelic literary culture of this period. According to MacInnes, ‘the emergence of the clan system as we know it in the later Middle Ages included a considerable number of units whose economic power was extremely limited. A clan chief who could not maintain a *file* might nevertheless be able to afford to maintain a bard — representative of a lower and less demanding

³²Simms, ‘Literacy and the Irish bards’, p. 243.

³³John MacInnes, ‘Gaelic Poetry’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1975), p. 193.

order'.³⁴ This situation may well have intensified in the wake of the breakup of the Lordship of the Isles at the end of the fifteenth century, when smaller kindreds reasserted their independence even in the West Highlands, former heartland of the Lordship.³⁵ The network of bards attached to these lesser kindreds may have had a critical role in the development of vernacular Scottish Gaelic poetry, with its distinct idiom and metrical structures — poetry that comes to the fore in the seventeenth century but that had clearly been developing for some centuries before then. Critically, the lower orders of poet would not undergo formal training in Ireland or maintain the same degree of cultural orientation to Ireland as the higher orders, nor earn the prestige that accompanied formal training and exposition of the most learned arts.

These bards could, however, develop new styles in an atmosphere of relative freedom unchoked by the unquestionably straitening restraints of the trained poetic orders.³⁶ In turn, this new style of panegyric must at some point 'have ceased to be the exclusive province of a class of bards and have been taken up by amateurs in the stratum of society to which the bards had addressed it'.³⁷ This development, MacInnes hypothesizes, explains why heroic praise-poetry composed in the vernacular rather than the classical literary language emerged in Scotland but never did so in Ireland.

The structure of literary organization may well have had additional layers and complexities beyond this basic framework; for example, there may have been a range of ranks of bards in Scotland — *saorbhaird* and *daorbhaird* (noble bards and inferior bards) of a kind.³⁸ Such a hierarchy may help explain the use of the label *an t-Aos Dàna* (literally 'the people of art', but applied here with a singulative meaning) for several vernacular Scottish Gaelic poets of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, including two members of Clann Mhic Ghill-Eathain, Eachann Bacach and Iain mac Ailein, and *an t-Aos Dàna Mac Shithich*.³⁹ A similar label is also used for

³⁴ John MacInnes, 'The Oral Tradition', p. 33.

³⁵ John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry', p. 193.

³⁶ John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry', p. 193; *An Clàrsair Dall: Òrain Ruaidhri Mhic Mhuirich agus a Chuid Ciùil/The Blind Harper: The Songs of Roderick Morrison and his Music*, ed. by William Matheson, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 12 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1970), p. 150.

³⁷ John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod', *SGS*, 11 (1966), 3-23 (p. 20).

³⁸ Iain MacAonghuis, 'Baird is Bleidirean', in *Féilscríbhinn Thomáis de Bhaldraithe*, ed. by Seosamh Watson (Dublin: Coiste Féilscríbhinn Thomáis de Bhaldraithe, An Coláiste Ollscoile, 1986), pp. 94-110 (p. 100).

³⁹ Aonghus Mac Mhathain, 'Aos Dàna (I)', *Gairm*, 8 (1954), 343-47; Aonghus Mac Mhathain, 'Aos Dàna (II)', *Gairm*, 9 (1954), 33-36; Aonghus Mac Mhathain, 'Aos Dàna (III)', *Gairm*, 10 (1954), 124-29.

one of the poets in the Book of the Dean of Lismore, Mac Giolla Fhionntóg an Fear Dána. This class may have been the successors to the *saorbhaird*, a higher grade of bards.⁴⁰

Indeed, the role of the lower orders of poet may have been more widespread than MacInnes suggests. He states that 'where trained *filidh* succeeded in consolidating themselves on the Irish pattern, or where Irish poets, such as the Ó Muirgheasáins, found a Scottish patron, the organisation of poetic offices would no doubt be much the same as it was in Ireland'.⁴¹ Yet even here the position seems to have been more complex and fluid than the Irish model, in which there was no apparent equivalent to the Scottish *bard*. Various different kinds of poets seem to have been working simultaneously, producing various different kinds of poetry, as evidenced in the seventeenth century by the coexistence of Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin as the *file* to Mac Gill-Eathain of Duart and Eachann Bacach Mac Gill-Eathain as the *bard*,⁴² and the simultaneous role for Donnchadh Ó Muirgheasáin as *file* to Mac Leòid of Dunvegan and Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh and An Clàrsair Dall as composers of other kinds of verse.⁴³ The survival of both classical and vernacular elegies for various dead patrons testifies to the existence of such a parallel structure.⁴⁴

In contrast to this rather complex and variegated model, one conventional view asserts that literary culture throughout the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* effectively operated according to the Irish system. In this vision — a logical corollary to the theory outlined above that Scottish Gaelic manuscripts were destroyed in vast numbers, wreaking huge losses — the poetry contained in the Book of the Dean of Lismore represents 'a stray

⁴⁰John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry', p. 193.

⁴¹John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod', p. 20.

⁴²John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry', p. 198.

⁴³William Matheson, *An Clàrsair Dall*, p. 150.

⁴⁴For example, Cathal Mac Mhuirich's 'Do íslioh onóir Gaoidheal' ('The honour of the Gaels has lowered') (published in J. Carmichael Watson, 'Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh Cecinit', in *Féil-Sgríbhinn Eóin Mhic Néill/Essays and Studies Presented to Professor Eóin MacNeill*, ed. by Eóin Ó Riain (Dublin: Three Candles, 1940), pp. 166-79), and Pòl Crùbach Mac Leòid's 'Is i so iorram na truaighe' ('This is a rowing-song of woe') (published in *BG*, ll. 5396-5491), composed on the death of Iain mac Sir Ruairidh Mac Leòid in 1649; and the two classical poems 'Do thuim aobhneas Innsi Gall' (probably composed by Donnchadh Ó Muirgheasáin) and 'Rug an fheibhe a terme as teach' ('Distinction has ushered in its close') (anonymous) (published in *MNAR*, pp. 102-07), and Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh's 'Cha sùrd cadail | An rùn-s' air m'aigne' ('My spirit inclines not to sleep's sweet mood') ('Marbhrann do Shir Tormod Mac Leòid'/'Dirge for Sir Tormod Mac Leòid') (published in *MNAR*, ll. 1065-1185 and in *BG*, ll. 4230-4350) and 'Mo chràdhghal bochd' ('My piteous sore-crying') ('Cumha do Shir Tormod Mac Leòid'/'Lament for Sir Tormod Mac Leòid') (published in *MNAR*, ll. 1186-1236), all composed on the death of Sir Tormod in 1705.

survival of a great corpus of Scottish *dán díreach* that no longer survives.⁴⁵ W.J. Watson argued that 'there must have been, all over the north and north-east from Sutherland southwards, and eastwards by Aberdeen, to say nothing of Galloway, a very large amount of early Gaelic poetry, by trained professional bards and others, of which we have no record'.⁴⁶ More recently, Derick Thomson has spoken in similar terms, arguing that

the system which encouraged the production of [bardic] verse was a widely disseminated one in Gaeldom, likely to have existed not only in the well documented regions of Argyll and Perthshire, but also in the less documented areas to the south, west, east and north of these central regions' — that is, in Easter Ross, Badenoch, Lochaber, and the Lennox, and during the earlier period Strathearn and Moray.⁴⁷

For John MacInnes, Watson's hypothesis 'does not necessarily follow':

Even if we allow that there must have been poetry and song of one kind or another everywhere throughout the Gaidhealtachd, our classical Gaelic poetry, a special development of the high Middle Ages, dependent equally on a rigorous scholastic training and the availability of patronage, might well have failed to penetrate or failed to flourish in the greater part of the Gaidhealtachd outside the scope of the Lordship's influence. In fact, the later distribution of some other forms of poetry tends to support this view.⁴⁸

MacInnes also demonstrates another aspect of the weakness of the formal bardic tradition in Scotland in the pattern of 'fresh reinforcement from Ireland', by which prominent hereditary families of poets — including the two most important such families in Scotland, the Mac Mhuirichs and the Ó Muirgheasáins, who continued to bear the distinctively Irish Ó patronymic — came from Ireland and became established in service to Scottish kindreds.⁴⁹ Indeed, the third principal Scottish family, the Mac Eoghains, may also have been Irish in origin as well, a branch of the prominent Ó

⁴⁵John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry', p. 193.

⁴⁶*SVBDL*, p. xviii. E.C. Quiggin took a similar view. E.C. Quiggin, 'Prologomena to a Study of the Later Irish Bards 1200-1500', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 5 (1911), 89-143 (p. 106).

⁴⁷Derick S. Thomson, 'The Earliest Scottish Gaelic Non-classical Verse Texts', in *Scottish Language and Literature, Medieval and Renaissance, Fourth International Conference, 1984, Proceedings*, ed. by Dietrich Strauss and Horst W. Drescher (Frankfurt: Verlag Peter Lang, 1986), pp. 533-46 (p. 533); Derick S. Thomson, 'The Poetic Tradition in Gaelic Scotland', p. 122.

⁴⁸John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry and Historical Tradition', p. 147.

⁴⁹John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod', p. 20.

hEóghusa family, hereditary poets to the Mág Uidhirs of Fermanagh.⁵⁰ The critical point is that these Irish poets found gaps of some kind in Scotland that they could fill: the system of poet and patron as it evolved in Scotland apparently did not function in such a way as to generate long-standing hereditary relationships lasting over the entire course of the classical period, as occurred in Ireland. The fragility of the Scottish evidence in this regard is discussed in detail below.

Finally, it bears emphasis that much of the surviving body of Scottish panegyric poetry is distinctly different in character from the Irish poetry of the period. Although generalizations are difficult, indeed dangerous, the Scottish poems tend to be more idiosyncratic, less formally stylized. This is especially true of the semi-professional poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore, few of which fit snugly into the model of a 'typical' bardic poem, as exemplified by the works of the Irish masters of the art like Tadhg Óg or Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn. On the other hand, the surviving poetry of the seventeenth century, composed by unambiguously professional poets for Caimbeul and Mac Leòid patrons as well as members of various branches of Clann Domhnaill, tends to be rather closer in style to their Irish counterparts (of that century and to earlier classical poems) than do the earlier surviving poems from Scotland. This may represent the distinction between poems preserved in 'official' manuscripts such as family *duanaireadha* like the Red Book of Clanranald, where much of the seventeenth century Clann Domhnaill poetry is to be found, as against those in more individual, idiosyncratic collections (and the Book of the Dean is nothing if not idiosyncratic).

*

Because most writers addressing the connections between Scotland and Ireland during the late medieval period have tended to focus on the connection of the learned orders to Ireland and, to one degree or another, applied Watson's model of 'Irish' literary culture prevailing throughout Gaelic Scotland, the scarcity of hereditary professional poets in Scotland, and the scantiness of their surviving literary output, is rarely made sufficiently clear. The three major bardic families in Scotland — the Mac Mhuirichs, the Mac Eoghains, and the Ó Muirgheasáins — are often presented as if they were representative examples of a far larger group rather than practically the only attested practitioners of their kind in Scotland. Similarly, the bodies of poetry that

⁵⁰Meek, 'The Scots-Gaelic Scribes of Medieval Perthshire', p. 267.

survive from the various members of these poetic families tends to be distinctly patchy in chronological distribution, in contrast to those of major Irish hereditary poetic families like the Mac an Bhairds and Ó hUiginns, from whom a much more steady, productive continuity can be traced over the course of centuries. The apparent frailty of the hereditary learned tradition in Scotland would seem to undermine still further the concept of a uniform Gaelic culture based on the Irish model. A review of what is known about these families is thus valuable for an assessment of the nature of learned culture in Scottish Gaeldom and its place in the Gaelic world as a whole.

The Mac Eoghains appear to have been attached to the Mac Dubhghaills of Dunolly in the first instance, as evidenced by a fifteenth-century elegy on Eoin mac Ailín Mac Dubhghaill in the Book of the Dean of Lismore that is attributed to 'Eóghan mac Eoin mheic Eichthighearna'.⁵¹ At some point in the sixteenth century, however, the family evidently became attached to the earls of Argyll, chiefs of the Caimbeuls, receiving lands at Barmulloch and then at Kilchoan, in Lorne. Background evidence suggests that a hereditary relationship was then put in place,⁵² but it bears emphasis nevertheless that not a single poem to any Caimbeul patron survives that is formally attributed in manuscript to any member of the Mac Eoghain family. Four seventeenth-century poems may well be attributable to Niall Mac Eoghain (*fl.* c. 1630-52), however: according to the Reverend Donald M'Nicol, writing in 1779, Niall was the author of the elegy on Donnchadh Dubh Caimbeul of Glenorchy (†1631) beginning 'Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne' ('Great the woe-tale is the death of Duibhne's descendant'),⁵³ and Angus Matheson has suggested that three more poems of the period were also Niall's work.⁵⁴ Niall may also have been the translator of Calvin's

⁵¹'Do athruigh séan ar síol gCuinn' ('The auspicious omen has changed for the race of Conn') (published in *SVBDL*, poem 21).

⁵²Angus Matheson, 'Bishop Carswell', *TGSI*, 42 (1953-59), 182-205 (pp. 200-01); *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh/John Carswell's Gaelic translation of the Book of Common Order*, ed. by R.L. Thomson, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 11 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1970), pp. 183-86; see 'Ane Account of the Genealogie of the Campbells', in *Highland Papers*, ed. by J.R.N. MacPhail, 4 vols, Scottish History Society Publications, Second Series, 5, 12, 20, Third Series, 22 (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1914, 1916, 1920, 1934), II, 72-11 (pp. 73-74).

⁵³See Rev. Donald M'Nicol, *Remarks on Dr. Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Hebrides* (London: T. Cadell, 1779; repr. London and New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), p. 246. The poem is published in W.J. Watson, 'Marbhnadh Dhonnchaidh Duibh', *An Deo-Gréine*, 12 (1916-17), 132-34, 149-51.

⁵⁴Angus Matheson, 'Bishop Carswell', 202-03; R.L. Thomson, *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh*, p. 185. The poems in question are 'Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal' (c. 1580(?)); 'Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban' ('He has made an intervention upon the land of Alba') (c. 1640) (published in W.J. Watson, 'Unpublished Gaelic Poetry — IV., V.', *SGS*, 3 (1931), 139-59 (pp. 152-59)); and 'Triath na nGaoidheal Giolla-easbuig'.

Catechismus Ecclesiae Genevensis, the second Gaelic book published in Scotland (under the title *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh*, c. 1630).⁵⁵ The only verses attributed in manuscripts to any member of the Mac Eoghain family, however, are two religious poems prefixed to that translation, poems which may be the work of Athairne Mac Eoghain, father of Niall.⁵⁶

The most significant evidence from the poetry that indicates the existence of an established relationship between the Mac Eoghains and the Caimbeuls is to be found in the poem ‘Rug eadrain ar iath Albain’ (‘He has made an intervention on Scotland’s soil’), apparently dating from the early 1640s, where the poet — perhaps Niall — begs the restoration of traditional family lands at Kilchoan, which appear to have been taken away about 1630⁵⁷:

*Léigidh dhamh dúthchas m’athar,
a n-onóir na h-ealadhan,
a ghéig tarla fá thoradh,
do mhéd th’anma is adhmholadh.[. . .]*

Restore to me my father’s heritage
in honour of art,
o branch laden with fruit,
according to the greatness of your name and
your praises.

*Cíos na n-aithreach ór fhás mé,
díghrúis gráidh, cruas a cceirde,
caidhe mál as buaine bladhdh,
a lámh as cruaidhe a ccogadh?*

The tribute of my fathers from whom
I am sprung, fervour of love, rigour in art,
what tax brings more lasting fame,
you whose hand is hardest in warfare?
(§§ 17, 19)⁵⁸

The poet’s plea was not successful, however, as Niall Mac Eoghain was given only an inferior landholding, and upon his death in the following decade the family’s position was allowed to lapse permanently.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh: The Gaelic Version of John Calvin’s Catechismus Ecclesiae Genevensis*, ed. by R.L. Thomson, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 7 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1962).

⁵⁶ R.L. Thomson, *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh*, pp. xl, 216-18, and 223-25. The two poems, beginning ‘Is mairg do-ní uaille as óige’ (‘Woe to him afflicted with youthful pride’) and ‘Mairg dar compánach an cholann’ (‘Woe to him whose companion is the body’), are published in *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh*, pp. 217-18 and 224-25 respectively. ‘Mairg dar compánach an cholann’ is also published in *DD*, poem 36. ‘Mairg dar compánach an cholann’ is attributed in some manuscripts to members of the Ó Dálaigh family rather than to Athairne Mac Eoghain. *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh*, p. 224.

⁵⁷ Angus Matheson, ‘Bishop Carswell’, p. 201.

⁵⁸ I have made some minor revisions to Watson’s translation.

⁵⁹ Allan I. MacInnes, ‘Scottish Gaelic, 1638-1651: The Vernacular Response to the Covenanting Dynamic’, in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland*, ed. by John A. Dwyer, Roger A. Mason, and Alexander Murdoch (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1982), pp. 59-94 (p. 67).

Gaelic culture in the court of Mac Cailein Mór — the hereditary title bestowed on the Caimbeul chiefs — was evidently in decay by this time, as indicated by a colophon written by an Irish scribe, Muiris Ó Maoilghirigh, sometime in the middle of the seventeenth century, apologising for the inferior quality of his work with the excuse ‘*nar sgríbas an oireadsa do Ghaoidhealg o tangas a nAlbain, 7 ní h-iongnadh sin oir ní bfuil moran do lucht tuigsean san chuir a bfuilim anois*’ (‘I have not written this much Gaelic since I came to Scotland, and that is no surprise since there are few people who understand it in the court where I am now’).⁶⁰ Even so, the very fact that a scribe was brought over from Ireland at this stage demonstrates that learned Gaelic culture continued to be valued at Inveraray; more important, bardic or semi-bardic poetry was composed for Caimbeul chieftains well after this date — indeed as late as 1743⁶¹ — so the termination of the traditional relationship with the Mac Eoghains should not be taken as demonstrating a complete break with the patronage of learned Gaelic poetry on the part of the Caimbeuls.

The Ó Muirgheasáins were evidently already established in Mull by 1512, probably in service to the Mac Gill-Eathains of Duart, for one of the poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore, a twenty-five quatrain religious poem beginning ‘*Ná léig mo mhealladh, a Mhuire*’ (‘Do not allow me to be deceived, o Mary’), is ascribed to Maol Domhnaigh mac Mhaghnuis Mhuiligh or ‘Maol Domhnaigh son of Maghnus of Mull’, Maol Domhnaigh being a name strongly associated with this family.⁶² The Ó Muirgheasáins thereafter came under the patronage of the Mac Leòids of Harris and Dunvegan some time about 1600, however, when the *file* Ó Muirgheasáin apparently replaced the *bard* Mac Gille Riabhaich;⁶³ the presence at Dunvegan of Toirdhealbhadh Ó Muirgheasáin, evidently a member of the bardic family even though none of his poetry has survived, is demonstrated by his service as scribe for a contract of fosterage dated 1614 and his apparent participation in a sea raid launched by Ruairidh Mór Mac

⁶⁰NLS Adv. MS 72.1.36, 81 r 10.

⁶¹‘*Tuirseach an diugh críocha Gaoidhiol*’ (‘Sorrowful today are the bounds of the Gael’) (anonymous) (published in *RC*, II, 311).

⁶²William Matheson, ‘Replies: The O’Muirgheasáin Bardic Family’, *Notes and Queries of the Society of West Highland and Island Historical Research*, 7 (1978), 24; T.F. O’Rahilly, ‘Indexes to the Book of the Dean’, p. 48 (item 121)). The poem is published in David Greene, ‘*Na léig mo mhealladh, a Mhuire*’, *SGS*, 9 (1961), 105-15.

⁶³John MacInnes, ‘Gaelic Poetry’, p. 196; MacKenzie, *Highland Society Report on Ossian*, appendix pp. 40, 47.

Leòid in 1616.⁶⁴ This evidence of ongoing professional service notwithstanding, it is nevertheless necessary to emphasize that not one poem by any Ó Muirgheasáin poet to any Mac Gill-Eathain chief survives, and that the earliest extant poem to any Mac Leòid chief — Eóin Óg Ó Muirgheasáin's 'Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois' on the death of Ruairidh Mór — dates from no earlier than 1626. Moreover, there do not appear to be more than six extant panegyric poems in total that are formally ascribed to any members of the Ó Muirgheasáin family, and four of these were composed by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin in the course of an extended stay in Ireland in the middle of the seventeenth century.⁶⁵ The last surviving poem attributed (and that in only one of the two manuscripts in which it is preserved) to an Ó Muirgheasáin poet dates from 1705 (the elegy to Sir Tormod Mac Leòid of Berneray beginning 'Do thuirm aoibhneas Innsi Gall' ('The happiness of the Hebrides has come to an end')); as such, the productive association between the Mac Leòids and the Ó Muirgheasáins appears to have lasted well under a century. There is no concrete evidence, moreover, that the Mac Leòids retained trained poets on a hereditary basis prior to the engagement of the Ó Muirgheasáins, although two syllabic poems to Mac Leòid leaders (one of them head of the Lewis branch rather than that of Harris and Dunvegan) survive from the Book of the Dean of Lismore,⁶⁶ and lines referring to the Mac Leòids from poems that have not

⁶⁴John Bannerman, 'Gaelic Endorsements of Early Seventeenth-Century Legal Documents', *Studia Celtica*, 14-15 (1979-80), 18-33 (p. 21); John MacDonald, p. 28 fn. 1. Toirdhealbhach's role at Dunvegan is discussed in Stiùbhart, pp. 117-18.

⁶⁵'Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois'; 'Cia as urra d'ainm an iarhair' ('Who is guardian of the westerly name?') (Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, 1640; to Domhnall Ó Donnabháin of Carbery, Co. Cork (†1660)) (published in Ronald Black, 'Poems by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin (II)', *SGS*, 13 (1978), 46-55); 'Cia feasda as urra don eól' ('Who is guardian of learning now?') (Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, 1642; on the death of the poet Cú Chonnacht Ó Dálaigh) (published in Ronald Black, 'Poems by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin (I)', *SGS*, 12 (1976), 194-208); 'Gnáth féile ag fagháil innmhe' ('Liberality customarily begets standing') (Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, c. 1631-50; to Donnchadh Ó Ceallacháin of Clonmeen, Co. Cork († c. 1680)) (published in Ronald Black, 'Poems by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin (III)', *SGS*, 13 (1978), 289-301); 'Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad' ('Unhappiness begins when friends part') (Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, 1643(?); to Séafraidh Ó Donnchadha an Ghleanna (†1678)) (published in Pádraig Ó Riain, 'A Poem on Séafraidh Ó Donnchadha an Ghleanna', *Journal of the Kerry Archeological and Historical Society*, 3 (1970), 48-50); 'Do thuirm aoibhneas Innsi Gall'. There are, however, several anonymous Mac Leòid poems of the later seventeenth century that might well have been the work of Ó Muirgheasáin poets; and an Ó Muirgheasáin poet, perhaps Donnchadh, may have been responsible for the very slightly later anonymous elegy for Uilleam Mac Leòid, who died shortly after his father Sir Tormod, beginning 'Ar ttriall bhus ésguigh go Uilleam' ('Our journeying to Uilleam will be speedy') (published in supplemental appendix to Watson, 'Classical Poetry of Panegyric', 42-45).

⁶⁶'Díomdhach mé don ghaoith a ndeas' ('I am displeased with the wind from the south') (Mac Eachaig, c. 1420) (to Iain Borb Mac Leòid (†1442)) (published in *SVBDL*, poem 4); 'Fhuaras mac mar an t-athair' (anonymous, c. 1500(?)) (to Torcul Mac Leòid Leòdhuis († c.1520(?)) (published in *SVBDL*, poem 13).

survived are used as illustrative examples in the grammatical tracts,⁶⁷ making clear that some amount at least of Mac Leòid bardic poetry has been lost.

Study of the Mac Mhuirichs — without question the most important kindred in the classical tradition of Scotland — raises a number of significant problems. Oral tradition within the family itself, as presented by Lachlann Mac Mhuirich to the Highland Society of Scotland in 1800,⁶⁸ clearly maintains that the family line descended from the prominent, if somewhat mysterious, Sligo poet Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, supposed to have come to Scotland shortly after 1213, when, according to the account of the *Annals of the Four Masters* for that year, he was required to go on the run and flee Ireland after murdering his patron Domhnall Ó Domhnaill's tax collector with an axe. Modern scholars have generally accepted this claim to descent from Muireadhach Albanach and the remarkable continuity it demonstrates.⁶⁹

Nevertheless, the picture is much less impressive in terms of the actual evidence of surviving poetry composed by members of the family. More than a dozen poems attributed to Muireadhach Albanach himself survive, including two composed for Scottish patrons (both of them earls of Lennox),⁷⁰ but although it is generally accepted that Muireadhach's descendants served as hereditary poets to the Lords of the Isles, and held lands in Kintyre on that basis, there is not a single surviving composition for any Lord of the Isles that is ascribed to a Mac Mhuirich poet, and very few surviving compositions of uncertain authorship which might in fact have been composed for these patrons by a member of the Mac Mhuirich family. The only Mac Mhuirich poem surviving from the period of the Lordship of the Isles is the so-called 'Harlaw Brosnachadh' (beginning 'A Chlanna Chuinn, cuimhnichibh') ('O kindred of Conn, remember'), possibly composed by Lachlann Mór Mac Mhuirich on the eve of the Battle of Harlaw in 1411.⁷¹ There are substantial questions as to whether the poem

⁶⁷Osborn Bergin, 'Irish Grammatical Tracts', supplement to *Ériu*, 8 (1916), 9 (1921-23), and 10 (1926-28), ll. 1474, 1477.

⁶⁸MacKenzie, *Highland Society Report on Ossian*, appendix pp. 275-77.

⁶⁹Derick S. Thomson, 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family', *TGSI*, 43 (1960-63), 276-304 (p. 282).

⁷⁰'Saor do leannán, a Leamhain'; 'Mairg thréigios inn, a Amhlaóibh' ('Woe to him who abandons me, o Amhlaóibh') (published in Brian Ó Cuív, 'A poem by Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh', in *Celtic Studies: Essays in memory of Angus Matheson*, ed. by James Carney & David Greene (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 92-98).

⁷¹Published in Derick S. Thomson, 'The Harlaw *Brosnachadh*: An early fifteenth-century literary curio', in *Celtic Studies: Essays in memory of Angus Matheson*, ed. by James Carney & David Greene (London:

is indeed a genuine product of the time, however, and it is, in any event, composed in the vernacular rather than the literary language and well removed in style and substance from the classical panegyric tradition.

Several items composed by Mac Mhuirich poets survive from the turn of the sixteenth century, but it is difficult to reconstruct a clear picture of the family's activity during this period. There is a single eighteen-line fragment, preserved in a phonetic Scots-based orthography in an eighteenth-century genealogy, beginning 'Clann Ghille Eoin na mbratach badhbha' ('Clann Ghill-Eathain of the warlike banners'),⁷² and the Book of the Dean of Lismore contains a number of items that can be attributed, with various degrees of certainty, to members of the family: two poems and a fragment of four lines by Eoin Mac Mhuirich (*fl.* c. 1520?)⁷³; a poem by the 'Dean of Knoydart', evidently another member of the family bearing the name Eoin, concerning the murderer of Aonghas Óg Mac Domhnaill in Inverness in 1490⁷⁴; and three poems by Giolla Coluim Mac an Ollaimh (*fl.* 1490), perhaps the son of Lachlann Mac Mhuirich (*fl.* 1485), who is identified as an *archipoeta* in a surviving charter of the period, but from whose hand no poems survive.⁷⁵ Also surviving from c. 1514 is a poem on the deaths of two chiefs of Clann Raghnaill, attributed in the Red Book of Clanranald to a Mac Mhuirich: this may have been the Eoin whose work is found in the roughly contemporary Book of the Dean of Lismore.⁷⁶ This poem is the only surviving work

Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 147-69.

⁷²Published in J.L. Campbell, 'Varia: "The Beginning of Mac Vurich's Panegyric on the MacLeans"', *SGS*, 9, 90-91 (1961). The original unedited text is printed in *MacFarlane's Genealogical Collections*, ed. by James Toshach Clark, 2 vols, Publications of the Scottish Historical Society, 33 (Edinburgh: Scottish Historical Society, 1900), I, 142.

⁷³The poems begin with the lines 'Maith do chuid, a charbaid mhaoil' ('Good is your share, o bare jaw') (published in E.C. Quiggin, *Poems from the Book of the Dean of Lismore*, ed. by J. Fraser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937), poem 49) and 'Námha dhamh an dán' ('Inimical to me is the fact') (published, in unreliable form, in *The Dean of Lismore's Book*, ed. by Thomas MacLauchlan (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1862), p. 82); the fragment begins 'Fir Alban 's ní hiad amháin' ('The men of Scotland, and not them alone') (published, in unreliable form, in MacLauchlan, pp. 84-85).

⁷⁴'A chinn Diarmaid Uí Chairbre' ('O head of Diarmaid Ó Cairbre') (published in *SVBDL*, poem 12 (ll. 941-68)). Derick Thomson marshalls the evidence in support of this attribution in 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family', pp. 287-88.

⁷⁵'Mór an feidhm freagairt na bhfaighdheach thig fá seach' ('To answer the demands for aid that come in turn is a great effort'); 'Ní h-éibhneas gan Chlainn Domhnaill' ('There is no joy without Clan Donald'); 'Thánaig adhbhar mo thuirse' ('Matter for grief has come to me') (published in *SVBDL*, poems 9, 10, and 11 respectively). Thomson discusses the evidence for connecting Giolla Coluim to the Mac Mhuirich family in 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family', p. 291. John Bannerman, however, suggests that this poet was 'probably a Beaton'. Bannerman, 'The Lordship of the Isles', p. 235.

⁷⁶'Alba gan díon an déidh Ailín' ('Alba without protection after Ailín') (anonymous Mac Mhuirich poet, c. 1509) (published in *RC*, II, 216-25; improved edition in *CW* 137A, pp. 94-100). See Derick S. Thomson, 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family', pp. 296-97.

attributable to the family from the sixteenth century.

Every other surviving Mac Mhuirich poem dates from the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries and is attributed to one of four members of the family, Niall Mór (*fl.* c. 1550-after 1613), Cathal (*fl.* c. 1618-c. 1661), Niall (c. 1637-1726), and Domhnall (c. 1670-c. 1743). By this time the family had reestablished itself further north, holding lands in the Clann Raghnaill territory of South Uist from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards,⁷⁷ and principally serving that branch of Clann Domhnaill. Other seventeenth and eighteenth century Mac Mhuirich poems were composed for various members of other branches of Clann Domhnaill, notably the Mac Domhnaills of Sleat,⁷⁸ and for the Mac Leòids.⁷⁹

A fourth bardic family, about whom even less is known than the three principal kindreds discussed above, is that of Mac Marcuis, who appear to have been connected to the Irish Mac Craith poetic family, who originated in Tír Chonaill and later became prominent in Thomond. Three members of the Mac Marcuis branch are attested as holding lands in Laggan in Kintyre during the sixteenth century.⁸⁰ There is no surviving poetry from two of these landholders, 'John M^cMarkische' and 'Donald Makmarkie'/'Donald M^cVarchis', but two stanzas in the Book of the Dean of Lismore are attributed to Giolla na Naomh Mac Mharcuis,⁸¹ probably the 'Gilnow M^cMarkische' and 'Gilnow M^cMarcus' noted in two entries in the Exchequer Rolls for

⁷⁷Derick S. Thomson, 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family', pp. 295-96.

⁷⁸'Eireóchthar fós le cloinn gColla' ('Colla's race will rise again') (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1640; to Domhnall Gorm Óg Mac Domhnaill of Sleat (†1643)) (unpublished (RIA MS A v 2, f. 73 v.; transcript in CW 73, pp. 177-78)); 'Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir' ('Welcome to him I saw last night') (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, to Domhnall Gorm Óg Mac Domhnaill) (published in Angus Matheson, 'Poems from a Manuscript of Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh' [II], *Éigse*, 11 (1964), 1-17 (pp. 1-6)); 'Leasg linn gabháil go Gearloch' ('I am reluctant to go to Gairloch') (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1635-40; on the death of Catriona nighean Dhomhnaill Ghuirm Òig Nic Dhomhnaill of Sleat) (published as appendix C to Watson, 'Classical Poetry of Panegyric'); 'A Sheónoid, méadaigh meanma' ('Seónoid, be of good cheer') (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1635-40; to Seónoid nighean Choinnich Nic Coinnich, wife of Domhnall Gorm Óg of Sleat) (published in Angus Matheson, 'Poems from a Manuscript of Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh' [III], pp. 7-10, and in *GC*, poem 18); 'Deimhin do shíol Ádhaimh éag' ('Death is certain for the race of Adam') (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1635-40; to Mairghréd nighean Dhomhnaill Ghuirm Òig Nic Domhnaill of Sleat (?)) (published in Angus Matheson, 'Poems from a Manuscript of Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh' [II], p. 10). One of Cathal's poems, 'Saoth leam do chor, a Cholla' ('I grieve for your condition, Colla') (c. 1623-24) (published in Ronald Black, 'A Manuscript of Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh', *Celtica*, 10 (1973), 193-209 (pp. 194-200)), is to Colla Ciotach mac Giolla Easbuig of the Mac Domhnaills of Colonsay (c. 1570-1647).

⁷⁹'Sé hoidhche dhamhsa san Dún' ('Six nights for me in the fort') (Niall Mór Mac Mhuirich, c. 1613) (published in *RC*, II, 284-85, and in *GC*, poem 7); 'Do ísligh onóir Gaoidheal'.

⁸⁰Colm Ó Baoill, 'Domhnall Mac Mharcuis', *SGS*, 12 (1976), 183-93 (pp. 183-84).

⁸¹Published in Quiggin, *Poems from the Book of the Dean*, p. 99.

1541.⁸²

Another poet with the same surname, Ainnrias Mac Marcuis, was active in County Antrim in the early seventeenth century, and left a poem on the Flight of the Earls (1607) beginning ‘Anocht is uaigneach Éire’ (‘Tonight Ireland is desolate’).⁸³ The rarity of this surname in modern Ireland outside County Antrim, and the absence of other Irish poets of the period that bear this name, suggests that Ainnrias or his forebears may have come to Ulster through a migration across Sruth na Maoile,⁸⁴ just as seems to have been the case with the Ó Gnínmhs, another important northeast Ulster bardic family of the period.

The final member of the family was Domhnall Mac Marcuis, who was active about the turn of the eighteenth century, when he was employed as a catechist in Lochaber by the Synod of Argyll. The only poem that survives by this Domhnall is a short accompaniment to an address to the Synod in 1701, beginning ‘Flaitheas saor le saoghal sean | Do Sheanadh Earra-ghaoidheal’ (‘Unfettered leadership and long life | To the Synod of Argyll’).⁸⁵ The poem concludes with a salutation by the poet identifying himself as Domhnall Mac Mharcuis ‘gan lagan’, presumably meaning ‘*dhen Lagan*’ (‘of Laggan’), and thus demonstrating his connection to the members of the family attested from the sixteenth century.⁸⁶

*

Significantly, the number of Scottish families for whom bardic verse was composed was also extremely small in comparison to Ireland, where many scores, indeed hundreds of families are memorialized in bardic poetry.⁸⁷ The poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore are addressed to members of a total of only eight Scottish families — Mac Domhnaill (four poems), Caimbeul of Argyll (two), Caimbeul of Lawers (one), Mac Leòid of Lewis (one), Mac Leòid of Harris and Dunvegan (one), Mac Suibhne of Knapdale (one), Mac Dubhghaill of Dunolly (two), Mac Griogair (eight), Stiùbhart of Rannoch (one), and Mac Néill of Gigha (one)⁸⁸ — but there are no bardic poems to members of the last four kindreds anywhere outside the Book of the

⁸²Derick S. Thomson, ‘Gaelic Learned Orders’, p. 73.

⁸³Published in Eleanor Knott, ‘The Flight of the Earls (1607)’, *Ériu*, 8 (1916), 191-94.

⁸⁴Ó Baoill, ‘Domhnall Mac Mharcuis’, p. 184.

⁸⁵Published in Ó Baoill, ‘Domhnall Mac Mharcuis’, pp. 190-91.

⁸⁶Ó Baoill, ‘Domhnall Mac Mharcuis’, p. 191.

⁸⁷Ó Tuama, p. 57.

Dean, and the other surviving poems (of which there are dozens) to the Mac Suibhnes were composed in Ireland following the substantial relocation of the Mac Suibhnes to Tír Chonaill from the thirteenth century onwards. Further, of the entire body of Scottish bardic poetry outside the Book of the Dean, all but four poems — two early thirteenth-century poems to Earls of Lennox,⁸⁹ one to a Mac Fhionghuin,⁹⁰ and one (depending on one's definitions) to a Mac Coinnich⁹¹ — are to members of only three kindreds, Caimbeul, Mac Domhnaill and Mac Leòid. Notably, no complete panegyric poems to any Mac Gill-Eathain chiefs survive, a remarkable gap considering the importance of that kindred in the century following the collapse of the Lordship of the Isles.

Among the kindreds for whom surviving bardic poems were composed, however, patronage seems not to have been confined to the main lines but to have extended across the various subsidiary septs. For Clann Domhnaill, bardic poems were composed for members of the septs of Dunyveg and the Glens, Antrim, Colonsay, Clann Raghnaill, Sleat, and Glengarry. For the Caimbeuls, poems survive not only to the main line — the Earls, and later Marquesses and Dukes, of Argyll — but to heads of the cadet families of Auchinbreck and Glenorchy as well. The notorious late sixteenth-century poet Aonghus nan Aoir ('Aonghus of the Satires') visited and satirized the cadet Caimbeul families as well as the Earl of Argyll, which William Gillies takes as an indication 'that these houses were frequented by the *cliar* or poet-band — i.e. they were regarded as members of [. . .] a sort of "Gaelic club"'.⁹²

With respect to the Caimbeuls, additional evidence demonstrates that the kindred's involvement in literary matters was not confined to patronage alone, and that the survival of formal bardic poems is not the only indicator of cultural vitality. The second Earl of Argyll (†1513), for example, was held to be a discerning judge of

⁸⁸Meek, 'The Scots-Gaelic Scribes of Medieval Perthshire', p. 266.

⁸⁹'Saor do leannán, a Leamhain'; 'Mairg thréigios inn, a Amhlaofbh'.

⁹⁰'Adhbhur tuirsi ag fuil Fhionghuin' ('A reason for sadness for the blood of Fionghun') (anonymous, c. 1640) (unpublished; NLS Adv. MS 72.2.2, 33a (transcript in CW 137A, pp. 58-64)).

⁹¹'Leasg linn gabháil go Gearrloch'.

⁹²William Gillies, 'Some Aspects of Campbell History', *TGSI*, 50 (1976-78), 256-95 (p. 264). According to William Matheson, Aonghus nan Aoir appears to have been born in Harris and to have died in Strathglass, and is not to be confused with the roughly contemporary Irish poet Aonghus Ó Dálaigh, also nicknamed Aonghus na n-Aoir, a confusion that has led some commentators to offer Aonghus Ó Dálaigh as an example of an Irish poet journeying to Scotland. William Matheson, 'Aonghus nan Aoir: A Case of Mistaken Identity', *Scottish Studies*, 21 (1977), 105-08.

professional poetry, according to a famous line from the Book of the Dean of Lismore: ‘ná beir duan ar mhísheóladh | go a léigheadh go Mac Cailéin’ (‘bring unto Mac Cailein no poem lacking artistry to be read’).⁹³ Some thirteen poems survive in the Book of the Dean that were composed by three different Caimbeul aristocrats, nine by Sir Donnchadh Caimbeul of Glenorchy (†1513), cousin of Cailean, first Earl of Argyll, three by Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailein (Isabella, Countess of Argyll), apparently the first Earl’s wife (*fl.* c. 1500), and one by Mac Cailein himself, the second Earl of Argyll; although composed in syllabic metres, these are not learned poems but comply only loosely with the metrical rules and deal with lighter subjects, from love to unblushing ribaldry.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, as William Gillies notes, ‘their traditional metrical form, their literary allusions and their language testify to an informed interest in Gaelic poetry and tales on the part of their composers’.⁹⁵ The fact that the classical Gaelic poetic tradition was clearly so vibrant amongst the Caimbeuls in the early sixteenth century does suggest that the survival of bardic poetry associated with a kindred or area — only three poems prior to 1600 in the case of the Caimbeuls⁹⁶ — is not necessarily the best indicator of its literary vitality.

Similarly, the Book of the Dean of Lismore includes poems by approximately forty different Scottish poets, thus testifying to a fairly active and open poetry scene in Scotland at that time. Many of these poets do not appear to have belonged to hereditary learned families, and in most cases there is no other bardic verse by poets bearing these surnames to be found in other manuscripts. The difficulty comes when one attempts to extrapolate from this evidence and reconstruct a broader view of Scottish Gaelic literary culture at other periods or in regions unattested by the material

⁹³‘Duanair na sracaire’ (‘The song-book of the pillagers’) (Fionnlagh Mac an Aba, before 1525), § 7c-d (published in *SVBDL*, poem 1 (ll. 27-28)).

⁹⁴These poems are published in William Gillies, ‘The Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (I)’, *SGS*, 13, Part 1 (1978), 18-45; William Gillies, ‘The Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (II)’, *SGS*, 13, Part 2 (1981), 263-88; and William Gillies, ‘The Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (III)’, *SGS*, 14 (1983), 59-82. Two of Iseabail’s poems are published in *SVBDL*, poem 31 and pp. 307-08, and in *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets*, ed. by Catherine Kerrigan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), pp. 60-61. Iseabail’s third poem and Mac Cailein’s poem are transcribed, unedited, in Quiggin, *Poems from the Book of the Dean*, poems 62 and 70 respectively.

⁹⁵Gillies, ‘Some Aspects of Campbell History’, p. 259.

⁹⁶‘Ar sliocht Gaoidheal ó ghort Ghréag’; ‘Fhuaras rogha na n-óg mbríoghmhóir’ (‘I have found the pick of vigorous young warriors’) (Giolla Pádraig Mac Lachlainn, before 1542) (published in *SVBDL*, poem 14); ‘Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg’. The anonymous poem ‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal’ may also date from the late sixteenth century; and the important early vernacular poem ‘An Duanag Ullamh’ (beginning with the line ‘Triallaidh mi le m’ dhuanag ullaimh’ (‘I will journey with my ready poem’) (published in *BG*,

in the Book of the Dean. It is certainly tempting to adopt the view of the Book of the Dean as ‘a stray survival of a great corpus of Scottish *dán díreach*’,⁹⁷ but the evidence is simply not sufficient.

*

If classical bardic poetry may best be understood as an Irish development to which Gaelic Scotland attached itself — rather loosely — at its edges, the same may perhaps be said of the artificial, consciously planned language in which it was composed. Assessing the linguistic evidence, Brian Ó Cuív and, more recently, Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh have demonstrated how the shapers of the classical language excluded from the range of permissible options forms used in Scotland or other ‘marginal’ areas — ‘areas that were either remote or limited in extent or that lacked a strong literary “voice”’.⁹⁸ That Scotland should have been perceived as either remote or lacking such a voice would be significant in any circumstances, but this exclusion is all the more remarkable because the general strategy of these pioneering ‘language planners’ was to endeavour to take into account the dialectal divergences of the day and authorise the use of a range of alternative linguistic forms that would make it easier for poets to comply with the strict metrical rules, which, as noted above, were also being formalized and recodified at this time.⁹⁹

The exclusion of distinctly Scottish linguistic forms could have been deliberate, but was more likely a matter of working within particular horizons — culturally central, Irish horizons. Ó Maolalaigh has put the case in the following terms:

The Classical norm was created on Irish soil by Irish poets who drew solely on the resources of the language as it was spoken and written in Ireland. [. . .] None of the Scottish features which we would now associate with pre-twelfth century Scottish Gaelic are represented in the Classical Irish language. [. . .] If we accept that the Classical language is an Irish creation, then the absence of Scotticisms must be understood as being due to the tendency of the creators of linguistic norms to build on ‘central’ features at the expense of ‘peripheral’ features. It follows that the Irish language planners of the twelfth and subsequent centuries perceived the Scottish variety of Gaelic as being

ll. 6867-6946)), composed in the syllabic *snéadhbhairdne* metre, is also significant here.

⁹⁷ John MacInnes, ‘Gaelic Poetry’, p. 193.

⁹⁸ Brian Ó Cuív, ‘Vowel Hiatus in Early Modern Irish’, in *Celtic Language, Celtic Culture: A Festschrift for Eric P. Hamp*, ed. by A.T.E. Matonis and Daniel F. Melia (Van Nuys, CA: Ford & Bailie, 1990), pp. 96-107 (p. 97)

⁹⁹ Ó Cuív, ‘A Medieval Exercise in Language Planning’, pp. 24-26; Ó Cuív, ‘Vowel Hiatus’, p. 97; Ó Maolalaigh.

peripheral. The lack of overt Scottish features in the Classical language no doubt contributed to and consolidated the poor-sister status of Scottish Gaelic within the Gaelic world from the thirteenth century onwards.¹⁰⁰

A slightly alternative view might accept the central aspects of this argument, but reinterpret the late medieval position somewhat differently. In several respects, the literary dynamic, and cultural dynamic in general, seems to have been one through which Gaelic Scotland latched on to Irish practices to one degree or another, rather than seeking to rework and adapt those practices in a distinctively Scottish way. One of the most striking features of the classical language is its stability over the course of almost five hundred years, an immense stretch of time that involved tremendous changes in political and cultural circumstances. In its obliviousness to these changes, even more than in its creativity in dealing with dialectal variation and grammatical innovation at the time of its initial codification, the classical language can be said to be ‘artificial’. On the other hand, the fact that Scotland and Scottish linguistic forms were largely ignored at the particular time that the classical language was settled — the turn of the thirteenth century — does not necessarily provide a clear illustration of the nature of the cultural dynamic at other stages of the classical era. The late twelfth century was a time of great change and challenge within Ireland itself, as a result of church reorganization and the new Anglo-Norman presence, and the Hibernocentric nature of the classical language can be taken more as a snapshot of the specific circumstances prevailing at that time than as an indication of Irish attitudes more generally over a longer historical epoch. At a later stage in the classical era — most importantly, perhaps, in the fifteenth century when the Lordship of the Isles reached the peak of its political and cultural importance — attitudes might well have been very different, and the position of Gaelic Scotland rather more ‘central’. The mere fact that the same, distinctively Irish, language continued to be used in Scotland and Ireland alike may reflect a deliberate choice, but more likely demonstrates a general cultural conservatism that rested on unquestioning, largely unconscious acceptance of Ireland’s central role, rather than a continuing assertion of Scotland’s marginality. In this regard, it may be misleading to attribute to Scotland a fixed and unvarying status as Gaeldom’s ‘poor sister’ continuously from the late twelfth century onwards; at minimum, the

¹⁰⁰ Ó Maolalaigh, p. 14.

degree of that poverty should perhaps not be taken as constant.

*

From the body of surviving poetry and other contemporary evidence, it is certainly evident that Irish poets sometimes visited Scotland and composed poems for Scottish patrons, and that Scottish poets sometimes visited Ireland and composed poems for Irish patrons. What remains much less than clear is how common such practices were, and whether the traffic was more or less equal in both directions or was imbalanced to one degree or another. Scholars like Derick Thomson and Thomas Owen Clancy have fudged the matter somewhat, asserting that 'intercourse between the two countries was fairly free' and that 'Gaelic Scotland participated fairly freely in a standard literary Gaelic language' — whatever 'fairly' means.¹⁰¹ Thomson seems to have understated the importance of this question, commenting that it 'would make an interesting footnote to literary history' to investigate these comings and goings between Ireland and Scotland in detail.¹⁰² Surely it would be more appropriate to work forwards rather than backwards here, seeking to determine the nature and frequency of these interactions before announcing the conclusion that interaction was free.

Substantial and consistent evidence suggests that bardic training in Ireland was much more developed in Ireland than in Scotland, so that Scottish poets routinely went to Ireland for some, or perhaps in some cases all, of their poetic education. It seems much more doubtful that Irish poetry students would ever have undertaken the opposite journey, and, indeed, there is no surviving evidence of such movements. It would seem a safe conclusion, then, that Ireland played the dominant role in this important aspect of the bardic system.

Significantly, the evidence for the maintenance of bardic schools in Scotland is extremely slight. In fact, although there are various references to schools in general, there is no contemporary evidence at all concerning any specific school anywhere in Scotland. Thus, although it seems very likely that hereditary poetic families in Scotland did maintain schools of some kind, these may have been small in scale, or oriented towards elementary instruction only, with Irish institutions having exclusive

¹⁰¹Derick S. Thomson, 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family', p. 277; Clancy, p. 37.

¹⁰²Derick S. Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, p. 39.

responsibility for more advanced training.¹⁰³

Furthermore, evidence is very thin concerning the specific connections between Scottish poetic families and schools and their Irish counterparts. It would be safe to assume, nevertheless, that traditional relationships and networks of various kinds were in place so that a budding Scottish poet from an established family would head for a certain institution in Ireland with which the family had an established connection. In particular, it appears that the family connection between the Mac Mhuirichs of Scotland and the Ó Dálaighs of Ireland, from whom the Mac Mhuirichs' progenitor Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh sprang, lay at the centre of the professional relationships between poets in the two countries. The Scottish link to the Ó Dálaighs is apparent as late as the 1640s, for example, in the relationship between the important Irish poet Cú Chonnacht Ó Dálaigh of Kilsarkan, Co. Kerry and the visiting Scottish poet Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, who apparently spent substantial time as an acolyte of Cú Chonnacht and composed an elegy upon his death in 1642.¹⁰⁴

The evidence of surviving poetry, in contrast, suggests a more mutual interaction with respect to the actual work of trained poets. Yet the surviving corpus of bardic poetry composed by Irish poets for Scottish patrons is surprisingly small — certainly small enough that one should hesitate in drawing firm conclusions about the range and frequency of Irish poets' activity in Scotland. Moreover, several of these poems were composed not in Scotland itself but in Ireland, either by poets choosing not to journey to Scotland for one reason or another, or on behalf of chiefs resident in Ireland, like the Mac Domhnaills of Antrim, whose 'Scottishness' at different points in time is a matter of definition. The chronological range is wide, which is helpful in terms of demonstrating the continuity of the tradition, but unhelpful in showing its frequency at any given time.

By the same token, there are very few surviving panegyric poems composed by Scottish poets for Irish patrons — no more than eleven, and of these four are seventeenth-century compositions by a single poet, Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin. Only seven different patrons are addressed. Given the relatively greater strength of the scribal tradition in Ireland, this scarcity of evidence could be taken as an indication that

¹⁰³John Bannerman, 'Literacy in the Highlands', in *The Renaissance and Reformation in Scotland*, ed. by Ian B. Cowan and Duncan Shaw (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1983), pp. 214-35 (p. 221).

visits to Ireland by Scottish poets might not have been all that common.

These various poems are arranged in four tables below. Where there are doubts as to whether a particular poem should be placed in a certain category — for example, if it is not clear whether the poet in question was Irish or Scottish — the area of uncertainty is noted.

¹⁰⁴ 'Cia feasda as urra don eól'.

Bardic poems composed for Scottish patrons by Irish poets in Scotland:

‘Saor do leannán, a Leamhain’ (‘Noble is your lover, o Leven’)

(Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, c. 1200(?); to Alún mac Muiredhaigh, first earl of Lennox († c. 1200(?))

The date of this poem, and the patron for whom it was composed, are not entirely clear, but Thomas Owen Clancy suggests convincingly that it was composed for the first earl of Lennox, Alún mac Muiredhaigh, and not his son Alún mac Alúin, the second earl.¹⁰⁵ Accordingly, as discussed below, the poem would appear to have been composed not during Muireadhach Albanach’s exile in Scotland after 1213 but in the course of an earlier, unrecorded *cuairt*.

‘Maírg thréigios inn, a Amhlaóibh’ (‘Woe to him who abandons me, o Amhlaóibh’)

(Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, c. 1217(?); to Amhlaóibh mac Alúin, third earl of Lennox († c. 1217))

‘Ceannas Gaoidheal do chloinn Cholla’ (‘The headship of the Gaels to the race of Colla’)

(Ó hÉanna, before 1503; to Eóin Mac Domhnaill, fourth Lord of the Isles (†1503))

Origin of poet unknown: it is not clear who Ó hÉanna was or to which kindred or district he belonged. Mícheál Ó Mainnín notes that a family of this name once served as church officials in Beannchor (Banagher), Co. Derry, and speculates that the Ó hÉannas might have come to Scotland as part of the *tochradh nighean a’ Chathanaich*.¹⁰⁶

‘Domhnall mac Raghnaill, rosg mall’ (‘Domhnall mac Raghnaill, languid eyed’)

(anonymous, before 1247; to Domhnall mac Raghnaill, eponymous progenitor of Clann Domhnaill)

Origin of poet unknown, but geographical references in the poem suggest a Tír Chonaill/northwest Connacht provenance.

‘Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill’ (‘True is my praise for Mac Domhnaill’)

(anonymous, before 1503; to Eóin Mac Domhnaill, fourth Lord of the Isles)

Origin of poet unknown: Derick Thomson suggests that the author of this poem is probably either a Lachlann Mac Mhuirich ‘*archipoeta*’, who appears as a witness to a charter in 1485, or Ó hÉanna, author of ‘Ceannas Gaoidheal do chloinn Cholla’.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵Clancy, p. 258.

¹⁰⁶Ó Mainnín, p. 48 fn. 48; see above, p.

¹⁰⁷Derick S. Thomson, ‘The Poetic Tradition in Gaelic Scotland’, p. 123.

‘Meisde nach éadmhar Éire’ (‘It’s unfortunate that Ireland is not jealous’)
(Domhnall mac Briain Ó hUiginn, c. 1490(?); to Eóin Mac Domhnaill, fourth Lord of the Isles (†1503))
(? — location of composition unknown)

‘Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg’ (‘It is fitting for an *ollamh* to journey on an embassy’)
(anonymous [*ollamh* to An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill]), c. 1555; to Giolla-Easbuig, fourth Earl of Argyll (†1558))

‘An síth do rogha, a rígh Fionnghall?’ (‘Is peace your choice, o king of the Hebrideans?’)
(anonymous, c. 1590; to Aonghas Mac Domhnaill of Dunyveg (†1614))¹⁰⁸

W.J. Watson suggests that this poem was composed by an Irish poet, as implied by stanzas 14 and 15 (lines 53-60).

¹⁰⁸Published in W.J. Watson, ‘An Unpublished Poem to Angus MacDonald of Dun Naomhaig’, *An Gaidheal*, 19 (1923), 36-38.

Bardic poems composed for Scottish patrons by Irish poets in Ireland:

‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’ (‘Purchase thy father’s poem, o Aonghas’)
(anonymous, c. 1250; to Aonghas Mór Mac Domhnaill (†1296))

‘Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh’ (‘I have received a present I sought not’)
(Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, c. 1429-48; to Alasdair Mac Domhnaill, third Lord of the Isles
(†1449))

‘Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais’ (‘Awake, o son of Angus’)
(anonymous, c. 1600; to Sir Séamas mac Aonghais Mac Domhnaill of Knockrinsay
(†1626))
(? — location of composition uncertain)¹⁰⁹

‘Ionmholta an t-óglach nach diongnadh’
(anonymous, c. 1620; to Sir Séamas mac Aonghais Mac Domhnaill of Knockrinsay)
(? — origins of poet and location of composition uncertain)¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹Published in Osborn Bergin, ‘Address to Séamas Mac Aonghuis’, *SGS*, 4 (1934-35), 136-149 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 43).

¹¹⁰Published in Pól Breathnach, ‘Interpretanda’, *Irisleabhar Muighe Nuadh*, 30 (1931), 37-46 (poem 4, pp. 43-46). Also notable is Toirdhealbhadh Óg Ó Mítháin’s accentual poem in praise of an unnamed woman (c. 1650(?)) beginning ‘A theachtairé théid i gcéin go talamh Mhic Leóid’ (‘O messenger who goes afar to Mac Leóid’s country’) (unpublished (TCD MS 1375 (H.5.3), pp. 4, 22; RIA MS F v 3, p. 208; Maynooth MS MF 9, p. 60; British Library Egerton MS 207 f. 27 b.). In another manuscript, RIA MS 24 M 11, p. 41, the poem, in fragmentary, four-stanza form, is ascribed to ‘Ailís Ní Néill’.

Two well known poems by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird also have a Scottish connection, but neither can properly be considered a conventional panegyric in praise of a patron: ‘Dursan mh’eachtra go hAlbuin’ (‘My journey to Scotland was a tribulation’) (c. 1582(?)) (published in *AD*, poem 53) and ‘Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais’ (‘The three crowns in James’s charter’) (c. 1590(?)) (published in *AD*, poem 44).

Bardic poems composed by Irish poets for arguably Scottish chiefs resident in Ireland:

‘Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne’ (‘An assembling of a fleet against Castle Sween’)

(Artúr Dall Mac Gurcaigh, c. 1310; to Eoin Mac Suibhne (*fl.* c. 1310))

There is a substantial body of later Mac Suibhne poetry that could conceivably be included here, but the Mac Suibhnes became firmly established in Ireland from the fourteenth century onwards, as discussed earlier, and it would be overreaching to connect this poetry — which is not rhetorically ‘Scottish’ in any way — to Scotland.

‘Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain’ (‘Long has Fódla had a claim upon Scotland’)

(Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1580; to Somhairle Buidhe Mac Domhnaill (†1590))¹¹¹

‘Treisi an eagla ioná an andsacht’ (‘Fear is stronger than affection’)

(Brian (?) Ó Gnímh, c. 1580; to various members of the Mac Domhnaills of Antrim)¹¹²

‘Do loisceadh meisi sa Mhuaidh’ (‘I have been burnt in the Moy’)

(Brian (?) Ó Gnímh, c. 1586; on the deaths of Domhnall Gorm and Alasdair Carrach Mac Domhnaill at Ardnaree (1586))¹¹³

‘Mionn súl Éireann i nÁth Cliath’ (‘The jewel of Ireland’s eyes is in Dublin’)

(Brian Ó Gnímh, c. 1586; on the execution of Alasdair mac Somhairle Bhuidhe Mac Domhnaill (1586))¹¹⁴

‘Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochlainnaigh’ (‘These Hebrideans are Irishmen indeed’)

(Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh, c. 1620; to Ragnall Mac Domhnaill, first Earl of Antrim (†1636))¹¹⁵

¹¹¹Published in *TD*, poem 24. Also pertinent are the poem, possibly also by Tadhg Dall, to Máire (†1582), wife of Somhairle Buidhe and daughter of Conn Bacach Ó Néill (†1559), beginning ‘Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn’ (‘The enticement of an exchange for Ireland’) (published in Pádraig Ó Macháin, ‘Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn: Foinse dá Shaothar’, in *An Dán Díreach*, ed. by Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, Léachtaí Cholm Cille, 24 (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1994), pp. 77-113 (pp. 103-11)), and a fragmentary *iomchasaoid* (complaint), more certainly attributable to Tadhg Dall and interpreted by Eleanor Knott as an appeal to the leaders of Clann Domhnaill Gallóglach, beginning ‘Oraoid sunn go síol gColla’ (‘This is an address to the race of Colla’) (published in *TD*, poem 42), where the poet complains of constant harassment by Scottish warriors. Three late sixteenth-century poems to members of Clann Domhnaill in Leinster, established in Ireland from the fourteenth century onwards, are preserved in the so-called Tinnakill Duanaire (TCD MS 1340 (H.3.19)). See Anne O’Sullivan, ‘The Tinnakill Duanaire’, *Celtica*, 11 (1976), 214-28.

¹¹²Published in Paul Walsh, *Irish Chiefs and Leaders*, ed. by Colm Ó Lochlainn (Dublin: Three Candles, 1960), pp. 72-78.

¹¹³Published in Colm Ó Lochlainn, ‘Ár ar Ard na Riadh’, *Éigse*, 5 (1945-47), 149-55.

¹¹⁴Published in *RC*, II, 302-03 and in Laoide, pp. 46-49.

¹¹⁵Published in Lambert McKenna, ‘Poem to the First Earl of Antrim’, *The Irish Monthly*, 48 (1920), 314-18,

‘Díon tíre da thighearna’ (‘A country’s defence is for its lord’)
(anonymous, c. 1630(?); to Ragnall Mac Domhnaill, first Earl of Antrim, and
Ragnall Mac Domhnaill, second Earl of Antrim (†1683))¹¹⁶

‘Taisdil mhionca ór siabhradh sionn’ (‘We are left deranged by frequent journeying’)
(anonymous, c. 1639-42; to Ragnall Mac Domhnaill, second Earl of Antrim)¹¹⁷

‘Beid mar do bhádar roimhe’ (‘They shall be as they were before’)
(anonymous, c. 1644; to Ragnall Mac Domhnaill, second Earl of Antrim)¹¹⁸

‘Ainmigh ria ccách ceann a ccionn’ (‘Name before all others when placed in order’)
(Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh (?); after 1644; to Ragnall Mac Domhnaill, then elevated to
first Marquis of Antrim) (four-stanza fragment)¹¹⁹

and in *DD*, poem 89.

¹¹⁶RIA MS A v 2, 63a-64a (unpublished). Also noteworthy are several learned poems composed for the Mac Domhnaills of Antrim in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries: ‘Cuimhnigh sochar síol gColla’ (‘Remember the privileges of the progeny of Colla’) (anonymous, c. 1620(?)) (unpublished; TCD MS 1340 (H.3.19), pp. 63-64); ‘Dodhéan craobhsgaoileadh na cColla’ (‘I will give the pedigree of the Collas’) (anonymous, 1618(?)) (unpublished; RIA MSS 23 G 12, p. 130, 23 M 18, 288 m, 23 D 5, 206 i, 23 C 12, 7 m, 23 Q 2, p. 78, 23 G 8, p. 103, C vi 1 (II), p. 415, 24 G 19, item (4)); ‘Eisd re senchas síol gColla’ (‘Listen to the pedigree of the progeny of Colla’) (anonymous, 1588; ascribed to different poets in different MSS.) (unpublished; Harvard MS of the Book of the O’Byrnes, f. 76a; Murphy MSS Catalogue; RIA MSS 23 G 12, p. 88, 23 M 18, p. 284, 23 D 5, p. 151 i, 23 G 8, p. 88 m; TCD MS 1340 (H.3.19), pp. 65-66); ‘Iad féin mhóras Clann Cholla’ (‘It is they themselves who will magnify Clann Cholla’) (Fearghal Óg mac Briain Dorcha Ó hUiginn, c. 1620(?)) (unpublished; RIA MS C iv 1, pp. 179, 188).

¹¹⁷Published in Brian Ó Cuív, ‘A Poem on the Second Earl of Antrim’, *SGS*, 13 (1981), 302-05.

¹¹⁸Published in Robin Flower, ‘An Irish-Gaelic Poem on the Montrose Wars’, *SGS*, 1 (1926), 113-18.

¹¹⁹Published in Brian Ó Cuív, ‘Some Irish Items Relating to the MacDonnells of Antrim’, *Celtica*, 16 (1984), 139-56 (p. 151). Also noteworthy here are the anonymous vernacular poem composed for Ragnall, first Marquess of Antrim upon his arrival in Scotland in 1644, beginning ‘Fàilt’ a Mharcuis a dh’Alba’ (‘Welcome to Scotland, o Marquess’) (published in A. MacDonald and A. MacDonald, *The MacDonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry* (Inverness: Northern Counties Newspaper and Printing and Publishing Co., 1911), pp. 46-47), and the accentual poem ‘Bile cosanta Críche Fáil’ (‘Defending tree of the bounds of Ireland’) (published in Cathair Ó Dochartaigh and Colm Ó Baoill, *Trí Rainn is Amhrán* (Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen Press, forthcoming 1999) (earlier edition, without notes, Belfast: Lagan Press, 1996 (p. 91)). The original version of ‘Bile cosanta Críche Fáil’, contained in several Munster manuscripts which ascribe it to Domhnall Mac Lochlainn, contained four verses followed by an *amhrán*, but it was adjusted in other manuscripts so as to remove the fourth verse and make the poem fit the popular *trí rainn is amhrán* format. A reference to oaths in the last line of the poem, perhaps referring to the Oath of Loyalty and Oath of Refusal required by the Act of 1704, suggests that it was composed c. 1705, for the fourth Earl of Antrim (†1721), although it has also been associated with the first Earl (†1636). I am grateful to Cathair Ó Dochartaigh for giving me a copy of the notes accompanying the poem in the forthcoming supplemented edition of the book.

Bardic poems composed by Scottish poets for Irish patrons:

‘Aisling ad-chonnarc ó chianaibh’ (‘A vision I saw some time ago’)
(Giolla Brighde Albanach, before 1242; to Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain, king of Thomond (†1242))¹²⁰

The question of Giolla Brighde’s origins is discussed in detail below.

‘Fada dhamh druim re hÉirinn’ (‘Long am I with my back towards Ireland’)
(Giolla Brighde Albanach, before 1224; to Cathal Croibhdhearg Ó Conchubhair, king of Connacht (†1224))
(? — origins of poet, and authorship, unclear)¹²¹

‘Sgían mo charad ar mo chliú’ (‘My friend’s knife at my left side’)
(Giolla Brighde Albanach, before 1242; to Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain)
(? — origins of poet, and authorship, unclear)¹²²

‘Tabhraidh chugam cruit mo ríogh’ (‘Bring me my king’s harp’)
(Giolla Brighde Albanach, before 1242; to Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain)
(? — origins of poet unclear)¹²³

‘Tháinig an Craobhdhearg go Cruachan’ (‘The Red Hand has come to Cruachan’)
(Giolla Brighde Albanach, c. 1220; to Cathal Croibhdhearg Ó Conchubhair)
(? — origins of poet unclear)¹²⁴

‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’ (‘It is the hand of one man who in Ireland will succour’)
(Giolla Críost Brúilingeach, before 1458; to Tomaltach Mac Diarmada of Moylurg, Co. Roscommon (†1458))¹²⁵

¹²⁰Published in Hugh McGeown and Gerard Murphy, ‘Giolla Brighde Albanach’s Vision of Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain’, *Éigse*, 7 (1953-55), 80-83.

¹²¹Published in Brian Ó Cuív, ‘A Poem for Cathal Croibhdhearg Ó Conchubhair’, *Éigse*, 13 (1969-70), 195-202.

¹²²Published in Osborn Bergin, ‘On a Dagger’, *Studies*, 15 (1926), 605-06 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 52); see Clancy, p. 262.

¹²³Published in Paul Walsh, *Gleanings from Irish Manuscripts*, 2nd edn (Dublin: Three Candles, 1933), pp. 113-15.

¹²⁴Published in E.C. Quiggin, ‘A Poem by Gilbride Macnamee in Praise of Cathal O’Conor’, in *Miscellany Presented to Kuno Meyer*, ed. by Osborn Bergin and Carl Marstrander (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1912), pp. 167-77.

¹²⁵Published in *SVBDL*, poem 6.

'Dá urradh i n-iath Éireann' ('Two chiefs there are in Ireland')
(Giolla Críost Brúilingeach, c. 1430-58; satirical comparison of Tomaltach Mac Diarmada and Tomás Óg Mág Uidhir (†1480))¹²⁶

'Cia as urra d'ainm an iarthair' ('Who is guardian of the western name?')
(Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, 1640; to Domhnall Ó Donnabháin of Carbery, Co. Cork (†1660))

'Cia feasda as urra don eól' ('Who is guardian of learning now?')
(Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, 1642; on the death of the poet Cú Chonnacht Ó Dálaigh (1642))

'Gnáith féile ag fagháil innmhe' ('Liberality customarily begets standing')
(Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, c. 1631-50; to Donnchadh Ó Ceallacháin of Clonmeen, Co. Cork (†c. 1680))

'Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad' ('Unhappiness begins when friends part')
(Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, 1643(?); to Séafraidh Ó Donnchadha an Ghleanna (Co. Kerry) (†1678))¹²⁷

¹²⁶Published in *SVBDL*, poem 7.

¹²⁷Also notable here, because perhaps composed in Ireland, is the *dán grádha* (courtly love poem) beginning 'I mbrat an bhrollaigh ghil-se' ('In the cloak of this fair breast'), attributed to Fearchar Ó Maoil Chiaráin (*fl.* before 1500) (published in *Dánta Grádha: Cnósach de sna Dánta Grá is Fearr san Ghaelge (A.D. 1350-1750)*, ed. by Thomas F. O'Rahilly, 2nd edn (Cork: Cork University Press, 1926), poem 14). Fearchar, who was killed in Ireland, is better known as the subject of the famous lament by his father Maol Chiaráin beginning 'Tugadh oirne easbhaidh mhór' ('A great loss has befallen me') (published in R.A. Breatnach, 'Marbhna Fhearchoir Í Mháoil Chiaráin', *Éigse*, 3 (1943), 165-85).

It is striking that two of the most important early bardic poets, both active in the early thirteenth century, share the nickname ‘Albanach’ and an evident connection to Scotland: Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh and Giolla-Brighde Albanach. There are important areas of uncertainty concerning these poets’ backgrounds and careers, however, uncertainties that extend to Giolla-Brighde’s surname and, indeed, nationality.

Rather more is known about Muireadhach Ó Dálaigh’s career, although the principal source is the seventeenth-century account in the *Annals of the Four Masters* (1213), which recounts how Muireadhach, established as *ollamh* to Domhnall Ó Domhnaill (†1241) and based in Lissadill (Lios an Doill) in modern Co. Sligo, came to flee Ireland. After killing Ó Domhnaill’s tax collector with an axe, Muireadhach fled Ó Domhnaill’s unanticipated wrath, heading for Clanrickard, Limerick, and Dublin before setting off for Scotland.

Muireadhach’s decision to come to Scotland is interesting in itself as an indicator of cultural connections between Ireland and Scotland during this period, and all the more so because of his specific source of patronage there with the earls of Lennox, a family of Anglo-Norman origin based at Balloch at the south end of Loch Lomond, on the very periphery of the Gaelic culture-area in subsequent centuries. Two poems evidence Muireadhach’s connection to these patrons, the second of them, ‘Mairg thréigios inn, a Amhlaofbh’ (‘Woe to him who abandons me, o Amhlaofbh’), making clear that the relationship had become established with some degree of solidity and expressing Muireadhach’s consequent dissatisfaction that his expectations and perceived entitlements were not being fulfilled.

Significantly, it appears that this relationship with the earls of Lennox — perhaps part of a broader professional connection to Scotland — predated Muireadhach’s flight from Ireland, and thus demonstrates a rather greater firmness of footing. Muireadhach’s first poem to a member of the family, ‘Saor do leannán, a Leamhain’ (‘Noble is your lover, o Leven’), is addressed to a patron named Alún, associated by most twentieth-century scholars with the second earl of Lennox, who bore that name and who died c. 1217, thus making him a suitable patron for Muireadhach in the wake of his flight from Ireland in 1213. As Thomas Clancy points

out, however, this Alún was the son of another Alún, the first earl, but the poem is addressed to ‘*Alún ógmhach Muireadhaigh*’ (‘Alún son of **Muireadhach**’) (§§ 1b, 10a).¹²⁸ Alún mac Muireadhaigh was the first rather than the second earl and appears to have died c. 1200, so that Muireadhach’s poem would seem to have been composed well in advance of his flight from Ireland, and in connection with an earlier visit to Scotland.

Approximately eight poems¹²⁹ survive from Giolla-Brighde Albanach — long confused with, but now successfully disentangled from, the slightly later Tír Eoghain poet Giolla-Brighde Mac Con Midhe (c. 1210-c. 1272)¹³⁰ — but almost nothing concrete is known about him, save that he journeyed to the eastern Mediterranean on the Fifth Crusade in 1218, apparently in the company of Muireadhach Albanach. Significantly, there is almost nothing, in his surviving poems or elsewhere, to suggest that this poet was Scottish rather than Irish: all his surviving poems, other than those of a religious nature, were composed for Irish chiefs. Most scholars — with the notable exception of Derick Thomson — have nevertheless assumed that Giolla-Brighde was in fact a Scot.¹³¹

Two pieces of evidence suggest a Scottish connection of some kind, but they seem to conflict with one another. The first item, the concluding stanza from his poem ‘*Tabhraidh chugam cruit mo ríogh*’ (‘Bring me my king’s harp’), composed for Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain, king of Thomond (†1242), seems fairly unambiguous on its face:

*Ionmhoin lem-sa — duthchas damh —
fiodhbhuidhe áille Alban;
gíodh ionmhain as annsa leam
an crann-sa d’fhiodhaidh Éireann.*

Dear to me (my heritage)
Scotland’s lovely yellow woods;
though still more dear to me yet
is this tree of Irish wood.¹³²

¹²⁸Clancy, p. 258. I am grateful to Dr. Clancy for further elucidation on these points.

¹²⁹These include the panegyric poems noted above — ‘*Aisling ad-chonnarc ó chianaibh*’, ‘*Fada dhamh druim re hÉirinn*’, ‘*Tabhraidh chugam cruit mo ríogh*’, ‘*Sgían mo charad ar mo chliú*’, and ‘*Tháinig an Craobhdhearg go Cruachan*’ — and two poems relating to the poet’s participation in the Fifth Crusade, ‘*A ghilli gabhus an stiúir*’ (‘O lad who takes the helm’) (published in Gerard Murphy, ‘Two Irish Poems Written from the Mediterranean in the Thirteenth Century’, *Éigse*, 7 (1953-55), 72-74) and ‘*A Mhuireadhaigh, meil do sgín*’ (‘Muireadhach, sharpen your knife’) (published in *Measgra Dánta/Miscellaneous Irish Poems*, ed. by T.F. O’Rahilly, 2 vols (Cork: Cork University Press, 1927), II, poem 69; see Clancy, p. 264).

¹³⁰Gerard Murphy, ‘A Vision Concerning Rolf MacMahon’, *Éigse*, 4 (1944-45), 79-111 (pp. 95-96); Williams, pp. 1-2.

¹³¹Compare Murphy, ‘A Vision Concerning Rolf MacMahon’, pp. 94-95, and Bannerman, ‘The King’s Poet’, p. 144, with Derick S. Thomson, ‘The MacMhuirich Bardic Family’, p. 279, and Derick S. Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, p. 39.

¹³²§ 13; translation from Clancy, p. 257.

The word *dúthchas* ('birthright', 'heritage', 'patrimony', 'native place or country', 'ancestral home', 'traditional connection') certainly suggests a Scottish connection of the most fundamental kind, but the statement is so isolated and unembellished that it seems risky to use it as the basis for a definitive conclusion. It is noteworthy here, for instance, that Muireadhach Albanach — indisputably an Irishman — refers to Scotland as his own country in a poem to a Munster patron, Murchadh na n-Each Ó Briain (†1224(?)): '*Ceadaigh dhamhsa dul dom thír* [. . .] *i nAlbain bhfeadhaigh bhféraigh*' ('Let me go back to **my country** . . . to festive grassy Scotland').¹³³ If as little were known about Muireadhach as about Gille-Brighde, this statement might well be taken as an indication of Scottish origins for Muireadhach.

The second piece of evidence concerning Giolla-Brighde's origins is the poem 'Fada dhamh druim re hÉirinn' ('Long am I with my back towards Ireland'), a panegyric to the Connacht king Cathal Croibhdhearg Ó Conchubhair (†1224). The poem is very much cast in the mold of the Irish exile's lament, expressing fondness for the homeland while away in an alien country; this stereotyped form of expression is surely an odd idiom for a Scotsman to adopt to express his feelings for Ireland while at home in Scotland.¹³⁴ Scotland is, indeed, not mentioned anywhere in the poem; although the poet describes himself as being overseas (§ 1b), it is no more than an informed guess to place him in Scotland.

Several different conclusions seem possible from this rather contradictory evidence. If Scottish, and therefore receiving the nickname *Albanach* by virtue of nationality, Giolla-Brighde must have spent much of his life and career in Ireland, perhaps following on from bardic training there. If Irish, and receiving the nickname *Albanach* on the basis of his professional activity, he must have had some more substantial connection to Scotland than is evidenced from the surviving poetry. The former scenario, perhaps the more likely, would certainly be the more significant and remarkable — that is, that at this early point in the classical era a poet of Scottish provenance could move so freely and flourish so successfully in Ireland — but a definitive conclusion seems impossible.

¹³³'Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh' ('Guess who I am, o Murchadh') (Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, c. 1230), § 29a, c (published in Osborn Bergin, 'A Palmer's Greeting', *Studies*, 13 (1924), 569-74 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 24)).

¹³⁴The nuances and ramifications of this theme in Irish poetry are discussed extensively below, pp. 168-82.

Nor is any general conclusion possible about the extent to which Scottish poets could choose a career in Ireland rather than Scotland, or to what extent such options, if available, were in fact taken up. Nor is it possible to know the converse position with respect to Irish poets. Yet these sorts of questions, even if they remain unanswered, are important if one attempts to reconstruct a picture of classical Gaelic literary culture as a functioning system.

It is not easy to hypothesize whether Scottish visits to Ireland would have been commoner than Irish visits to Scotland, or vice-versa, or whether traffic would have been more or less equivalent. Scottish poets certainly went to Ireland for training, as discussed above, and some would surely have been attracted to its extensive and prestigious patronage opportunities, seeking either to base themselves there or to undertake *cuarta* (poetic circuits to the courts of different patrons) whenever possible. On the other hand, the extent of job competition in Ireland might have made such aspirations difficult to fulfill. It is more challenging to postulate affirmative reasons that might have prompted Irish poets to migrate to Scotland, but the competition for patronage in Ireland and the possibility of secure compensation in Scotland from powerful patrons like the Mac Domhnaills could well have provided sufficient incentives. There is certainly no evidence that working in Scotland was viewed as any kind of prestige assignment, and indeed several Irish poems communicate a distinct reluctance to journey to Scotland.¹³⁵

Significantly, the collapse of the old Gaelic order in Ireland in the early seventeenth century does not appear to have prompted a large-scale movement of Irish literati to Gaelic Scotland. Certainly there is no feeling at all — to be observed in literary sources or inferred from the fact of migration — that Gaelic Scotland was perceived as a surviving bastion of ‘Gaeldom’ even after the crushing of Gaelic Irish independence, to which retreat was logical or natural. At least a few Irish poets appear to have sought out new patrons in Scotland after the upheavals in Ireland, however, as suggested by Cathal Mac Mhuirich’s poem to Domhnall Gorm Óg Mac Domhnaill of Sleat (c. 1640) beginning ‘Eireóchthar fós le cloinn gColla’ (‘Colla’s kindred will rise again’), where he praises Domhnall Gorm Óg’s wife Seònaid as a generous patron:

*Ge a-tá a n-Innsi Gall gan ghluasacht
a glac méirsheng
siobhlach a teisd thiar 's gach aonfhonn
fa íath nÉirenn.[. . .]*

Although she of the slender-fingered hand
is firmly settled in the Hebrides,
her renown speeds west into every single
territory about the land of Ireland.

*Le a ttig fá clú don chléir Mhuimnuigh
go Magh Monaidh
casaoid rempa ar fhedh gach ionuidh —
cedh fa gconuigh?*

Because of her fame so many Munster poets
come to Scotland
that they are complained of everywhere —
why find fault?¹³⁶

The factual background to these stanzas is frustratingly uncertain, however, for little evidence survives detailing the migrations of particular poets. Why Munster poets should be specified is not obvious: disruptions were more profound in the north of Ireland, and connections between the Mac Domhnaills and the preeminent Ulster kindreds more immediate. There are other hints of cultural vitality in the Hebrides at this time, however, as in the evocative first line of another of Cathal's poems: 'Foraois éigeas Innsi Gall' ('The Hebrides are a forest of learned men').¹³⁷

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, one of the most interesting poetic careers during this period involves a journey in the opposite direction, from Scotland to Ireland. Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, apparently connected to Mull and to Dùthaich Mhic Leòid, is said to have spent thirty-four years in Ireland (c. 1608-c. 1642)¹³⁸ — a remarkable illustration of how a Scottish poet could successfully pursue a professional career in Ireland as late as the 1630s and 1640s. Circumstances must certainly have been difficult by this time: the last of the traditional bardic schools are said to have closed at the time of the 1641 Rising,¹³⁹ and the demise of the old bardic order — the subject of many famous Irish poems of the period¹⁴⁰ — is lamented keenly in one of Maol Domhnaigh's four surviving poems, his elegy for the Munster poet Cú

¹³⁵This theme in Irish poetry is discussed in detail below, pp. 158-66.

¹³⁶I am grateful to Ronald Black for giving me sight of his edition and translation of this poem, which I have used in the text.

¹³⁷Published in Ronald Black, 'The Genius of Cathal Mac Mhuirich', *TGSI*, 50 (1976-78), 327-65 (pp. 344-52), and in *RC*, II, 224-35.

¹³⁸The Rev. John MacLean, minister of Kilninian in Mull, writing in 1702, describes a 'Muldonish M'Eoin' as having been in Ireland for thirty-four years and having died some forty years earlier. It seems most likely that Maol Domhnaigh would have returned to Scotland shortly after 1642, the year of his last clearly dateable surviving poem, given the dangerous political situation in Ireland at that time. Ronald Black, 'Poems by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin (I)', p. 195.

¹³⁹*IBP*, p. 159.

¹⁴⁰E.g. 'Tairnig éigse fhuinn Ghaoidheal' ('The poets of the land of the Gael have come to an end') (Fear Flatha Ó Gnín, c. 1610(?)) (published in *DD*, poem 115); 'Aonar dhamhsa eidir dhaoineibh' ('I am alone among men') (anonymous, c. 1620(?)) (published in Osborn Bergin, 'The Empty School', *Irish Review*, 2

Chonnacht Ó Dálaigh (†1642) beginning ‘Cia feasda is urra don eól’ (‘Who is guardian of learning now?’).

Despite this background of upheaval and decay, Maol Domhnaigh appears to have flourished in Ireland, as evidenced most strikingly in the poem by Piaras Feiritéar — himself fated to be hanged by the English in 1653 after playing a prominent role in the risings of the era — beginning ‘Oide a ndréchtaibh an dreasfháil’ (‘An expert in thorn-dense poems’), which praises Maol Domhnaigh — ‘óigfhile foirbhthe a hAlbain’ (the ‘faultless young poet from Scotland’) (§ 5d) — in affectionate terms.¹⁴¹ Maol Domhnaigh is described as visiting a number of bardic schools throughout Ireland — in Antrim, Clare, Cork, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Galway, Kerry, Limerick, Mayo, Offaly, Tipperary, and Wexford¹⁴² — so that Feiritéar compares him to a bee stealing honey from every flower (‘*gadaidh bláith gach blátha a-muigh | don bheich is meadh Maol Domhnaigh*’) (§ 10a-b). On the other hand, the poem’s strikingly personal tone and emphasis on Maol Domhnaigh’s Scottish origins (§§ 5d, 9d-e, 11a-b) can be taken as indications that the presence of such a poet in Munster at this time was perceived as something out of the ordinary, and noteworthy for that reason.¹⁴³ Irrespective of any such ‘novelty value’, however, Maol Domhnaigh seems to have earned a prominent place in Munster literary tradition, as evidenced by Diarmaid mac Seáin Bhuidhe Mac Cárthaigh’s elegy for Saerbhreach Mac Cárthaigh (†1694), where the poet laments that former masters of the art like Maol Domhnaigh are no longer alive to compose proper elegies for Saerbhreach.¹⁴⁴ ‘*Maol Domhnaigh rug geall leis i cómhdaibh*’ (‘Maol Domhnaigh who was surpassing in poetry’) (§ 15d) is juxtaposed with Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn as one of the departed greats.

It is impossible to determine the basis on which Maol Domhnaigh was able to arrange his sojourn in Ireland: what ties and connections allowed him to secure welcomes and patronage. It was, of course, common for Scottish poets to undergo

(1912-13), 594-96 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 42)).

¹⁴¹Published in T.F. O’Rahilly, ‘A Poem by Piaras Feiritéar’, *Éigse*, 13 (1940-42), 113-18.

¹⁴²O’Rahilly, ‘A Poem by Piaras Feiritéar’, 116-18.

¹⁴³Feiritéar was not, of course, a trained poet in the classical mode and adopted a similarly personal tone in other poems, including ‘Ionmhain th’aiseag, a Eóghain’ (‘Eoghan, I’m glad you’re better’) (published in Pádraig de Brún, Breandán Ó Buachalla, and Tomás Ó Concheannainn, *Nua-Dhuanaire, Cuid I* (Dublin: Institiúid Ardléinn Bhaile Átha Cliath, 1986), poem 23).

¹⁴⁴The poem begins with the line ‘A Shaerbhreachaigh éachtaigh mo bhrón tu’ (‘O heroic Saerbhreachaigh you are my grief’) and is published in *Amhráin Dhiarmada mac Seáin Bhuidhe Mac Cárthaigh*, ed. by Tadhg Ó Donnchadha (Dublin: M.H. MacGill & Son, 1916), pp. 14-26.

training in Ireland; the easy assumption is that such students would return home to Scotland at the end of this training, but it may well have been that some pursued opportunities in Ireland thereafter, perhaps temporarily, perhaps indefinitely. In the case of Maol Domhnaigh, it may well have been the case that he had relatively close Irish connections, as suggested by the family's continuing use of the distinctively Irish patronymic Ó in seventeenth-century Scotland.¹⁴⁵

Although the traditional system of Gaelic learning was crumbling badly by the 1640s, Maol Domhnaigh does not appear to have been the last Scottish poet to undergo bardic training in Ireland. Domhnall Mac Mhuirich (fl. c. 1670-c. 1743), nephew of Niall, is also reported — albeit in a rather anecdotal account — to have undergone training as a poet in Ireland,¹⁴⁶ but this must surely have been in an attenuated form given the state of poetic output and education in Ireland at that time.

*

A fascinating illustration of how links between Scottish and Irish poets were maintained throughout the seventeenth century is the so-called 'Contention of the Red Hand', a poetic disputation (c. 1690) over which kindred — Ó Néill of Tír Eoghain, Ó Néill of Clann Aodha Buidhe, or Mac Domhnaill — was properly entitled to claim the ancient symbol of the *Lámh Dhearg* or Red Hand. Four poems survive from this Contention, one each by the Ulster poets Diarmuid mac Laoisigh Mac an Bhaird (pressing the claim of Clann Aodha Buidhe) and Eóghan Ó Donnghaile (speaking for the Ó Néills of Tír Eoghain), and replies by Niall Mac Mhuirich to each of these, on behalf of Clann Domhnaill.¹⁴⁷ The dispute echoes the much more renowned and large-scale contention over the primacy of the two traditional halves of Ireland (*Leath Cuinn* and *Leath Mogha*), the so-called *Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh* (Contention of the Bards)

¹⁴⁵Derick S. Thomson, 'The Seventeenth-Century Crucible of Scottish Gaelic Poetry', *Studia Celtica*, 26/27 (1991-92), 155-62 (p. 162 fn. 5).

¹⁴⁶Statement of Rev. John Macpherson of Sleat (1763), in MacKenzie, *Highland Society Report on Ossian*, Appendix, p. 6.

¹⁴⁷The four poems are published in *RC*, II, 291-99: 'A Chormuic, cuimhnigh an chóir' ('O Cormac, remember what is proper') (Mac an Bhaird), 'Náir an sgéalsa tiacht do tigh' ('Shameful is the story coming to a house') (Ó Donnghaile), 'Labhradh Tríán Chonghuil go ciúin' ('Let Conghal's Race [i.e. Clann Aodha Buidhe] speak quietly') (Mac Mhuirich to Mac an Bhaird), and 'Nár lem choisneas tú clú Chuinn' ('It is shameful for me that you uphold the reputation of Conn') (Mac Mhuirich to Ó Donnghaile). See A.J. Hughes, 'The seventeenth-century Ulster/Scottish contention of the Red Hand: background and significance', in *Gaelic and Scots in Harmony: Proceedings of the Second International Conference on the Languages of Scotland*, ed. by Derick S. Thomson (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Department of Celtic, n.d. [1990]), pp. 78-94.

earlier in the century¹⁴⁸ — a dispute which, it should be noted, illustrates the ordinarily Hibernocentric worldview of the bardic orders, and in which there was no attention at all to the role of Scottish Gaeldom, or room for the participation of Scottish poets.

The most remarkable aspect of the Red Hand disputation is the simple fact that it happened at all — that as late as 1690 poets could muster the technical skills and historical knowledge to assemble arguments on these points, that the poets found it worth their while to expend energy arguing these matters given the political situation of 1689-90 and the condition of Gaeldom at that time,¹⁴⁹ and, perhaps most important for present purposes, that traditional links and channels were preserved in such a way that Irish poems could circulate to the Hebrides. These links do appear to have been fragile, however: Niall indicates that a messenger is to deliver his poem to Ireland,¹⁵⁰ but the evidence of the manuscripts suggests that it may well never have arrived. The only manuscripts containing all four poems are the Red and Black Books of Clanranald; Niall Mac Mhuirich's poems are not found in any of the dozen or so Irish manuscripts that included Mac an Bhaird's and Ó Donnghaile's poems.¹⁵¹ The political upheavals in both Scotland and Ireland in 1689-90 were such that one could certainly imagine that messages could go astray.

Another interesting aspect of the debate is Niall's evident cultural confidence in stating his claims. He criticizes Ó Donnghaile's command of metrics, for example,¹⁵² and even claims to be a better craftsman than Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, one of the most prominent poets in the bardic tradition: '*sgo cuirfet a n-aon chethram cáim | na cuirfedh Táodhg sa leathrann*' ('I will put into a single crooked line | More than Tadhg would into half a quatrain').¹⁵³ Poetic disputations were by their nature based on vigorous

¹⁴⁸See Lambert McKenna, ed., *Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh/The Contention of the Bards*, 2 vols, Irish Texts, 20, 21 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1920).

¹⁴⁹The situation was even more dire than at the time of the Contention between the two halves of Ireland, whose participants were famously described by Flaithrí Ó Maoil Conaire as '*coin [. . .] go n-iomad bhfeasa | ag gleic fán easair fhalaimh*' ('hounds of great knowledge | wrangling over an empty dish') (published in *Dánfhocail: Irish Epigrams in Verse*, ed. by Thomas F. O'Rahilly (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1921), p. 31).

¹⁵⁰'Labhradh Tríán Chonghuil go ciúin', § 23.

¹⁵¹A.J. Hughes, 'The seventeenth-century Ulster/Scottish contention of the Red Hand', p. 90.

¹⁵²'Nár lem choisneas tú clú Chuinn', § 13.

¹⁵³'Nár lem choisneas tú clú Chuinn', § 13. Niall also makes use of Tadhg Dall and Flann File (§§ 15-16) in 'Labhradh Tríán Chonghuil go ciúin' to back up his argument, thus providing further evidence of the viability of the Gaelic tradition during this era. The invocation of Tadhg Dall to which he is responding is found in 'A Chormuic, cuimhnigh an chóir', § 8. A.J. Hughes points out, however, that Niall was mistaken in attributing an allusion in Mac an Bhaird's poem to Tadhg Dall, when it was actually the work of his late 14th or early 15th century kinsman Maol Seachluinn na nUirsgeál Ó hUiginn. A.J. Hughes, '*Fuar Leam Longphort mo*

self-assertion, if not outright boasting, but there is absolutely no sense in which Niall can be said to speak cautiously or tentatively, perceiving himself as entering an ‘Irish’ debate from the periphery, and restraining himself accordingly.

*

Above and beyond the evidence of surviving poems composed for Irish chiefs, bardic poetry contains many other hints of visits to Ireland by Scottish poets, although it is rarely possible to reconstruct the concrete facts relating to these interactions. For example, in his poem beginning ‘Fhuaras mo rogha teach mhór’ (‘I have found of houses my choice supreme’),¹⁵⁴ Fionnlagh ‘An Bard Ruadh’ bestows lavish praise on the house of Iain Mac Griogair and compares it to that of Aodh mac Conchobhair Mac Diarmada of Moylurg (†1478). From the personal tone of the poet’s phrasing, it is evident that he speaks from the personal experience of a visit to Mac Diarmada’s court in Connacht: ‘*Fhuaras teach coimneas dod thaigh [. . .] | ríghtheach na bhfaobhar bhfada | teach Aodha Mheic Dhiarmada*’ (‘I have found a house to match thy house | the royal house of long keen blades | the house of Aodh Mac Diarmada’) (§ 7a, c-d). By the same token, the fact that Fionnlagh speaks of ‘*taighe Gaoidheal a bhos*’ (the ‘houses of the Gael on this side of the sea’) (§ 17c (l. 1475)) suggests that he is familiar with *taighe Gaoidheal thall*, the great patrons’ houses across the sea in Ireland. That such a visit should have occurred is especially interesting because it suggests a continuity of contact between Scottish poets and the Mac Diarmadas — one of the more important kindreds in Connacht — for two other poems from the Book of the Dean of Lismore make clear that Giolla Críost Brúilingeach paid a visit to Aodh’s predecessor Tomaltach Mac Diarmada (†1458).¹⁵⁵ Unfortunately, although it is clear from the internal evidence of his poems that Giolla Críost Brúilingeach came from Scotland,¹⁵⁶ no works of his besides these two relating to Tomaltach Mac Diarmada survive. No viable hypothesis can be tendered concerning any specific links that would have connected Giolla Críost Brúilingeach, Fionnlagh ‘An Bard Ruadh’, and the Mac Diarmadas. Nor, unfortunately, is there any evidence of any Scottish literary connection to this family at periods other than the middle of the fifteenth century.

Charad’, *Celtica*, 19 (1987), 61-74 (pp. 67-68).

¹⁵⁴Published in *SVBDL*, poem 19.

¹⁵⁵‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’; ‘Dá urradh i n-iath Éireann’.

¹⁵⁶‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’, §§ 20-21.

Interestingly, later evidence underscores the importance of the Mac Diarmadas to Scottish poets. In a poem composed about 1696, Niall Mac Mhuirich echoes Fionnlagh ‘An Bard Ruadh’ in invoking Aodh Mac Diarmada as a paragon of generosity for comparison with the returning chief of Clann Raghnaill,¹⁵⁷ and an eighteenth-century Kintyre manuscript preserves an anonymous version of Giolla Críost Brúilingeach’s ‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’ reworked into the Scottish vernacular, beginning ‘A láimh oinidh óir is oighre’ (‘O generous hand of gold and property’).¹⁵⁸

In addition, evidence from sixteenth and seventeenth century poetry, both classical and vernacular, indicates the ongoing presence of Irish poets in Scotland, either as visitors or on a more permanent basis. The Ulster poet Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird made at least one visit to Scotland, in 1581, as evidenced by two surviving poems he composed there — neither of them a conventional panegyric to a Gaelic chief¹⁵⁹ — by an entry in the royal Treasury Accounts noting a payment to ‘fergall og Irische poet’,¹⁶⁰ and by a satirical poem concerning his flirtation with an unknown woman, in which he is described as ‘*duine re dán | do-bhí i Muile ’na mhacámh*’ (‘a practitioner of verse who was a youth in Mull’).¹⁶¹ This Irish presence is also indicated by a satire by Cathal Mac Mhuirich beginning ‘Sona do cheird, a Chalbhaigh’ (‘Blissful is your trade, o Calbhach’) (c. 1640(?)),¹⁶² wherein Cathal mocks the sloppy craftsmanship of a poet bearing the distinctively Irish forename of An Calbhach — ‘clearly’, according to Ronald Black, ‘one of the new untrained or vernacular bards who were impinging on the professional poets’ territory’.¹⁶³ The elegy for Iain Molach Mac Coinnich of Applecross (†1684-85), ascribed in the manuscript to ‘an Irish poet’, begins with the poet’s lament ‘*An taobh tuath ud cha téid mi | Air chuairt no air chéilidh | Bho chualas gun d’eug thu*’ (‘No more will I head northwards | neither on

¹⁵⁷ ‘Maith an sgéal do sgaoil ’nar measg’ (‘Good are the tidings that have spread amongst us’) (Niall Mac Mhuirich, 1696) (unpublished; NLS Adv. MS 72.2.2, 12a (transcript in CW 137A, pp. 55-57)), §§ 4c, 8a-b.

¹⁵⁸ The poem survives in NLS Adv. MS 72.2.15, dated 1748, and is published in *RC*, II, 326-28.

¹⁵⁹ ‘Trí coróna i gcairt Shémáis’; ‘Dursan mh’eachtra go hAlbuin’.

¹⁶⁰ Scottish Record Office MS E 21/61-2, f. 31r.

¹⁶¹ ‘Cá h-ainm a-tá ar Fearghal Óg?’ (‘By what name is Fearghal Óg known?’) (anonymous, c. 1581(?)), § 11c-d (unpublished; NLS Adv. MS 72.1.34, p. 39 (edited in Ó Macháin, ‘Poems by Fearghal Óg’, pp. 766-69)).

¹⁶² Published in David Greene, ‘A satire by Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh’, in *Celtic Studies: Essays in memory of Angus Matheson*, ed. by James Carney & David Greene (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 51-55, and in *GC*, poem 17.

circuit nor to visit | since I heard you are departed’).¹⁶⁴ More generally, Cathal Mac Mhuirich suggests the presence of Irish poets in Skye on a broader scale in the early seventeenth century:

*Le a ttig fá clú don chléir Mhuimnuigh
go Magh Monaidh
casaoid rempa ar fhedh gach ionuidh —
cedh fa gcronuigh?*

Because of her fame so many Munster poets
come to Scotland
that they are complained of everywhere —
why find fault?¹⁶⁵

Similarly, Irish poetry contains occasional hints of poets’ visits to Scotland. In his poem beginning ‘Ceanglam re chéile, a Chormuic’ (‘Let us form a pact with each other, o Cormac’), Irial Ó hUiginn attempts to mollify his patron Cormac Ó hEadhra (†1612), after apparently extensive inattention on the poet’s part:

*D’éis gach thimchill dá ttug sind
idir Alboin is Éirind
béin fad mhíonbhois as mithid
ler ndíoghrais féin fillfithir.*

After all the rounds I have made
over both Scotland and Ireland
it is time to try your gentle hand
(i.e. seek your patronage): by my earnest
love of you I will be brought back.¹⁶⁶

*

Another important indicator of cultural interaction is the circulation of Irish literary material in Scotland and, to a much lesser extent, Scottish literary material in Ireland. Most Scottish manuscripts that contain bardic poetry of any kind include Irish poems, often with no link to Scotland in terms of their subject matter;¹⁶⁷ family or personal connections seem to be the driving causal factors explaining their presence in Scotland. The heavy preponderance of Ó Dálaigh poetry (27 poems by seven members of the family) among the Irish items in the Book of the Dean of Lismore is a case in point.¹⁶⁸ In a number of cases, Irish poems unrelated to Scotland have survived only in Scottish manuscripts, most notably the Book of the Dean of Lismore, which contains

¹⁶³Ronald Black, ‘The Genius of Cathal MacMhuirich’, p. 337.

¹⁶⁴Published in *GC*, poem 36 (§ 1a-c), and in Kenneth D. MacDonald, ‘The MacKenzie Lairds of Applecross’, *TGSI*, 54 (1984-86), 411-74 (pp. 449-50).

¹⁶⁵‘Eireóchthar fós le cloinn gColla’, § 46.

¹⁶⁶Published in *The Book of O’Hara/Leabhar Í Eadhra*, ed. by Lambert McKenna (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1951), poem 12 (§ 9, ll. 1953-56). McKenna’s translation of the second half of the quatrain is ‘Tis not strange I have come up against thee | O gentle hand, but my earnest love of thee will set that right’. The translation suggested in the text is prompted by the *Dictionary of the Irish Language* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1983 (compact edn)), p. 68 (s.v. *béin*).

¹⁶⁷E.g. NLS Adv. MSS 72.1.39, 72.1.42, 72.1.48, 72.2.2; RIA MS A v 2 (folios 73 to 77).

¹⁶⁸O’Rahilly, ‘Indexes to the Book of the Dean’, p. 56.

more than a dozen Irish poems not found in any Irish manuscript.¹⁶⁹ These poems include four attributed to Gearóid Iarla, Earl of Desmond (†1397), a poet whose work was far from ignored by Irish scribes, as indicated most clearly by the preservation of the so-called *Duanaire Ghearóid Iarla*, which contains thirty of his poems.¹⁷⁰ It is not always clear how or why particular Irish poems came to Scotland, or came to be copied and recopied there; some may have been exemplars preserved from bardic training in Ireland, some may have been favoured for more personal or aesthetic reasons. Certainly personal predilection seems to have been the ultimate guiding force for inclusion in the Book of the Dean.

Circulation of Scottish poems in Ireland seems to have been a great deal more restricted, tending to imply a 'one-way street' pattern to literary interaction. Only two of the poems in the Book of the Dean composed by Scottish authors are also found in Irish manuscripts, and of these one is to an Irish chief.¹⁷¹ Indeed, it appears that no panegyric poems composed by Scottish poets for Scottish chiefs found their way into Irish manuscripts, with the single exception of Eóin Óg Ó Muirgheasáin's 'Creach Gaidheal i reilig Rois', whose presence in south Munster manuscripts must surely be connected to the presence of Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin in the area at the time of the poem's composition. On the other hand, the randomness of what has survived over the centuries creates clear anomalies: for example, although eight poems by Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh are found in the Book of the Dean, these do not include either of his two surviving panegyrics to Scottish chiefs.

*

Considerable speculation is required when attempting to reconstruct the mechanics by which poets and poems circulated between Ireland and Scotland. There are numerous references in bardic poetry to messengers who are to deliver the poem in question,¹⁷² and several Irish poems composed for Scottish chiefs make clear that the

¹⁶⁹O'Rahilly, 'Indexes to the Book of the Dean', p. 32.

¹⁷⁰Mac Niocaill, 'Duanaire Ghearóid Iarla'.

¹⁷¹O'Rahilly, 'Indexes to the Book of the Dean', p. 32.

¹⁷²Examples with a Scottish connection include 'Labhradh Tríán Chonghuil go ciúin', § 23; 'A theachtaire théid i gcéin go talamh Mhic Leóid'; and 'Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin' ('I sent a messenger afar') (Sir Donnchadh Caimbeul of Glenorchy, before 1513), § 6 (published in Gillies, 'Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell (I)', pp. 26-27). See Pádraig A. Breatnach, 'Tradisiún na hAithrise Liteartha i bhFilíocht Chlasaiceach na Gaeilge', in Pádraig A. Breatnach, *Téamaí Taighde Nua-Ghaeilge* (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1997), pp. 1-63 (p. 29).

poem is being sent on to Scotland without the company of the poet — most notably Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn's 'Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh', in which the poet thanks Alasdair, third Lord of the Isles (†1449), for a drinking cup that represents Alasdair's invitation to visit him to Scotland, but begs off actually making the journey across the sea. The most likely inference must be that documents were exchanged between chiefs on a casual basis, as needs arose, with poems being included in parcels or shipments, not that messengers were sent off to order, journeying across the sea bearing only a single poem. Brian Ó Cuív suggests that a chieftain might thereby come to accumulate a number of poems written on individual 'membranes', in addition to material written down, perhaps on a more aggregated basis, in the chieftain's own castle.¹⁷³

Links were evidently also maintained through embassies, in which the poet served as part of a team accompanying the chief on a political mission of one kind or another. The most striking example is perhaps the mission, described in the previous chapter, of An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill (†1566) to procure military support from the Earl of Argyll in 1555, which is memorialized in a poem composed by Ó Domhnaill's *ollamh* (whose name is unfortunately not known) beginning 'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg' ('It is fitting for an *ollamh* to journey on an embassy'). This opening makes clear how common a practice such ventures must have been, and other evidence from the late sixteenth century reinforces this: the Treasury Accounts entry concerning Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird noted above, for example, and an English intelligence report describing how the poets 'Ferrall M'Evy'e' and 'Ferdoragh M'Ananney' assisted Aodh Ó Domhnaill (†1600) and Toirdhealbhadh Luineach Ó Néill (†1595) by going on an expedition to Scotland in 1567-68 in an attempt to procure Scottish wives and concomitant military support.¹⁷⁴

*

Beyond the poetic tradition, other aspects of Gaelic artistic and learned culture, notably harping and medicine, can also shed light on the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland and the attitudes and perceptions that shaped it or flowed from it. Their usefulness is a great deal less than that of literature, however, for their

¹⁷³Brian Ó Cuív, *The Irish Bardic Duanaire or 'Poem-Book'* (Dublin: R.I. Best Memorial Trust, 1973), p. 27.

¹⁷⁴Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 98; Hamilton, *Calendar of State Papers, 1509-1573*, pp. 350, 352 (November 27 and November 29, 1567).

actual substance — the contents of a medical text, for example — yields little relevant information. The nature of interactions, however, and perceptions about the roles of Ireland and Scotland within these professions can be informative, however.

The harping tradition is fundamentally different from the poetic tradition in two additional important respects. First, harp music was not preserved in written form to any meaningful extent, and little evidence survives from the late medieval period. Second, instrumental music is not dependent on language and can be readily appreciated and shared with communities that speak different languages. In the Gaelic context, this meant that harpers from the Scottish or Irish *Gàidhealtachds* could have a greater degree of connection to the English Pale or the Scottish Lowlands; it is striking, for example, that the Scottish monarchs retained ‘Gaelic’ harpers for centuries after the demise of the royal poets, and that there is substantial evidence of visits to the Scottish court by Irish harpers as late as the sixteenth century.¹⁷⁵

Several Scottish scholars discussing the general cultural relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland — rather than focusing closely on the harping tradition — have seized on an isolated assertion by the twelfth-century Cambro-Norman writer Gerald de Barri (Giraldus Cambrensis) that ‘Scotland at the present day, in the opinion of many persons, is not only equal to Ireland, her teacher in musical skills, but excels her; so that they [the Irish] now look to that country as the fountain head of this science’.¹⁷⁶ It is doubtful whether this statement deserves so much attention or credit. There is no evidence to suggest that Gerald was any kind of expert on the subject, and his general knowledge of Scotland seems to have been patchy in the extreme. Moreover, this isolated statement concerning the situation in the late twelfth century can hardly be taken as a definitive and authoritative assessment of the entire classical period.

¹⁷⁵Ó Baoill, ‘Some Irish Harpers in Scotland’, p. 145 (noting entries in the Scottish Treasury Accounts for payments to Irish harpers in 1490, 1505, 1512, and 1533-34). See Keith Sanger and Alison Kinnaird, *Tree of Strings/Crann nan Teud: A History of the Harp in Scotland* (Temple, Midlothian: Kinmor Music, 1992), pp. 80-88.

¹⁷⁶Gerald de Barri, *The Topography of Ireland* [1187], in *The Historical Works of Giraldus Cambrensis*, ed. by Thomas Wright (London: H.G. Bohn, 1863), pp. 3-164 (p. 127) (Distinction III, Chapter 11); see Jennie MacKenzie, ‘The Clàrsach’, in *The Middle Ages in the Highlands*, ed. by Loraine Maclean of Dochgarroch (Inverness: Inverness Field Club, 1981), pp. 101-02 (p. 101); Ronald Williams, *The Lords of the Isles: The Clan Donald and the early Kingdom of the Scots* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1984), p. 219. John Bannerman contends that ‘music, particularly harp music, may be the area of the common culture in which it would be possible to demonstrate that Scotland outstripped her mentor [Ireland]’, but does not amplify this claim. Bannerman, ‘The Lordship of the Isles’, p. 239.

A very different view, though perhaps not a great deal more authoritative at the end of the day, was given by Joseph Walker in 1786, asserting Irish cultural supremacy in the context of the Ossianic controversy:

In fact, the Scots have never affected extraordinary skill on the Harp: so sensible were they of their inferiority to the Irish, in in [*sic*] the practical knowledge of this instrument, that their Princes and Nobility were content to invite Harpers from this kingdom [Ireland], to serve them in the capacity of chief Musician.¹⁷⁷

Later, Walker provided evidence from Lowland Scottish sources to back up his claims:

John de Fordun, a Scottish Priest, who was sent over to this kingdom in the 14th century to collect materials for an History of Scotland, expressly says, that Ireland was the fountain of music in his time, whence it then began to flow into Scotland and Wales. John Major, in his panegyric on James I. of Scotland, calls that Prince another Orpheus, who touched the Harp more exquisitely than either the Highlanders, or *the Irish, who were the most eminent Harpers then known*. Such are the praises of men who never discovered an inclination to flatter Ireland.¹⁷⁸

Speaking generally, the picture that emerges of the Gaelic harping culture appears to conform to the position of poetry: a dominant role for Ireland; some, fairly limited, evidence of circulation between the two countries; and journeying to Ireland for training on the part of Scottish students. The Ó Senogs (also known as Mac O'Senogs, MacSenachs, and MacShannons), hereditary harpers to the Lords of the Isles, who held lands in South Kintyre for their services, appear to have been of Irish origin, bearing the distinctively Irish Ó patronymic.¹⁷⁹ A harper of Monaghan origin by the name of Diarmaid Ó Cairbre earned notoriety for murdering Aonghas Óg Mac Domhnaill in Inverness in 1490, an event immortalized in the poem 'A chinn Diarmaid Uí Chairbre' ('O head of Diarmaid Ó Cairbre').¹⁸⁰

Most of the Irish harpers whose activities in Scotland can be traced with any degree of detail are of a late date. Among the most important is Ruaidhrí Dall Ó

¹⁷⁷Joseph C. Walker, *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (Dublin: Luke White, 1786; repr. New York: Garland Publishing, 1971), p. 71.

¹⁷⁸Walker, pp. 120-21 (footnotes omitted; emphasis in original).

¹⁷⁹Derick S. Thomson, 'Gaelic Learned Orders', pp. 69-70.

¹⁸⁰The event is also noted in *AConn, ALC, AU* 1490, and described in *RC*, II, 162, and 'Fragment of a Manuscript History of the MacDonalds Written in the Reign of Charles II', in *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis*,

Catháin, who belonged to the Co. Derry family of that name, which had maintained links to Scotland since at least the early fourteenth century. Ruaidhrí Dall — from whom as many as thirteen tunes survive — seems to have come to Scotland shortly after 1603 and to have remained there until his death at some time in the middle of the seventeenth century. His contacts with the *Gàidhealtachd* do not seem to have been significant, however, for his patrons were Lowland aristocrats, especially the family of the Earl of Linlithgow.¹⁸¹ From the same era is the rather more shadowy figure of ‘Cailean Cormaic’, who appears to have enjoyed the patronage of the Earl of Antrim and is remembered in Scottish Gaelic tradition for his praise of Mac Coinnich of Applecross.¹⁸² Other Irish harpers whose activities can be traced with at least a modicum of detail — including the late 17th-century Sligo harper Thomas O Connellan, connected to Edinburgh; the Derry harper Dennis O Hampsey (c. 1695-1807), who appears to have visited both Highland and Lowland Scotland on visits connected with the risings of 1715 and 1745; and the Derry harper Echlin Ó Catháin (1723-c. 1790), known to have visited Scotland, including Argyll and Skye, on several occasions between 1757 and 1779¹⁸³ — are all late in date, and their activities shed little light on the culture of the Gaelic world during the classical era.

Activities of Scottish harpers in Ireland are sketchier still. The fifteenth-century poet Giolla Críost Brúilingeach appears to have been a harper as well, as suggested by his poem to Tomaltach Mac Diarmada (†1458) beginning ‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’, where he requests a harp as payment for his poem; it has been suggested that he belonged to the prominent hereditary harping family of Mac an Bhreatnaich, based in Gigha.¹⁸⁴ At least two Scottish harpers — Ruaidhri Mac Mhuirich, ‘An Clàrsair Dall’ (1656-1713/14), and his pupil Murchadh Clàrsair (†1738), later harper to Mac Gill-Eathain of Coll, are supposed to have undergone training somewhere in Ireland, but both of these figures come at the very end of the period, in the late seventeenth century or later, and no details of this Irish education have survived.¹⁸⁵

ed. by Cosmo Innes (Edinburgh: Iona Club, 1839), pp. 282-326 (p. 318).

¹⁸¹ Ó Baoill, ‘Some Irish Harpers’, pp. 146-53; *An Clàrsair Dall*, pp. xxxv-xxxvii.

¹⁸² Ó Baoill, ‘Some Irish Harpers’, pp. 166-67 fn. 2; Kenneth MacDonald, pp. 449-50.

¹⁸³ Ó Baoill, ‘Some Irish Harpers’, pp. 153-66.

¹⁸⁴ Derick S. Thomson, ‘Gaelic Learned Orders’, p. 69.

¹⁸⁵ William Matheson, *An Clàrsair Dall*, pp. xlii-xliii, lxxii; Ó Baoill, ‘Some Irish Harpers’, pp. 144-45.

With respect to the Gaelic medical tradition, rhetorical claims about the superiority of Scotland or Ireland are not as common, but the basic picture of Gaelic Scotland 'lean[ing] heavily on Irish initiative, periodically and consistently importing [. . .] professionals' from Ireland¹⁸⁶ seems much the same. As with the poets, each of the principal medical families in late medieval Gaelic Scotland seems to have originated in Ireland and arrived in Scotland at a relatively late date. The Mac Beathas (Beatons), who eventually spread into different branches in various parts of the *Gàidhealtachd*, notably Islay and Mull, serving Clann Domhnaill and Clann Ghill-Eathain, appear to have come to Scotland initially as part of the *tochradh nighean a' Chathanaich* (the dowry-party of Áine Ní Chatháin) in the early fourteenth century.¹⁸⁷ The Ó Conchubhairs (sometimes Mac Conchubhairs) of Lorne come to prominence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in service to the Mac Dubhghaills and the Caimbeuls; yet the family retained its connection to Ireland so strongly that their medical school remained in Leinster.¹⁸⁸ Finally, members of the major Irish medical family of Ó Duinnshléibhe, long connected to the Mac Cárthaighs of southwest Munster, appear to have established themselves in Argyll.¹⁸⁹

Sculpture is also worth considering in this context, for the situation here is in some respects similar to the other learned arts and in other respects rather different. As elsewhere, the principal hereditary craftsmen, who were responsible for developing the so-called 'Iona School', seem to have been of relatively recent Irish origin.¹⁹⁰ The most important family of sculptors, the Ó Brolcháins, were originally connected to the monastery of Derry, and members of the family are mentioned frequently in the annals during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, and into the fifteenth century; their first appearance in Scotland occurs in 1382.¹⁹¹ Another important family was the Ó Cuinns, also evidently of Irish origin, though without the same record in Ireland as the Ó Brolcháins; a particularly prominent member of the family, who flourished c.

¹⁸⁶Derick S. Thomson, 'Gaelic Learned Orders', p. 75.

¹⁸⁷Derick S. Thomson, 'Gaelic Learned Orders', pp. 61-63.

¹⁸⁸Derick S. Thomson, 'Gaelic Learned Orders', pp. 63-64; Bannerman, 'The Lordship of the Isles', p. 234.

¹⁸⁹Derick S. Thomson, 'Gaelic Learned Orders', pp. 64-65.

¹⁹⁰Steer and Bannerman, pp. 41-42.

¹⁹¹Steer and Bannerman, pp. 106-07. Steer and Bannerman note that a hereditary Irish family of goldsmiths may have accompanied the Ó Brolcháins to Iona — a further demonstration of the extent of Irish initiative in this field. Steer and Bannerman, pp. 144-46.

1500, bore the distinctively Irish forename Mael-Sechlainn.¹⁹² What is perhaps rather different about late medieval West Highland sculpture, in comparison to other forms of cultural expression, is that its styling is quite distinct from that of Irish sculpture of the period, even though the main craftsmen working in Scotland were of Irish extraction.¹⁹³ This may have been the consequence of training systems different from those that operated for poetry, where the tradition of Scottish poets training in Ireland ensured a similarity and continuity of outlook and output.

*

This review of the pertinent evidence in a range of fields conforms closely with Derick Thomson's assessment 'that there was a close correspondence' between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland 'in the organisation of the learned and literary orders, but that Gaelic Scotland leaned heavily on Irish initiative'.¹⁹⁴ At the same time, it is unsafe to infer from this evidence that a single, unified 'culture-province' was in operation. The relative lack of surviving literary material from Scotland certainly suggests that the 'Irish' literary model did not become as well rooted as it was in Ireland. Moreover, although it seems that movement and interaction between Scotland and Ireland was a viable option for those poets and other learned men who chose it, the evidence suggests that such migrations may not have been as common or as fundamental as the 'culture-province' model might suggest. The number of Scottish poets known to have been active in Ireland, and the number of Irish poets known to have been active in Scotland, is very small when measured against the total number of individual classical poets known from the various sources. Similarly, the number of known surviving poems having an 'international' connection of some kind makes up only a minuscule share of the total — some three dozen out of two thousand, or less than two in every hundred. Even during this period of close interaction, then, non-interaction between the two parts of the Gaelic world may have been the dominant dynamic on a day-to-day basis for most of the time, with separate existence and separate development being the principal experience. The logical next question is whether this relative separation meant a divergence in outlooks and perceptions, and the next chapter will therefore turn to a close analysis of classical poetry, seeking out evidence of the attitudes of

¹⁹²Steer and Bannerman, p. 120.

¹⁹³Steer and Bannerman, p. 43.

Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland towards each other.

¹⁹⁴Thomson, 'Gaelic Learned Orders and Literati', p. 75.

Chapter 3

Scotland and Ireland: The Vision of Bardic Poetry

Panegyric bardic poetry — the classical praise poetry of the late Middle Ages, composed in standardized literary language and according to strict, syllabically based metrics — is a critically important source for assessing cultural attitudes and relations between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland during the late medieval period. Indeed, as Brendan Bradshaw has observed in the context of late medieval Ireland, this corpus of poetry is ‘the only substantial body of contemporary documentary evidence available from inside Gaelic society’.¹ Yet its limitations are numerous and considerable.

The most immediate difficulty is the small size of the surviving corpus. Although approximately one thousand bardic poems of a panegyric nature survive from Ireland,² very few of these have any connection or make any reference to Scotland; the total body of classical panegyric poetry composed by Scottish poets, or by Irish poets on behalf of Scottish patrons, consists of under a hundred poems,³ and this material is very unevenly distributed in terms of time. The best-represented century for Gaelic Scotland is the seventeenth, when the traditional Gaelic world, and its established systems of poetic training and patronage, were rapidly breaking down. Only eight or nine Scottish panegyric poems clearly dateable before 1400 survive,⁴ and all but one of the seven poems surviving from the extremely important period c. 1530-c. 1600, when Scottish involvement in Irish political affairs probably reached its maximum intensity, were composed by Irish poets rather than Scottish, all but one of these poems for members of Clann Iain Mhóir (Clann Domhnaill South), who were not especially

¹Brendan Bradshaw, ‘Native reaction to the Westward Enterprise: a case-study in Gaelic ideology’, in *The Westward Enterprise: English activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America 1480-1650*, ed. by K.R. Andrews, N.P. Canny, and P.E.H. Hair (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1978), pp. 65-80 (p. 66).

²Katherine Simms, ‘Bardic Poetry as a Historical Source’, in *The Writer as Witness: literature as historical evidence*, ed. by Tom Dunne, Historical Studies, 16 (Cork: Cork University Press, 1987), pp. 58-75 (p. 71). Simms estimates that some 1,800 to 2,000 bardic poems survive, of which approximately 52% are panegyric, 20% religious, and 28% *dánta grádha* and miscellaneous.

³As noted earlier, Derick Thomson estimates the total corpus of Scottish bardic poetry at some 148-163 items, but this figure includes a number of religious poems, courtly love poems, and personal poems, together with various compositions best summarized as ‘miscellaneous’ in subject matter.

⁴‘Saor do leannán, a Leamhain’; ‘Mairg thréigios inn, a Amhlaofbh’; ‘Aisling ad-chonnarc ó chianaibh’; ‘Fada dhamh druim re hÉirinn’; ‘Tháinig an Craobhdhearg go Cruachan’; ‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’; ‘Dál chabhlaigh ar Chistéal Suibhne’; ‘Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill’; ‘Ceannas Gaoidheal do chloinn Cholla’. As noted earlier, the poems attributed to Giolla Brighde Albanach may not

'Scottish' by that time but becoming increasingly focused on their Ulster territories.⁵ As noted earlier, perhaps the most serious aspect of this shortfall is the scarcity of surviving poems associated with the heyday of the Lordship of the Isles in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the political and cultural confidence of late medieval Gaelic Scotland reached its height.

These various gaps make it difficult and dangerous to draw conclusions from the surviving evidence. Extant poems may be unrepresentative of a former broader whole, and there is a real risk of over-interpreting isolated statements and references in what remains. Moreover, it is always difficult to be sure how representative any aspects of a particular poem are — most importantly, for present purposes, the cultural and political ramifications of its imagery and its various hints concerning the prevailing cultural attitudes of the time. These problems are serious even in attempting to assess the vastly larger body of Irish bardic poetry; as Bernadette Cunningham has pointed out, 'unless the original purpose and contemporary impact of [particular poems] is evaluated there is a risk of accepting the idiosyncratic views of individual authors as though they represented widespread and popular attitudes'.⁶

By its very nature, moreover, bardic poetry is not always readily conducive to political and cultural interpretation. This poetry is highly stylized, working within a relatively fixed range of images and subject matter in accordance with an established 'panegyric code',⁷ and constrained by a complex network of institutional relationships, so that direct political and cultural commentary is rare, at least until the end of the

properly belong in this list.

⁵'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg' (c. 1555); 'Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais' (c. 1600); 'Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain' (c. 1580); 'Treisi an eagla ioná an andacht' (c. 1580(?)); 'Do loisceadh meisi sa Mhuaidh' (1586); 'Mionn súl Éireann i nÁth Cliath' (1586); 'An síth do rogha, a rígh Fionnghall?' (c. 1590(?)). Note that this last poem might well have been composed by an Irish rather than Scottish poet, and that the fourth, fifth, and sixth poems were composed by Ó Gnímh poets, who may well have been recent incomers to Ireland from Scotland, like Clann Iain Mhóir themselves. See McDonnell, 'Agnews and O'Gnímhs'. 'Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaidheal' composed for either the fourth, fifth, or seventh Earl of Argyll, may also belong to this period.

Also pertinent here is 'Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn' (c. 1580), perhaps by Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn; Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird's 'Dursan mh'eachtra go hAlbuin' (c. 1582) and 'Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais' (c. 1590) might also be added to the list, but neither can properly be considered a conventional panegyric.

⁶Bernadette Cunningham, 'Native Culture and Political Change in Ireland, 1580-1640', in *Natives and Newcomers: The Making of Irish Colonial Society 1534-1641*, ed. by Ciaran Brady and Raymond Gillespie (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1986), pp. 148-70 (p. 148).

⁷This is John MacInnes's term for the style of vernacular Scottish Gaelic poetry ('The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background', *TGSI*, 50 (1976-78), 435-98), but the label is equally applicable to the classical poetry and, indeed, the two 'codes' share many aspects in common.

sixteenth century.⁸ It is also deliberately conservative, especially in terms of its language and metrics, as underscored by Lambert McKenna's famous statement that

dá gcuirfí duan ós comhair duine ní fhéadadh sé ó fhoirm na bhfocal ná ó mheadar na rann aon tuairim do thabhairt do dháta na duaine ná dá háit bhunaidh; ní fhéadadh sé a rádh cé acu i nÉirinn nó i nAlbain, ná cé acu san tríomhadh haois déag nó san seachtmhadh haois déag do cumadh í.

(if a poem were set before one, one could not give any opinion from the form of the words or the metre of the verses at what date the poem was composed or from what place it originated; one could not tell if it was composed in Ireland or in Scotland, in the thirteenth or the seventeenth century).⁹

The style of bardic poetry has been described as 'a flat table-land stretching from the 13th to the 17th century',¹⁰ and as such evolutions of style or subject matter, or changes in cultural outlook, are almost impossible to track over time.

In addition, as Marc Caball has noted, if perhaps with some overstatement, bardic poetry was 'traditionally formless': 'while lavish care was bestowed upon each individual quatrain, it was a tendency to view each stanza as an aesthetic end in itself, which, more often than not, left the poem as a whole somewhat disjointed'.¹¹ One important consequence of this feature of the poetry is that integrated expository analysis of any subject matter, especially political or cultural topics, is rarely attempted. The typical structure is that of a series of fairly disjunct images, presented in a tableau style and relying on implication and received resonance, and it is not always easy to link these images together as a series of connected ideas tied together in a definitive and unambiguous conclusion.

The vagaries of the preservation process must also be taken into account. For example, Irish scholars have noted the distortions that may arise from over-emphasising the large body of poems preserved in official family *duanaireadha* or poem-books, works that incline strongly towards panegyric of the purest and most restricted kind, often especially stylized or formulaic in nature.¹² The poverty of the

⁸T.J. Dunne, 'The Gaelic Response to Conquest and Colonisation: The Evidence of the Poetry', *Studia Hibernica*, 20 (1980), 7-30 (pp. 8-9).

⁹*DD*, p. 5.

¹⁰*TD*, I, li.

¹¹Marc Caball, 'A Study of Intellectual Reaction and Continuity in Irish Bardic Poetry Composed During the Reigns of Elizabeth I and James I' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 1991), p. 12.

¹²Ó Tuama, p. 163; Marc Caball, 'The Gaelic Mind and the Collapse of the Gaelic World: An Appraisal',

manuscript tradition in Scotland means that this particular problem does not arise to the same degree as in Ireland, although the hugely important Book of the Dean of Lismore, a collection reflecting the distinct, and less than universally representative, cultural orientation and predilections of its compilers, presents difficulties of a somewhat similar kind. The sheer weight of the Book of the Dean within the surviving Scottish corpus is such that it must receive considerable attention in any assessment of this body of poetry, but the dangers of overemphasis on what is by any reckoning an idiosyncratic collection must be constantly borne in mind.

Above and beyond these general limitations, bardic poetry is also a notoriously difficult material as a source of political commentary and analysis. For example, a vigorous debate has developed in recent years among Irish scholars over the extent to which the poets understood and assessed the nature of the final English conquest of Ireland in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.¹³ Whatever the difficulties in interpreting this evidence — much of it unquestionably murky and oblique — Irish bardic poetry does at least contain vastly more commentary on these matters than on the question of relations with Scotland and the Scottish Gaels, which are rarely treated with much more than hints or stereotyped formulas.

Outright political commentary on the nature of ethnic or national identity is rare in bardic poetry. Seán Ó Tuama notes, nevertheless, that the poets did have a 'strongly developed sense of *nationality* in that no matter how much fratricidal political strife they engaged in, they passionately identified with the one national culture which they wished to defend'.¹⁴ Notably, this sense of nationality became more and more *Irish* — rather than more vaguely, and perhaps more inclusively, *Gaelic* — during the course of the Reformation and the final English onslaught of the later sixteenth century and early seventeenth century.¹⁵ At no point, however, does there appear to have been a clearly

Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies, 25 (1993), 87-96.

¹³The most vigorous, and indeed often bitter, debate has revolved around Michelle O Riordan's *The Gaelic Mind and the Collapse of the Gaelic World* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1990), reviewed, with various degrees of negativity, by Marc Caball ('The Gaelic Mind'), Liam Irwin (*Irish Historical Studies*, 29 (1994), 259-60), and Breandán Ó Buachalla ('Poetry and Politics in Early Modern Ireland', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 7 (1992), 149-75).

¹⁴Seán Ó Tuama, 'Gaelic Culture in Crisis: The Literary Response', in Ó Tuama, pp. 119-33 (p. 121).

¹⁵Breandán Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar: Na Stiobhartaigh agus an tAos Léinn 1603-1788* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1996), pp. 73-80; Mícheál Mac Craith, 'Creideamh agus Athartha: idé-eolaíocht pholaitíochta agus aos léinn na Gaeilge i dtús an seachtú haois déag', in *Nua-Léamha: Gnéithe do Chultúr, Stair agus Polaitíocht na hÉireann c. 1600-c. 1900*, ed. by Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1996), pp. 7-19; Marc Caball, *Poets and Politics: Reaction and Continuity in Irish Bardic Poetry, 1558-1625*, Field Day

defined place for Gaelic Scotland within this vision; to the Irish learned classes it seems to have remained hazy, marginal, and distant, a place and phenomenon that could not be readily classified or understood — often ignored, sometimes positioned at the margins, occasionally and suddenly thrust to the centre. But Scotland certainly does exist in Irish bardic poetry, manifesting itself in sometimes unpredictable, even paradoxical ways. In contrast, Scottish bardic poetry places heavy and consistent emphasis on the Irish connection, as the touchstone of authority and prestige, and indeed it is the connection to *Scotland* — as an integrated and imagined entity — that seems more obscure and problematic in the surviving poetry of Scottish Gaeldom.

Poetry in the Scottish Gaelic vernacular is also sometimes a useful source for assessing cultural relationships and identities in the late medieval period, though not to the same extent as the syllabic bardic verse. These limitations on its value arise principally because vernacular poetry does not emerge in significant quantity until the old Gaelic order was at or beyond the point of collapse, and thus sheds little light on the operation of that order in its full vigour on both sides of Sruth na Maoile. Only two vernacular poems dateable to before 1500 survive, and perhaps a dozen from the sixteenth century, of which only three — the lament by ‘Am Bard Muileach’ for Ealasaid (†1530), daughter of Giolla-easbuig, second Earl of Argyll, beginning ‘S cianail, gruamach, coimheach guarach | A d’fhàs am fuar mhon ard’ (‘Sad, gloomy, fierce and wintry wild | Looks the lofty stormy hill’); the so-called ‘Duanag Ullamh’, composed for Giolla-easbuig, fourth Earl of Argyll (†1558) and beginning ‘Triallaidh mi le m’ dhuanag ullaimh’ (‘I shall journey with my finished poem’) (c. 1558); and the poem to Mac Phàrlain of Arrochar beginning ‘A Mhic Phàrlain an Arthair’ (c. 1550-80) — bear any real relation to the panegyric tradition.¹⁶ Much of the earliest vernacular poetry is more in the vein of folk-song, tending to reflect the outlook of

Monographs, 8 (Cork: Cork University Press/Field Day, 1998), pp. 144-52.

¹⁶In their handbook *Scottish Gaelic Vernacular Verse to 1730: A Checklist* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Dept. of Celtic, 1988), Colm Ó Baoill and Donald MacAulay assign dates before 1500 to only two poems, the ‘Harlaw Brosnachadh’ (‘A Chlanna Chuinn, cuimhnichibh’) and the ‘Piobaireachd Dhòmhnail Dhuibh’ (‘Chaidh an diugh, chaidh an diugh, chaidh an diugh oirme’) (‘Today went against us, went against us, went against us’) (anonymous, 1429(?)), and dates before 1600 to thirteen (pp. 27-29). ‘S cianail, gruamach, coimheach guarach | A d’fhàs am fuar mhon ard’ is published in *An Gaidheal*, 1 (1873), 297-98, 312-13, and in Sinclair, *Na Baird Leathanach*, I, 18-21; ‘A Mhic Phàrlain an Arthair’ is published in *Leabhar na Féinne: Heroic Gaelic Ballads Collected in Scotland Chiefly from 1512 to 1871*, ed. by J.F. Campbell (London: J.F. Campbell, 1872; repr. Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1972), p. xvii. In contrast, Derick Thomson identifies ‘some 37 items of verse, some fragmentary or involving a single quatrain [. . .] as dating from 1601 or earlier.’ Thomson, ‘The Earliest Scottish Gaelic Non-classical Verse Texts’, p. 542.

sectors of Scottish Gaelic society for whom connections to Ireland, which were maintained by the intelligentsia and aristocracy, by and large, would have been rather less prominent and immediate. In this sense, however, the absence of less formal kinds of poetry is a significant deficiency, for the panegyric bardic verse may express a misleadingly strong connection to Ireland, rather different from the attitude of Scottish Gaeldom more generally.

Nevertheless, vernacular Scottish Gaelic poetry, in particular the panegyric poetry of the sixteenth and especially seventeenth centuries, does sometimes make a useful point of comparison with the bardic poetry. Many kinds of imagery and expression continue; other features are new, and some aspects of bardic poetry are absent. The expression of Irish connections is often quite different, with much less reference to Ireland in general, except to ancient Irish clan progenitors, who remain extremely prominent. So too with the formal bardic poetry of the seventeenth century, which becomes perceptibly less 'Irish' in its nomenclature and idiom, as discussed in Chapter 4.

*

As discussed earlier, bardic poetry of the classical era — that is, from some point in the latter twelfth century to some point in the seventeenth — was the product of a specific combination of artistic developments and the broader cultural and political context from which those developments emerged. Over the course of the latter twelfth century, poetic language was standardized, metrical rules were formalized and tightened, and training in professional schools was restructured and institutionalized — although, as discussed above, these developments are best understood as the result of gradual processes, under the leadership of the principal bardic families, rather than the programme imposed by some 'unrecorded "synod of poets"'.¹⁷ The poetry that resulted became the principal form of 'high-register' cultural expression for the following four centuries and more.

As discussed extensively above, bardic poetry should be understood as an essentially Irish phenomenon, conceived and developed in Ireland on Irish terms, to which Scottish Gaeldom became attached in a loose and somewhat ambiguous fashion. The basic political and cultural backdrop to bardic poetry, therefore, has relatively

little to do with developments in Scotland, but instead relates primarily to the Gaelic reaction to the Anglo-Norman presence in Ireland from the late twelfth century onwards. Yet even so, the Scottish presence in bardic poetry and among bardic poets and their patrons is a very real phenomenon, complex and often contradictory in its dynamics.

One of the most striking ways in which the interconnection between Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland is expressed is the poets' constant invocations of Gaelic historical and mythological tradition. Crucially, Scottish poets draw upon these traditions with just as much gusto as Irish poets: there is no sense whatsoever that this is inappropriate 'Irish' material that would be better replaced by something 'Scottish'. This tradition is 'pan-Gaelic' in every way, and plays an important unifying role as a source of culturally binding expression. Imbuing poets in this tradition, and teaching them how to locate chiefs and leaders in its matrix, must have been one of the principal aspects of the bardic training process, but unfortunately no records survive concerning this critical aspect of the curriculum, in contrast to technical matters of syntax and metrics.¹⁸ In addition, the constant use of references and allusions in bardic poetry meant that this tradition was reiterated again and again to the Gaelic aristocracy in both Scotland and Ireland, and thus served as a genuinely binding intellectual system — the closest approach to an ideology to be found in the traditional Gaelic world.

The basic frame of reference for bardic poetry, and the primary idiom of its densely allusive, culturally rooted imagery, was established by the *Leabhar Gabhála Éireann*, an inherently Hibernocentric work devoted to Ireland's earliest history — literally the history of its 'taking' or successive invasions.¹⁹ This focus on early history gives rise to a frame of reference to which Scottish Gaels could be connected at the root, but through a process of 'plugging them in' to this Irish structure at appropriate places; there was no specific and discrete role for the Gaels in Scotland, whose distinct history fell outside the scope of the *Leabhar Gabhála* and received no direct attention.

¹⁷Simms, 'Literacy and the Irish bards', p. 243.

¹⁸*Irish Syntactical Tracts*, ed. by Lambert McKenna (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944); Bergin, 'Irish Grammatical Tracts'.

¹⁹*Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, ed. by R.A. Stewart MacAlister, 5 vols, Irish Texts, 34, 35, 39, 41, 44 (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1937 [1940], 1939 [1941], 1956); see Caball, 'A Study of Intellectual Reaction', p. 8; Máire Herbert, 'Sea-divided Gaels? Constructing relationships between Irish and Scots c. 800-1169', in *Britain and Ireland 900-1300: Insular Responses to Medieval European Change*, ed. by Brendan Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 87-97.

The end result of this focus on Ireland's early origins and the alienation of Scottish Gaeldom from 'Lowland' Scotland during the late medieval period, discussed above, was that there seems to have been a relative lack of interest in 'the matter of Scotland' among the Scottish Gaels and their poets, to say nothing of their Irish counterparts; as such, bardic poetry, in Ireland and Scotland alike, has strikingly little to say about Scotland.

The *Leabhar Gabhála* resulted from a process of compilation, integration and invention over the course of the later eleventh century, shortly before the coalescence of the various factors that ushered in the classical period, principally the standardization of the literary language and of *dán díreach* metrics. The *Leabhar Gabhála* was the intellectual rage of the twelfth century, and it continued to hold that place of honour throughout the bardic period: 'its influence on Irish literature and historical thinking was fundamental and ubiquitous'.²⁰ Students of the poetic art would have been deeply immersed in the *Leabhar Gabhála* from an early stage in their studies. It provides the source of prestigious ancestors, national and regional pedigrees, and historical rooting: a complex web of names and incidents to be invoked as panegyric epithets, instructive historical analogies, and cultural anchors.

Bardic poetry draws on this wellspring of tradition in a variety of ways, most commonly by invoking great names from the past who are then put to use for different rhetorical purposes. Most simply, a range of figures are invoked as great heroes from the Gaelic past, without any personal connection to the subject of the poem being implied: often, as one might expect, the device is simply to compare the valour or military prowess of the chief being praised to that of one or more of these illustrious forerunners. On other occasions, great names are proclaimed as the chief's progenitors, though often (and ideally) these ancestors themselves belong to the pantheon of Gaeldom's heroes, and they may appear in other poems as 'free-standing' figures, invoked for their heroism alone and not because of any immediate connection to the subject of the poem. As discussed below, linkage to venerable progenitors was perhaps the single most important source of prestige for a Gaelic ruler, and thus the single most important point of emphasis for panegyric poetry.

²⁰John Carey, *A New Introduction to Lebor Gabála Éirenn* (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1993), p. 6. The more inclusive term 'Gaelic' might be preferred here to Carey's 'Irish'.

The purely 'heroic' figures in the stock can be identified fairly readily, while references to 'genealogical' figures can be more difficult to untangle. Cú Chulainn, as the greatest warrior of all in Gaelic tradition, makes more appearances in Scottish bardic poetry than any other hero of the past;²¹ other figures from the Ulster Cycle like Conchobhar²² and Cathbhadh²³ are also common. Fenian figures like Fionn mac Cumhaill²⁴ and Oscar²⁵ are also important ingredients in the stock. Naoise and the other sons of Uisnech are notably popular in Scottish bardic poetry, perhaps because their famous exile to Scotland creates particularly immediate Scottish associations.²⁶ The early king Guaire mac Colmáin is a different sort of hero, famed for his legendary generosity, and thus an ideal comparator for patrons receiving praise for their hospitality.²⁷ At the same time, the bardic poets in both Scotland and Ireland also make free use of certain figures from classical history — Caesar,²⁸ Pompey,²⁹ Cato,³⁰

²¹'Fhuaras mac mar an t-athair', § 13a (l. 1017)); 'Cóir feitheamh ar uaislibh Alban' ('It is right to wait for the nobles of Alba') (anonymous, before 1542), § 10a (published in *SVBDL*, poem 24 (l. 1843)); 'Fada dhomh an laighe-se' ('Long I deem this lie-abled') (An Barún Eóghan mac Combaigh, before 1542), § 3d (published in *SVBDL*, poem 25 (l. 1894)); 'Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban', §§ 6b, 6d, 12a, 13a, 14c.

²²'Gabh rém chomraigh, a Mheic Ghriogóir' ('Receive and protect me, Mac Griogair') (Fionnlagh 'Am Bard Ruadh', before 1519), § 7a (published in *SVBDL*, poem 15 (l. 1205)); 'Adhbhur tuirsi ag fuil Fhionghuin', § 9d.

²³'Thánaig adhbhar mo thuirse', § 25a-b (l. 872c-d); 'Alba gan díon an déidh Ailín', §§ 18-27; 'Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais', § 24b; 'Tuar doimheanmna dul Raghnaill' ('An omen of gloom is the passing of Raghnaill') (anonymous, 1705), § 34a (unpublished; NLS Adv. MS 72.2.2, 14a (transcript in *CW* 137A, pp. 50-54)).

²⁴'Buaidh thighearna ar thóiseachaibh' ('Chiefs possess the excellence of lords') (Mac Giolla Fhionntóg an Fear Dána, c. 1415), §§ 8c-d, 9a-b (published in *SVBDL*, poem 5 (ll. 303-08)); 'Ríoghacht ghaisgidh oighreacht Eoin' ('A kingdom of valour is the inheritance of Eoin') (Dubhghall mac an Ghiolla Ghlais, before 1519), §§ 14a, 16b, 19c, 20a (published in *SVBDL*, poem 27 (ll. 2055, 2064, 2077, 2079)); 'Is truagh m'imtheachd ó chuir Mhic Cailin' ('Sad is my departure from the court of Mac Cailin') (anonymous, c. 1650(?)), § 3d (published in *RC*, II, 321; improved edition in *CW* 137B, pp. 128-29)); 'Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaidheal', § 35d.

²⁵'Ríoghacht ghaisgidh oighreacht Eoin', § 11c (l. 2045); 'Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban', § 2c; 'Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaidheal', § 37c; 'Fáilte d'ar n-Ailín, rígh na Raghnaill' ('Welcome to our Allan, king of Clann Raghnaill') (Niall Mac Mhuirich, c. 1686) (published in *RC*, II, 286), l. 6.

²⁶'Cumha ceathrair do mheasg mé' ('The grief for four has bewildered me') (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1636), §§ 19-21 (published in *RC*, II, 232); 'Adhbhur tuirsi ag fuil Fhionghuin', §§ 10c, 14a, 15b; 'Fhuaras rogha na n-óg mbríoghmhóir', § 17c (l. 1103)); 'O 's uaigneach a nochd Clár Ghorra' ('O lonely tonight is the plain of Lochgair') (anonymous, c. 1642), § 9c (published in *RC*, II, 322; improved edition in *CW* 137B, pp. 130-31).

²⁷'Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne', § 24c; 'Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill', § 2b; 'Fhuaras mac mar an t-athair', § 4d (l. 984); 'Fhuaras rogha na n-óg mbríoghmhóir', § 19c (l. 1111)); 'O 's uaigneach a nochd Clár Ghorra', § 6a; 'Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir', § 16a; 'Is maith mo leaba, is olc mo shuain' ('Good is my bed, poor is my sleep') (anonymous, 1661), § 12d (published in W.J. Watson, 'On the Imprisonment of Argyll, in 1661', in *Voices from the Hills (Guthan o na Beanntaibh)*, ed. by John MacDonald (Glasgow: An Comunn Gaidhealach, 1927), pp. 252-55). The uses of Guaire in bardic poetry are discussed in Pádraig A. Breatnach, 'Moladh na Féile: Téama i bhFilíocht na Scol agus a Chúlra', in Breatnach, *Téamaí Taighde*, pp. 97-129 (pp. 102-03).

²⁸'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg', § 7c; 'Fada cóir Fhóidla ar Albain', §§ 19-35; 'Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban', § 4c.

Hector,³¹ Aristotle,³² Philip of Macedonia and Alexander the Great³³ — and from the Bible, perhaps most commonly Noah, probably because the *Leabhar Gabhála* traced the main Milesian line back to him.³⁴

The distinction between ‘heroic’ and ‘genealogical’ figures begins to break down with respect to the great early Irish kings, who play an important role in the onomastic field of bardic poetry. Unlike Cú Chulainn and the Fenian warriors, all these figures — Art Aoinfhear mac Cuinn,³⁵ Cormac mac Airt,³⁶ Cairbre Lifechair mac Cormaic,³⁷ and Niall Naoighiallach (‘Niall of the Nine Hostages’)³⁸ — are great progenitors, and at least one family — usually many — in Ireland or Scotland claims a connection in the family pedigree. At the same time, these figures are often invoked for ‘non-genealogical’ reasons, most obviously Conn Céadchathach (‘Conn of the Hundred Battles’), who comes to represent, particularly in Irish poetry, a sort of ‘father-figure’ for the Gaels as a whole. In the Scottish context, Conn appears most frequently in Mac Domhnaill poetry, with Clann Domhnaill sometimes earning the by-name *síol Chuinn* (‘the progeny of Conn’), though this label is also attested for their close relatives Clann Dubhghaill,³⁹ and indeed with the meaning of the entire world.⁴⁰ The connection to Conn is shared by other Scottish kindreds as well, for he is noted as

²⁹‘Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban’, § 4a.

³⁰‘Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban’, § 4b.

³¹‘Mó iná ainm Iarrrla Gaoidheal’ (‘The Earl of the Gaels is greater than his name’) (anonymous, c. 1650(?)), § 30c (TCD MS 1298 (H.2.7), f. 1 (unpublished); ‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal’, § 35b; ‘Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban’, § 3d.

³²‘Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban’, § 26b.

³³‘Mó iná ainm Iarrrla Gaoidheal’, § §13-26.

³⁴‘Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg’, §§ 22-28; ‘Do ísligh onóir Gaoidheal’, §§ 33-37. The image of Noah and the releasing of the bird after the Flood — an important feature of ‘Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg’ — also occurs in Sir Donnchadh Caimbeul of Glenorchy’s ‘Teachtair chuireas i geéin’ (§ 6), and Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair’s vernacular poem beginning ‘Is tuirseach mo sgeul ri luaidh’ (‘Sad is my story to recount’) (‘Marbhrann do Pheata Coluim’/‘Elegy for a Pet Dove’) (1751) (published in *BG*, ll. 2734-85 (ll. 2746-51)), while other treatments of Noah and the Ark are found in the classical poems ‘Crann do chuir amach Naoi nár’ (‘Noble Noah put out a pole’) (Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe, c. 1250) (published in Williams, poem 22) and ‘Iomdha sochar ag síol Néill’ (‘Many privileges have the seed of Niall’) (published in *TD*, poem 7). See Liam P. Ó Caithnia, *Apalóga na bhFíli 1200-1650*, *Leabhair Thairghde*, 45 (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1984), pp. 138-39.

³⁵‘Mór mo mholadh ar mhac Cholla’ (‘Great is my praise for the son of Colla’) (anonymous, 1645), § 4c (published in W.J. Watson, ‘Unpublished Gaelic Poetry — III’, *SGS*, 2 (1927), 75-91).

³⁶‘Do ísligh onóir Gaoidheal’, §§ 19-24.

³⁷‘Eireóchtar fós le cloinn gColla’, §§ 1c, 11a; ‘Míonn súl Éireann i n-Áth Cliath’, § 2b; ‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’, § 27b.

³⁸‘Mór an léan-sa ar aicme Íle’ (‘Great is this blow on the race of Islay’) (Niall Mac Mhuirich (?), c. 1670(?)), § 10a (published in *RC*, II, 134-35; improved edition in *CW* 137A, pp. 110-13).

³⁹‘Do athruigh séan ar síol gCuinn’, §§ 1a, 2b, 4c, 5a (ll. 1567, 1572, 1581, 1583).

⁴⁰‘Mairg ó ndeachaidh a léim lúidh’ (‘Woe to him whose vitality has left him’) (Sir Donnchadh Caimbeul of Glenorchy, before 1513), § 11a (published in Gillies, ‘The Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (II)’, pp. 280-82).

a heroic progenitor in poetry for Stiùbhart, Mac Griogair, and Mac Leòid chiefs.⁴¹

Invoked to similar effect are the legendary figures Míl Easbáin and his sons Éibhear and Éireamhón, first of the Gaels to arrive in Ireland according to the *Leabhar Gabhála* account. Because of this primacy a direct Milesian connection is the most prestigious of Gaelic pedigrees, but these figures are usually used metaphorically in Scottish bardic poetry, providing labels for the Gaels as a whole, like ‘*maicne Míledh*’ (‘the race of Míl’), ‘*clann Éibhir*’ (‘children of Éibhear’), and ‘*aicme Éireamhoin*’ (‘race of Éireamhón’).⁴²

*

For similar reasons and in largely similar ways, genealogy also plays a crucial role in the late medieval *Gàidhealtachd* of Scotland and Ireland. A distinguished pedigree locates a chief in Gaelic history and tradition, and ties him to other prominent kindreds past and present: it is the most powerful means of expressing the chief’s importance and natural right to rule. References to distinguished pedigrees and ancestors are central features of bardic poetry, and the formal maintenance of *seanchas* — a process often involving creative embellishment and outright invention, often according to the political exigencies of the moment — was considered a task of the utmost importance.⁴³ Linkage to venerable progenitors — with clarity of connection to ancient Ireland, and especially to the senior, Milesian line, being the relevant measuring-stick⁴⁴ — was perhaps the single most important source of prestige for a Gaelic ruler. Genealogical evidence can therefore show the various ways in which kindreds and chiefs related to each other — across Sruth na Maoile as well as within

⁴¹‘Cóir feitheamh ar uaislibh Alban’, § 16d; ‘Aithris fhréimhe ruanaidh Eoin’ (‘The repetition of a heroic stock is Eoin’) (Donnchadh mac Dubhghaill Mhaoil Mac Griogair, before 1519), § 16c (published in *SVBDL*, poem 28 (l. 2157)); ‘Do thuim aoibhneas Innsi Gall’, § 30a. Conn is also noted as a progenitor of the Mac Néills of Moyhanish in Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh’s vernacular poem beginning ‘‘S tìm, tuirseach mo dhusgadh’ (‘Spiritless and sad is my awakening’) (c. 1761), § 6d (published in W.M. Conley, ‘A Poem in the Stewart Collection’, *SGS*, 11 (1966), 26-37).

⁴²‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaidheal’, § 2a; ‘Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh’, § 28b; ‘Cionnas mhaireas mé am aonar’ (‘How will I survive alone’) (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1650), § 20b (published in *RC*, I, 129-32; transcript in *CW* 137A, pp. 101-106). These figures are used for rather more didactic purposes in ‘Meisde nach éadmhor Éire’, §§ 14-23, and in ‘Fada dhomh an laighe-se’, § 4a (l. 1895).

⁴³A classic discussion of the importance of genealogy is given by Dubhaltach Mac Fírhisigh in the introduction to his *Book of Genealogies* (1650) (Ó Raithbheartaigh, pp. 1-32).

⁴⁴William Gillies, ‘The Invention of Tradition — Highland Style’, in *The Renaissance in Scotland: Studies in Literature, Religion, History and Culture*, ed. by A.A. MacDonald, Michael Lynch, and Ian B. Cowan (London: E.J. Brill, 1994), pp. 144-56 (p. 145); see also William Gillies, ‘Heroes and Ancestors’, in *The Heroic Process: Form, Function and Fantasy in Folk Epic*, ed. by Bo Almqvist, Séamas Ó Catháin, and Pádraig Ó Héalaí (Dún Laoghaire: Glendale Press, 1987), pp. 57-74.

Ireland — and the broader cultural milieus in which they operated. It can also show the changing circumstances and perceptions of particular kindreds within those milieus, as with the Caimbeuls, whose progressively increasing political power was matched by a progressively more prestigious pedigree.

In the Scottish context, genealogy is particularly fascinating because of the complex ways in which Gaelic and non-Gaelic origins — and perhaps identities — could be intertwined. Significantly, the nature of this intertwining varied substantially from family to family. Mac Domhnaills were usually packaged in straightforwardly Gaelic terms, tied to mythological Irish progenitors or, less commonly, more recent *Gall-Ghaidheal* (mixed Norse and Gaelic) forebears; Mac Leòid chiefs tended to be associated with Norse ancestors more than Gaelic; Caimbeuls were presented as a complex and peculiar mix of Gaelic, British and French ancestors.

For the Mac Domhnaills, the most important linkage between Scottish kindreds and prestigious Irish pedigrees is the legendary fourth-century CE Irish warrior-king Colla Uais (often invoked in combination with his younger brothers Colla dhá Chríoch and Colla Meann),⁴⁵ his father Eochaidh Doimhléin,⁴⁶ and great-great-great-grandfather Conn Céadchathach. Asserting connections to these forebears also serves to underscore the interrelationship between the Mac Domhnaills and prominent Irish kindreds like the Ó Néills and Ó Domhnaills, said to be descended from Fiacha mac Cairbre, brother of Eochaidh Doimhléin, and the Mág Uidhirs, Mág Mathghamhnas, and Ó Ceallaighs of Uí Maine, said to be descended from Colla dhá Chríoch.⁴⁷ Closer still are the ties to the Mac Dubhghaills and Mac Alasdairs in Scotland and the Mac Síthighs in Munster, each of them also held to be descended from Colla Uais.⁴⁸

These connections to the Collas and the interlinking between their various descendants are often underscored by speaking of them as a trio and asserting a link — both factually baseless and biologically impossible — to all three brothers, as a kind of mythical triplication. In ‘Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochannaigh’, for example, Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh claims that Clann Domhnaill are ‘Éireannaigh féin . . . | dá bhfréimh ó

⁴⁵Narrative accounts of the adventures of the Collas are given in *FFÉ*, II, 243-44, 359-65, 383-85; *LCAB*, pp. 48-51; and *TD*, II, 228-232.

⁴⁶‘Saoth leam do chor, a Cholla’, §§ 6d, 24b; ‘Treisi an eagla ioná an andsacht’, §§ 22b, 23b.

⁴⁷*LCAB*, pp. 48, 51. These connections to Clann Domhnaill are explicitly noted in ‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’, § 30.

⁴⁸*LCAB*, p. 51.

na finnghealChollaibh ('Irishmen indeed . . . | owing to their descent from the fair-bright **Collas**') (§ 1a-b), while Domhnall mac Briain Ó hUiginn refers to the Collas, '*tríar fear gan bhrígh a mbarar*' ('three men without power for threatening'), as '*aithreacha fola Domhnuill*' ('the forefathers of the blood of Domhnall').⁴⁹ Similar usages are also found in Irish poems to Irish descendants of Colla dhá Chríoch.⁵⁰ This device serves as an implicit connector between Clann Domhnaill and prominent Irish kindreds. Claiming these connections to Colla Uais, and to Conn, is thus a standard feature of Mac Domhnaill poetry. In a poem ascribed to Cathal Mac Mhuirich, for example, Domhnall Gorm Óg Mac Domhnaill of Sleat is described as '*slat a caolach Cholla Uais*' ('a rod from the wattles of Colla Uais') and '*géag chumhra do chin ó Chonn*' ('fragrant branch who sprang from Conn').⁵¹ The death of Eoin Mac Dubhghaill, who shared the same origins, is also said to be a tribulation for '*siól Chuinn*' and '*siól Colla Uais*'.⁵²

Subsequent, and more specifically Scottish, figures in the Clann Domhnaill lineage are also invoked in the poetry, though rather less frequently than the more distant Irish progenitors. These include Earc, great-grandson of Colla Uais;⁵³ Earc's son Fearghas, legendary founder of the Dál Riata settlement in Scotland;⁵⁴ Suibhne,⁵⁵ Gofraidh;⁵⁶ and, thirteen generations down from Colla Uais, Somerled (†1164), grandfather of the eponymous Domhnall, universally recognized in Gaelic tradition as

⁴⁹'Meisde nach éadmhor Éire', § 27b, a; see also 'An síth do rogha, a rígh Fionnghall?', § 16c (l. 63).

⁵⁰E.g. 'Dá bhrághaid uaim i nInis' ('Two captives far away from me in Inis') (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, c. 1444), § 11a (published in *AD*, poem 14); 'Mairg fhéagas ar Inis Ceithleann' ('Alas for him who looks on Enniskillen') (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1580) (published in *TD*, poem 11), § 39c; see also 'Fada re huaisle cland Chéin' ('Long has Cian's race been engaged in noble deeds') (Diarmoid Dall Mac an Fhir Léighinn, 1581x1612), § 12a (published in McKenna, *The Book of O'Hara*, poem 17 (l. 2495)).

⁵¹'Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir', §§ 19a, 23a.

⁵²'Do athruigh séan ar síol gCuinn', §§ 1a, 2b, 4c, 5a (ll. 1567, 1572, 1581, 1583).

⁵³'Foraois éigeas Innse Gall', § 23c.

⁵⁴'Mór an feidhm freagairt na bhfaighdheach thig fá seach', § 25c (l. 733). Fearghas mac Earc is also invoked as a Mac Griogair progenitor in 'Aithris fhréimhe ruanaidh Eoin', § 11c-d (ll. 2137-38), and, significantly, in Aodhagán Ó Rathaille's elegy on Diarmaid Ó Laoghaire of Killeen (†1696?) beginning 'Créad an síobhra nimhe seo ar Fhódla?' ('What venomous enchantment is this on Fódla?'), where Diarmaid is described as '*Bráthair Fhearghuis chalma chródha | Do chuir Alba i gceangal le Fódla*' ('Kinsman of Fearghas, the strong, the valiant | Who brought Scotland into union with Fódla') (§ 18a-b) (published in *Dánta Aodhagáin Uí Rathaille/The Poems of Egan O'Rahilly*, ed. by Patrick S. Dinneen and Tadhg O'Donoghue, 2nd edn, Irish Texts, 3 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1911), poem 22).

⁵⁵'Ceannas Gaoidheal do chlainn Cholla', §§ 6-7. According to Cétinn and 'Ceannas Gaoidheal', Suibhne was seven generations back from Somerled and six ahead of Colla Uais. Other enumerations calculate differently, e.g. *AClon*, p. 209.

⁵⁶'Ceannaigh duain t'athar, a Aonghas', § 29a; 'Do athruigh séan ar síol gCuinn', §§ 20b, 21b (ll. 1644, 1648); 'Treisi an eagla ioná an andacht', § 15d. Gofraidh was the son of Suibhne, according to Cétinn. The

the founder of the Lordship of the Isles.⁵⁷

Although Clann Domhnaill's purported link to the kings of Norway is occasionally noted in poetry,⁵⁸ the Norse aspect of the Mac Leòids' pedigree is accorded much greater prominence. Here the most celebrated progenitor is Olbhar (known as Olghar in vernacular poetry, where he is also commonly invoked),⁵⁹ evidently the great-grandfather of the eponymous Leòd, himself a predictably common figure.⁶⁰ There are also references, less common, to Maghnus, Norse king of Man.⁶¹ At the same time, the Mac Leòids were also fitted with a Gaelic pedigree, reaching back to Fearghas Leith Dearg, son of Nemed, a figure commonly used by genealogists to graft kindreds not of purely Gaelic stock on to the Gaelic family tree.⁶²

A significant gap, in this context as more generally, is the absence of bardic poems to the Mac Gill-Eathains, a kindred known to have supported both formally trained *filidh* and secondary poets later to earn the title *aos-dàna*. Vernacular poetry

line of the Mac Domhnaill pedigree is set out in the *LCAB*, p. 52.

⁵⁷'Ceannaigh duain t'athar, a Aonghas', § 29a; 'Saoth leam do chor, a Cholla', § 26b; 'Labhradh Trían Chonghuil go ciúin', § 19b; see *FFÉ*, IV, 34-35. *LCAB* (p. 52) gives a different enumeration, reducing the distance to Gofraidh, Somerled, and Domhnall by one generation, owing to discrepancies in the line from Earc to Giolla Adhamhnáin, grandfather of Somerled. The distance from Suibhne to Somerled is also reduced to four generations from seven, a computation also given in 'Ceannas Gaoidheal do Chlainn Cholla', § 6a-b. Variations in this pedigree are discussed in Ó Cuív, 'Some Irish Items', pp. 148-49.

⁵⁸E.g. 'Mór an léan-sa ar aicme Íle', § 7a.

⁵⁹Classical examples include 'Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois', §§ 4c, 33c, 46d; 'Sé hoidhche dhamhsa san Dún', § 4a; 'Ar ttriall bhus ésguigh go Uilliam', §§ 5c, 12a, 23a; 'Do ísligh onóir Gaoidheal', §§ 29a, 31b; 'Dual freasdal ar feirg flatha' ('It is proper to attend to the anger of a prince') (anonymous, c. 1693), § 10a (NLS Adv. MS 39, 31a (stanzas 9-10 and 19-22 published in Ronald Black, 'Mac Mhaighstir Alastair in Rannoch', *TGSI*, 59 (1994-96), 341-419 (pp. 382-83); transcript of entire poem in CW 137B, pp. 139-43); 'Mór a n-ainm a n-iath eile' ('Great are their names in another land') (anonymous, c. 1699), § 6b (NLS Adv. MS 72.2.2, 43b (unpublished; transcript in CW 137B, pp. 144-45)). Vernacular examples include Iain mac Ailein Mac Gill-Eathain (an t-Aos Dàna)'s 'Shìl Olaghair gun ainnis' ('Progeny of Olghar that is without meanness') ('Sìol Olaghair'/'The Progeny of Olghar') (c. 1720) (published in Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, I, 131-32) and 'Thoir fios bhuam gu Anndra' ('Take tidings from me to Anndra') ('An Sugradh'/'Mirth') (c. 1706), § 8a (published in Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, I, 107-09), and in several of Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh's compositions: 'Ri fuaim an taibh' ('With the sound of the ocean') ('Crònan an Taibh'/'The Ocean-Croon') (after 1666), § 8b (published in *BG*, II, 5312-95 (l. 5380) and in *MNAR*, pp. 44-49 (l. 521), 'Gur e an naidheachd so fhuair mi' ('The message I have received') ('Cumha do Mhac Leòid'/'Lament for Mac Leòid') (1699), § 12b (published in *MNAR*, II, 609-720 (l. 698), 'An naidheachd so an dé' ('The message of yesterday') ('An Crònan'/'The Croon') (c. 1699), § 13a (published in *MNAR*, II, 721-859 (l. 791), 'Théid mi le m' dheoin' ('I shall go willingly') ('Fuigheall'/'A Fragment') (c. 1695), § 6a (published in *MNAR*, II, 860-907 (l. 875), and 'Cha sùrd cadail', § 14a (*MNAR*, I, 1148; *BG*, I, 4313).

⁶⁰*BG*, p. 305; 'Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois', §§ 3d, 47b; 'Do ísligh onóir Gaoidheal', §§ 8a, 28a; 'Dual freasdal ar feirg flatha', §§ 7a, 19a; 'Do thuirn aoibhneas Innsi Gall', *passim*.

⁶¹'Do thuirn aoibhneas Innsi Gall', § 30b. The term '*freunh Mhànuis*' also appears in 'Ri fuaim an taibh', § 23c (*MNAR*, I, 567, *BG*, I, 5380).

⁶²W.F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland: A History of Ancient Alban*, 2nd edn, 3 vols (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1887, 1890), III, 460-61; David Sellar, 'Highland Family Origins — Pedigree Making and Pedigree Faking', in *The Middle Ages in the Highlands*, ed. by Loraine Maclean (Inverness: Inverness Field Club, 1981), pp. 103-16 (p. 108).

for Mac Gill-Eathain chiefs composed around the turn of the eighteenth century is striking in its emphasis on the Milesian heritage, however, with the key names repeatedly invoked and the connection back to the original Irish invasion repeatedly retraced.⁶³ This is a significant manifestation of the ongoing connection to Ireland in the Scottish Gaelic imagination, more than a century after the Battle of Kinsale, and within one of the most resolutely Presbyterian of Scottish kindreds.

The Caimbeuls' pedigree is certainly the most complex among the principal Scottish clans, befitting a kindred at once adhering to Gaelic traditions and adapting itself to the broader Scottish and British contexts. The most prominent Caimbeul progenitor identified in the poetry is King Arthur, claimed as ten steps ahead of Cailean Mór in the pedigree, and forty-three steps from Adam himself.⁶⁴ Arthur is of course the paradigmatic British hero — though he does make occasional appearances in Irish bardic poetry as well⁶⁵ — and thus serves as a metaphor for the Caimbeuls' orientation towards British politics, as in poems like 'Triath na n Gaoidheal Giolla-easbuig', which places particularly heavy stress on the British connection.⁶⁶ Their '*fuil Bhreatnach*' ('British blood') is often praised, to similar effect.⁶⁷ Adding to this mix is a purported Norman connection — following re-analysis of the name 'Campbell' to produce 'De Campo Bello', thereby justifying the addition of a previously nonexistent *p* — and accompanying praise for French ancestry.⁶⁸

The connection to Arthur can also be given a Gaelic gloss, however, simply by extending his sway to Ireland and invoking resonant names from Irish tradition in the

⁶³Examples are Iain mac Ailein's 'Tha mi am chadal 's gur tìm dhomh dusgadh', §§ 3-7, and 'Iomchair mo bheannachd | Gu baintighearna Hamara' ('Take my greeting to the lady of Hamar') ('Marbhrann do Shir Iain Mac Gill-Eathain'/'Elegy for Sir Iain Mac Gill-Eathain') (1716), §§ 3-4 (published in Sinclair, *Na Baird Leathanach*, I, 116-23); and, in a slightly different vein, Maighstir Seathan's 'Air teachd on Spáin, do shliochd an Gháoidhil ghlais'.

⁶⁴'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg', §§ 9-10; 'Fhuaras rogha na n-óg mbríoghmhór', § 21d (l. 1120); 'Is maith mo leaba, is olc mo shuain', § 9b; 'Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal', §§ 26d, 45a; 'Mó iná ainm Iarrla Gaoidheal', § 6d; 'Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne', §§ 10a, 11b; 'Triath na nGaoidheal Giolla-easbuig', §§ 27-33. King Arthur is also invoked as an ancestor of the Mac Dubhghaills in 'Aithris fhréimhe ruanaidh Eoin', § 16a (l. 2155).

⁶⁵E.g., 'Fa ngníomhraidh measdar meic ríogh' ('By their deeds are the sons of kings assessed') (Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh, c. 1360(?)), § 31b (published in *DD*, poem 91); 'Fúarus iongnadh, a fhir chumainn' ('I have found a marvel, my friend') (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, c. 1615), §§ 8-12 (published in Osborn Bergin, 'A Begging Letter', *Studies*, 8 (1919), 72-76 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 6) and in *Dán na mBráthar Mionúr*, ed. by Cuthbert Mhág Craith, 2 vols, Scríbhinní Gaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr, 8 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1967), I, poem 24).

⁶⁶'Triath na nGaoidheal Giolla-easbuig', *passim*.

⁶⁷'Triath na nGaoidheal Giolla-easbuig', § 35a; 'Is truagh m'imtheachd ó chuir Mhic Cailin', § 7c.

⁶⁸'Is truagh m'imtheachd ó chuir Mhic Cailin', § 7c.

process, as in the poem by the *ollamh* to An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill beginning ‘Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg’:

*Do bhí a chíos ar Chruachaibh Àoi
's ar Bhóinn 's ar Gháille gres n[aoi]
is ar lucht Bhuilleadh sing suthain:
Cing Arduir ór fhásabhair.*

The tribute of King Arthur, from whom you sprang, was once upon the Stacks of Àoi, upon the Boyne and Galey [Co. Sligo], upon the sap of slender everlasting Boyle [Co. Roscommon] (§ 9)

In popular tradition, and vernacular poetry, the Campbells are also considered to descend from the Fenian warrior Diarmaid Ó Duibhne, but this association arises from a confusion between this Duibhne and the Duibhne of the traditional Caimbeul pedigree, sixth progenitor beyond Cailean Mór. William Gillies has pointed out that this connection to Diarmaid Ó Duibhne is almost entirely absent from the bardic poetry for the Caimbeuls, occurring only in a single poem from 1743 — the anonymous elegy for John, second Duke of Argyll beginning ‘Tuirseach an diugh críocha Gaoidhiol’ (‘Sorrowful today are the bounds of the Gael’) — that can only be considered a very marginal part of the bardic corpus. Genealogists and poets trained in the learned Gaelic tradition would neither have accepted the accuracy of purported descent from a Fenian hero, nor considered such an association appropriate for a prominent Gaelic family.⁶⁹ References to the Duibhne of the ‘traditional’ pedigree are legion, however, made in almost every surviving Caimbeul poem, and the connection to Cailean is so fundamental that the chief of the main Caimbeul line (progressively elevated to Earls, Marquesses and Dukes of Argyll) becomes simply *Mac Cailein Mór*.

Crucially, the Caimbeuls were also fitted with a more prestigious Gaelic pedigree as their political importance grew, eventually tapping into the main line of the Milesian invaders of Ireland, by means of a purported descent from Lugaid, son of Ith, son of Míl Espáin, who was ‘much more of an “establishment” figure’ in the Gaelic hierarchy, centred on the *Leabhar Gabhála*, than the other Gaelic progenitors, including the convenient Fearghas Leith Dearg, that had previously been invoked.⁷⁰ This association does not appear in surviving bardic poetry, but is noted in Céitinn’s

⁶⁹Gillies, ‘Some Aspects of Campbell History’, p. 279.

⁷⁰Gillies, ‘The Invention of Tradition’, p. 145. An earlier, less prestigious pedigree is given in Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, III, 458-60.

Because of the focus on the *Leabhar Gabhála* and Ireland's early history, the history of Scotland from the arrival of the Gaels onwards is largely a blank slate in bardic poetry. Not only is there an apparent alienation from the south and east of Scotland, in the wake of its de-Gaelicization, but relatively little consideration is paid to the earlier history of Dál Riada and the development of the Scottish kingdom in the centuries following its foundation. Such references as do occur in the poetry tend to be genealogical in nature, rather than political: chiefs are connected to the figures considered crucial in the pedigree, for the reasons discussed above, rather than the figures most prominent for their political achievements. Great leaders like Áedán mac Gabráin (†608),⁷² Cinaed mac Ailpín (†858), and Mael Coluim Ceann Mór (†1093) are almost invisible in bardic poetry, and are certainly not mentioned because of their political activities.⁷³ In contrast, although earlier, semi-legendary figures like Conn Céadchathach and Niall Naoighiallach are more prominent, Irish kings of the ninth to eleventh centuries CE are frequently invoked in bardic poetry, such as Flann Sionna (†914), Maoilsheachluinn (†1002), and especially Brian Bóroimhe (†1014), the great Munster king, whose deeds are often retold in Irish poetry and who becomes so prominent as to be memorialized in geographical kennings like *Banbha Bhriain* ('Brian's Banbha')⁷⁴ and *Sionann Bhriain Bhóroimhe* ('Shannon of Brian Bóroimhe'),⁷⁵ even becoming a metaphorical progenitor for all the people of Munster, *síol Bhriain* ('the progeny of Brian').⁷⁶ Bardic poetry thus serves to express and

⁷¹FFÉ, II, 284, 382; IV, 115.

⁷²Áedán mac Gabráin seems to have been more prominent in pre-classical Gaelic literature, as in the anonymous poem on his birth from the mid-eleventh century, beginning 'Ro bátar láeich do Laignib' ('Warriors there were of the Laigin') (published in M.A. O'Brien, 'A Middle-Irish poem on the birth of Áedán mac Gabráin and Brandub mac Echach', *Ériu*, 16 (1952), 157-70).

⁷³Mael Coluim Ceann Mór is, however, invoked for 'political' reasons in Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's 'Moladh na Sean Chànain Gàidhlig' ('Gur h-ì as crìoch àraid'): 'Is i labhair Calum | Allail a' chinn mhóir' ('It is [Gaelic] that illustrious Mael Coluim Ceann Mór spoke') (*BG*, ll. 2651-52; Derick S. Thomson, *Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair*, ll. 597-98). He is also invoked as a figure in the pedigree of Eoin mac Pádraig Mac Griogair (†1519) in 'Aithris fhréimhe ruanaidh Eoin', § 13b (l. 2144).

⁷⁴'Cia feasda as urra don eól', §§ 3d, 7d, 18b, 21c; see Ó Caithnia, pp. 84-89. Brian is also mentioned occasionally in poems for Scottish chiefs, including 'Fuath liom bheith anmoch ag triall' ('I hate to be late journeying') (anonymous, before 1542), § 5b (published in *SVBDL*, poem 34 (l. 2412)).

⁷⁵'A Shionann Bhriain Bhóroimhe' ('O Shannon of Brian Bóroimhe') (Diarmaid Ó Briain, c. 1440(?)), § 1a (published in Osborn Bergin, 'Two Poems on the Shannon', *Irish Review*, 3 (1913-14), 13-17 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 12)).

⁷⁶'A Shionann Chuinn Chéadchathaigh' ('O Shannon of Conn of the Hundred Battles') (Tadhg Óg Ó

reinforce Gaelic identity in Ireland as a historical continuity, but nothing of this kind is attempted for Gaelic Scotland.

Earlier Gaelic scholarship, in contrast, traced and constructed the pedigree of the Gaels in Scotland with full care, perhaps most notably in the so-called ‘Duan Albanach’ (beginning ‘A éolcha Alban uile’ (‘O all you learned ones of Alba’)) (c. 1093), which sets out the royal line from Earc to Mael Choluim Ceann Mór.⁷⁷ Interest in these pedigrees continued in Lowland Scotland throughout the late medieval period,⁷⁸ but largely disappears from the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* — and, evidently, from the bardic schools — almost as if the enterprise had been appropriated by outsiders.

At the same time, bardic poetry also pays little attention to the significant events of the late medieval period within the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* — events that became landmarks in later Scottish Gaelic tradition. An especially striking omission from bardic poetry is reference to *Cath Gairbheach* (the Battle of Harlaw) in 1411, one of the major events in the history of the Lordship of the Isles. A *brosnachadh catha* or ‘incitement to battle’ relating to Harlaw was apparently composed in the Scottish Gaelic vernacular by Lachlann Mac Mhuirich (though it may be a forgery of sorts, composed much later),⁷⁹ but there is no other mention of the battle in the surviving bardic poetry of the period.⁸⁰ References to *Cath Gairbheach* are commonplace in seventeenth and eighteenth-century vernacular poetry, however, where it is invoked as a touchstone of hereditary Gaelic loyalty, military prowess, and general prestige.⁸¹

hUiginn, c. 1440(?), § 9b (published in Bergin, ‘Two Poems on the Shannon’ (repr. in *IBP*, poem 13)).

⁷⁷Kenneth Jackson, ‘The Duan Albanach’, *SHR*, 36 (1957), 126-37 (§§ 8-27, ll. 29-108).

⁷⁸Dauvit Broun, ‘Defining Scotland and the Scots Before the Wars of Independence’, in *Image and Identity: The Making and Remaking of Scotland Through the Ages*, ed. by Dauvit Broun, R.J. Finlay, and Michael Lynch (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998), pp. 4-17 (pp. 10-11). Broun emphasizes the importance of the Irish connection amongst Lowland Scottish scholars, but points out that the Scottish dimension became paramount after the end of the thirteenth century and the Wars of Independence. Broun, *The Irish Identity of the Kingdom of the Scots*, pp. 129, 200.

⁷⁹‘A Chlanna Chuinn, cuimhnichibh’; Derick S. Thomson, ‘The Harlaw Brosnachadh’.

⁸⁰As mentioned earlier, however, the battle is noted in *AConn* 1411, described as ‘*maidm mór le Mac Domnaill na hAlpan for Gallaib Alpan*’ (‘a great victory by Mac Domhnaill of Scotland over the *Goill* of Scotland’). There is no reference to the battle in *AU* or *AFM*.

⁸¹‘Thriall bhur bunadh go Phàro’ (‘Your origins went back to Pharaoh’) ((‘A’ Chnò Shamhna’/‘The Hallowe’en Nut’) (Eachann Bacach Mac Gill-Eathain, 1649), § 1f (published in *BG*, ll. 5492-5610 (l. 5497) and in *EB*, poem 4 (l. 134)); ‘A bhean, leasaich an stòp dhuinn’ (‘Woman, replenish the vessel for us’) (Iain Lom Mac Domhnaill, c. 1663), § 11b (published in *BG*, ll. 5078-5165 (l. 5130) and in *ÒIL*, ll. 1788-1875 (l. 1840)); ‘Is i so an aimsir an dearbhar an tairgeanachd dhùinn’ (‘This is the time when prophecy is proved for us’) (‘Òran nam Fineachan Gàidhealach’/‘Song of the Highland Clans’) (Iain Dubh mac Iain mhic Ailein Mac Gill-Eathain, c. 1716), § 14g (published in *BG*, ll. 4026-4177 (l. 4136)); ‘Is goirt leam gaoir nam ban

This disparity of treatment highlights the extent to which bardic poetry was composed in an Irish idiom, with its main root in the *Leabhar Gabhála* and subsequent Irish politics, with little attention with Scottish Gaelic political identity.

*

A striking feature of bardic poetry is the underdevelopment of *Alba* as a frame of reference and source of imagery, in comparison to the complex and deeply resonant treatment of Ireland. The very terms *Alba* and *Albanach* are surprisingly infrequent in the poetry: the usual community invoked in classical Gaelic poetry to refer to the Scottish Gaels is not *Alba*, or any other label for Scotland as a whole, but the Hebrides and Hebrideans — *Innsi Gall* (literally ‘Islands of the *Goill*’) or especially, *Fionnghall* (literally ‘Fair *Goill*’). Especially before the seventeenth century, Scottish bardic poetry is every bit as likely to mention *Éire* (either by that name or any of myriad kennings) as *Alba*, and specific places in Ireland are as commonly specified as places in the *Gàidhealtachd* of Scotland, while ‘Lowland’ Scotland is almost never mentioned at all. This pattern reflects both the learned orders’ constant focus on Ireland and corresponding lack of interest in Scotland, and their alienation from the greater *Alba* as an entity increasingly controlled and driven by *Goill*.

The precise meaning of the term *Alba* as used in the poetry is itself not always clear. Often it is used in an older sense, to mean the entire island of Britain rather than simply the portion coterminous with modern Scotland, thus yielding terms like ‘*inns Alban*’ and ‘*oiléan Alban*’ (‘the island of Alba’);⁸² sometimes it seems to consist of the northern ‘Scottish’ mainland only, excluding the Hebrides, which are described by Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn as ‘*na hoiléinse thoir | atá idir Fhódla is Alboin*’ (‘the isles in

Muileach’ (‘Sore with me are the cries of the Mull women’) (Mairearead nighean Lachainn Nic Gill-Eathain, 1716), § 6g (published in *BG*, ll. 3586-3761 (l. 3632)); ‘Tapadh leat, a Dhòmhnail mhic Fhionnlaigh’ (‘My thanks to you, Donald son of Finlay’) (‘Moladh Chloinn Domhnaill’/‘In Praise of Clann Domhnaill’) (Iain Mac Codrum, c. 1766), § 14c (published in *BG*, ll. 1883-2018 (ll. 1989) and in *Òrain Iain Mhic Fhearchair a Bha ’n a Bhàrd aig Sir Seumas MacDhomhnaill/The Songs of John MacCodrum: Bard to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat*, ed. by William Matheson, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 2 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1938), ll. 1799-1934 (l. 1905)).

⁸²‘Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain’, § 4d; ‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaidheal’, § 8a; ‘Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn’, §§ 10b, 13d, 15d. *Alba* is also described as ‘*oilén ard úaine*’ (‘a lofty green island’) in Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh’s famous poem beginning ‘Mór ar bhfearg riot, a rí Saxan’ (‘Great is our anger against thee, o king of England’) (c. 1356-58), § 53c (published in Osborn Bergin, ‘A Poem by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh’, in *Essays and Studies presented to William Ridgeway*, ed. by E.C. Quiggin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913), pp. 323-32 (repr. in *IBP*, no. 17)). The earlier meanings of the term *Alba* are discussed in David N. Dumville, ‘Ireland and Britain in Táin Bó Fraích’, *Études Celtiques*, 32 (1996), 174-87, and in Broun, ‘Defining Scotland’.

the east *between* Ireland and Alba’).⁸³ Yet Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn and Cathal Mac Mhuirich speak of the Hebrides as ‘*inse Alban*’ and ‘*oiléin na hAlban*’ (‘the islands of Scotland’) respectively,⁸⁴ and a lament for Sir Tormod Mac Leòid of Berneray (†1705), apparently composed by Donnchadh Ó Muirgheasáin, speaks of ‘*slóigh na n-oiléin n-Albanach*’ (‘the hosts of the Scottish islands’).⁸⁵

These apparent shifts make sense in cultural and political terms, if less so as a matter of strict geography. The Hebrides were not legally annexed to the Scottish kingdom until 1266, and had indeed never really been part of the mainland kingdom of *Alba* that had developed from the middle of the ninth century onwards. The cultural and political integration of the Hebrides into the Scottish kingdom was a slow and ambiguous process, in which the semi-independence of the Lordship of the Isles was a crucial factor. In any event, bardic poetry — rarely a source of journalistic political reporting, steadfastly conservative in its ways of looking at the world — could be expected to move slowly in the expression of new political formulations and concepts, so that older meanings and understandings of places and entities probably lingered in the poetry.

The term *Fionnghall* — easily the most common term used in bardic poetry to refer to the Scottish Gaels (almost always in this genitive plural form, rather than the nominative plural *Fionnghoill*)⁸⁶ — is an ambiguous and significant one. Though it must certainly have lost much of its original cultural resonance over time, the superficial meaning ‘fair foreigner’, and the semantic connection to the Norse and to ‘foreignness’, must nevertheless have retained some measure of vitality at some level. For example, in one early (c. 1250) poem — and its earliness may be significant, in that the re-Gaelicization of the Hebrides might well have been relatively inchoate at that time — Aonghas Mór Mac Domhnaill of Islay (†1296) is addressed simply as

⁸³‘Fada cóir Fhóidla ar Albain’, § 6a-b. *LCAB* (p. 49) evokes a similar understanding, distinguishing between ‘Alba’ and ‘oiléin Fionnlochlan le n-aburthur Insí Gall’ (‘the islands of Norway that are called the Hebrides’).

⁸⁴‘Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh’, § 18c; ‘Do ísligh onóir Gaoidheal’, § 27d.

⁸⁵‘Do thuirn aoibhneas Innsi Gall’, § 31b.

⁸⁶The nominative plural form is apparently used in Diarmuid mac an Bhaird’s poem to Cormac Óg Ó Néill (†1707) beginning ‘Imir do chluiche, a Chormaic’ (‘Play your game, o Cormac’) (published in *LCAB*, poem 15), where the poet describes Cormac’s force as ‘*Gaoidhil glanchláir Breagh | is Fionnghoill ghlana Gaoidheal*’ (‘Gael of Bregia’s bright plain | and bright Hebrideans of the Gaels’) (§ 5a-b). The dative plural form *Fionnlochlonnaibh* [sic] appears in a prose section of the *LCAB* (p. 51), where its meaning seems ‘territorial’, i.e. referring to the Hebrides rather than to the Hebrideans.

'flaith Gall' ('lord of the *Goill*').⁸⁷ Interestingly, the term *Fionnghoill* — first used during the Viking era, and usually applied to Norwegians — is sometimes used in late Irish bardic poetry to refer to the Hibernicized Anglo-Norman community, the so-called 'Old English', alongside the more common term *Seanghoill* (literally 'Old Foreigners'), to distinguish them from the 'new foreigners' or 'dark foreigners' (*Dubhghoill*) coming to Ireland in the context of the Tudor conquest.⁸⁸ All in all, the application of the term to Scottish Gaeldom sits uneasily as a term for a Gaelic community.

In this Scottish context, the term *Fionnghall* also seems to undergo an evolution of meaning — perhaps by extension of the term *Innsi Gall* and usages structured in the genitive case like *Clár Fionnghall* (literally 'Plain of the Fair Foreigners') — so that it appears to refer more to a specific territory than a kind of people. This slight semantic variability, between people and place, can be analogized to that of the term *Gàidhealtachd*, as discussed earlier. The territorial limits of this territory are not clear, however; although centred on the Hebrides, it clearly encompasses the adjoining west coast mainland to some degree, much of its consisting of long peninsulas divided by sea lochs in such a way that it can be difficult to know where 'mainland' stops and 'islands' begin.

Significantly, the term *Fionnghall* rarely makes the jump from bardic to vernacular verse, scarcely being used even in poetry of the seventeenth century.⁸⁹ It

⁸⁷ 'Ceannaigh duain t'athar, a Aonghas', § 15b.

⁸⁸ Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar*, pp. 82-83. The best known example occurs in Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird's poem beginning 'A leabhráin ainmnightheair d'Aodh' ('O little book that bearest Aodh's name') (1625) (published in Osborn Bergin, 'On a Gaelic Miscellany', *Studies*, 8 (1919), 438-41 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 1) and in Breandán Ó Buachalla, 'Cúlra is tábhacht an dáin *A leabhráin ainmnightheair d'Aodh*', *Celtica*, 21 (1990), 402-16 (pp. 408-10)), where the poet refers to the Old English as '*ar bhFionnGhoill féin*' (§ 15a). Interestingly, the term *Dubhghoill* is occasionally applied to 'Lowlanders with no tincture of Gaelic culture' (*BG*, p. 362) in vernacular Scottish Gaelic poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries — a sense retained in the present-day language. Examples are Iain Dubh mac Iain mhic Ailein Mac Domhnaill's 'Is i so aimsir an dearbhar | An tairgeanachd dhuinn', §§ 10g, 19g (ll. 4104, 4176) and Iain mac Ailein Mac Gill-Eathain's 'Tha mi am chadal 's gur tìm dhomh dusgadh' ('I am asleep and it is time for me to awaken') (c. 1692), § 3c-d (published in Sinclair, *Na Bàird Leathanach*, I, 110-13), where the poet says '*Gur h-iomadh Dùbh-Ghall nach b'fhiu a sheanachas | A chaidh gu uir leibh le luths 'ur geala-ghlac*' ('It's many a *Dubh-Ghall* whose genealogy is not worth reciting | Who went to the ground from you with the strength of your fair fist'). Maighstir Seathan Mac Gill-Eathain appears to distinguish Norse from Anglo-Saxons as *Goill* and *Dubhghoill* respectively, in his poem beginning 'Air teachd on *Spáin*, do shliochd an *Gháoidhil* ghlais' (l. 1187).

⁸⁹ *Fionnghall* is not used at all in the work of Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, An Clàrsair Dall, or the various MacLean poets whose work is collected in *EB*. Iain Lom uses the term only twice (on each occasion to refer to Mac Domhnaill of Sleat as '*righ Fionnghall*'): 'A bhean, leasaich an stòp dhuinn', § 17c (*BG* l. 5163, *Òil* l. 1873), and 'Is e mo chion an t-òg meanmnach' ('My love is the young spirited warrior' ('Oran do Aonghas

thus appears to be a term of elite literary provenance, the idiom of the international — but in fact Ireland-focused — Gaelic literary class rather than vernacular Scottish Gaelic culture. This divergence may perhaps reflect an uneasiness amongst Scottish Gaels unsteeped in this training and culture to see themselves and refer to themselves as *Goill*, whether *fionn* or otherwise.

Other, although much less common, terms used in bardic poetry to refer to the Scottish Gaels also have similar echoes of Norse ancestry and heritage: *Lethghoill* (literally ‘half-foreigners’),⁹⁰ *Fionnlochlainnaigh* (literally ‘fair Norsemen’).⁹¹ These terms are only attested in seventeenth-century poetry, at a time when *Fionnghall* was developing a primary association with the ‘Old English’, so that new terms for the Scottish Gaels were needed. Another interesting label for Scotland, used by Cathal Mac Mhuirich, is *oirear Éirionn*, which Derick Thomson interprets, somewhat imaginatively, as ‘the east-land of Ireland’, thus clearly locating Ireland as the centre and Scottish Gaeldom as its periphery.⁹²

The relatively low profile of *Alba* in bardic poetry must surely be connected to the de-Gaelicization of the Scottish monarchy and much of the ‘Lowlands’ of the country by the time the classical era took root around the turn of the thirteenth century. By this point, the Scottish monarchy and ‘Lowland’ Scotland — to whatever extent it had differentiated itself by that time — was not a Gaelic polity in any meaningful sense

Òg Morair Ghlinne Garaidh’/‘A Song to Aonghas Òg, Laird of Glengarry’) (c. 1665), § 10c (published in *ÒIL*, II. 1174-1301 (l. 1248)). The term *rioh Fionnghall* also appears in An t-Aos-Dàna Mac Mhathain’s elegy for Alasdair Dubh Mac Domhnaill of Glengarry beginning ‘Fhuair mi sgeula moch Di-Ciadain’ (‘I heard tidings early on Wednesday’) (c. 1680), § 9a (published in *Sàr-Obair nam Bard Gàidhealach, or, The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry*, ed. by John MacKenzie (Edinburgh: MacLachlan and Stewart, 1841), pp. 76-77). This same stereotyped form also appears sporadically as a label for the Lords of the Isles in nineteenth-century poetry. E.g. ‘‘S coimeas mise do dh’Oisean’ (‘I am comparable to Oisean’) (Calum Dubh Mac an t-Saoir, c. 1800), § 3c (published in Dòmhnall MacMhuirich, *An Duanaire: Co-Thional Ùr de dh’Òrain, de Dhuanagan, etc.* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart, 1868), pp. 60-62); ‘Og-oighre ’n tigh’ chliùitich’ (‘Young heir of the famous house’) (anonymous (‘*Abrach*’), c. 1825), § 8a (published in Séumas Munro, *Am Filidh: Co-Thional Ùr de dh’Òrain ’s de Dhuanagan* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1840), pp. 67-70); ‘‘S ach fhìr a theid thairis’ (‘O man who goes over’) (‘Òran do Mhac Uisdean’/‘Song to Mac Uisdean’) (Gilleasbuig Grannda, before 1863), § 19g, and ‘‘S na ’m b’aithne dhomh oran | a chur ann an ordugh’ (‘If I knew how to set forth a song’) (‘Òran do Chaibtean Eoghan Grannd’/‘Song to Captain Eoghan Grannd’) (Gilleasbuig Grannda, before 1863), § 5j (published in Gilleasbuig Grannda, *Dàin agus Òrain* (Inverness: MacLean & Paterson, 1863), pp. 5-10 and 54-57 respectively).

⁹⁰‘Saoth leam do chor, a Cholla’, § 11d. The poem’s editor, Ronald Black, comments that *lethghall* ‘as a distinct term seems to be otherwise unknown’ (*Celtica*, 10, p. 205).

⁹¹‘Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochlainnaigh’; ‘Do thuim aoibhneas Innsi Gall’, § 12b.

⁹²‘Cionnas mhaireas mi a m’aonar’, § 4b; Derick S. Thomson, ‘Three Seventeenth Century Bardic Poets: Niall Mór, Cathal and Niall MacMhuirich’, in *Bards and Makars*, ed. by Adam J. Aitken, Matthew P. McDiarmid, and Derick S. Thomson (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 1977), pp. 221-46 (p. 233).

and thus did not warrant inclusion into the basic frame of bardic reference.

This alienation from *Alba* reached its rhetorical extreme in the seventeenth century, when it comes to mean *Lowland* Scotland only and thus to be used as a term of opposition to Gaeldom. Sixteenth-century Irish annalists, in contrast, freely use the term *Albanach* to refer to any kind of Scot, Highland or Lowland.⁹³ The new, restrictive usage is most typically represented in the term *fir Alban*, literally ‘men of Scotland’, which is used — with the purpose of exclusion — to mean the men of *Lowland* Scotland.

The usage apparently emerged in Ulster in connection with the Plantation, with the Lowland Scots planters being labeled *fir Alban*, and clearly distinguished from Scottish *Gaels*.⁹⁴ Later this usage is transferred into Scottish Gaelic poetry, in both the classical language and the vernacular, as a label for Lowlanders, especially Covenanters; its connotations are typically derogatory, most strikingly in the anonymous *crossántacht* poem to Alasdair mac Colla Chiotaich Mac Domhnaill beginning ‘Mór mo mholadh ar mhac Colla’ (‘Great is my praise for the son of Colla’) (c. 1645), which makes repeated contemptuous references to *fir Alban* as the object of what can only be described as racial hatred.⁹⁵ With *fir Alban* recast as the enemy, then,

⁹³E.g. *AConn* 1513, 1524, 1534, 1537, 1542.

⁹⁴E.g., ‘Cáit ar ghabhadar Gaoidhil?’ (‘Where have the Gaels gone?’) (Lochlainn Ó Dálaigh (?), c. 1610), § 26b (published in William Gillies, ‘A Poem on the Downfall of the Gaoidhil’, *Éigse*, 13 (1969-70), 203-10); ‘A Bhanbha, is truaigh do chor’ (‘Ireland, pitiful is your condition!’) (Eoghan Ó Dubhthuigh, c. 1610(?)), § 2c (published in Mhág Craith, I, 151-53). The term *fir Alban* clearly excludes Scottish *Gaels*: for example, Cathal Mac Ruaidhrigh’s accentual elegy for Eoghan Ruadh Ó Néill (†1649) beginning ‘Do chaill Éire a céile fíre’ (‘Ireland has lost her true spouse’) (published in *Céad de Cheoltaibh Uladh*, ed. by Énrí Ó Muirgheasa (Dublin: McGill, 1915), poem 7) includes ‘*fir Alban*’ amongst the enemies of the Gaels, and lists warriors ‘*anall ó Íle*’ (‘over from Islay’) amongst Eoghan’s allies (ll. 144, 47). Breandan Ó Buachalla points out that the parallel term ‘*fir Saxan*’ (‘men of England’) also emerged at this time, when it became important to make distinctions among peoples who would formerly have been lumped together as *Goill*. Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar*, p. 75. Significantly, *Albanach* remains the vernacular word for ‘a Protestant’ in Donegal Irish of the present day.

⁹⁵See especially stanza 14. Other striking examples occur in stanza 9 and the first prose passage of ‘Eireóchtar fós le cloinn gColla’. ‘Mór mo mholadh ar mhac Colla’ is strikingly similar in tone to Iain Lom Mac Domhnaill’s celebrated, ferociously graphic vernacular poem arising from the same military campaign, ‘An cuala sibhse an tionndadh duineil’ (‘Have you heard of the heroic countermarch’) (‘Latha Inbhir Lòchaidh’/‘The Battle of Inverlochy’) (published in *BG*, ll. 5710-93, in *ÒIL*, ll. 182-273, and in *GC*, poem 20), but presents the conflict squarely as one between *Gaedheil* and *Goill* rather than the Mac Domhnaills and the Caimbeuls. It is worth emphasizing, too, that the opposing forces of *Goill* in this campaign were exclusively Lowland Scottish rather than English. A similar understanding of *Alba* is given by Niall Mac Mhuirich in his account of the Montrose wars in the Red Book of Clanranald, where the Covenanters are labelled ‘*mórshluagh na hAlban*’ and Montrose’s army ‘*beagshluagh ríogh Breatan agus Ghaoidheal*’ (‘the small host of the king of Britain and of the Gaels’). *RC*, II, 198; McCaughey, ‘Bards, Beasts and Men’. Usage is slightly different in Father Toirdhealbhadh Ó Mealláin’s diary account of the various Irish campaigns during the 1640s, where the term *Albanaigh* is reserved exclusively for the Lowland Scots Parliamentary

one chief of the Mac Domhnaills of Glengarry comes to be praised as ‘*baoghal fhear n-Alban*’ (‘menace of the men of Scotland’).⁹⁶

It is not always easy to discern the precise perception of these *fir Alban* and their relationship to the Gaelic world. Most commonly, and more clearly as time goes on, Scottish Lowlanders are simply described as *Goill* — the generic ‘other’ of the Gaelic worldview. Yet there are indications of a more complex, ambiguous perception in the poem by Eoghan Ó Dubhthuigh beginning ‘A Bhanbha, is truagh do chor!’ (‘Ireland, pitiful is your condition!’):

*Ag siúd sluagh Saxan ad dháil,
a laith Fáil, chosnas an chóir;
is fir Alban, do chin uait,
thor[u]t fa gcuairt — is tuar bróin.*

Behold there the Saxon host assailing you,
o Land of Fál [Ireland], that defends what is
right; and the men of Scotland, **who sprang
from you**, around you everywhere —
it is a matter for sadness. (§ 2)

The apparent belief (or better, memory) that the Lowland Scots involved in the Plantation of Ulster⁹⁷ are descended from the Irish Gaels complicates the matter somewhat: these are not out-and-out foreigners, but deep Gaelic origins are no longer any guarantee of sympathetic outlook and shared understandings.

Similarly, the term *fir Alban* (or variants thereof) is sometimes used with an inclusive, favourable meaning in Scottish vernacular poetry of the seventeenth century,⁹⁸ and by the eighteenth century this usage appears to be consistently positive in connotation. Certainly there is no wholesale abandonment of association with *Alba*; and paradoxically, this particularized association of *fir Alban* sits within an overall context — discussed below — in which late Scottish bardic poetry works within an increasingly Scottish framework as traditional ties to Ireland fray.

forces and the term *Éireannaigh* is used to include both Irish and Scottish Gaels. Tadhg Ó Donnchadha, ‘Cín Lae Ó Mealláin’, *Analecta Hibernica*, 3 (1931), 1-61.

⁹⁶‘Níor ghlac cliath, colg no gunna’ (‘There grasped not sword, spear, or gun’) (anonymous, 1680), § 11d (published as appended poem B to Watson, ‘Classical Poetry of Panegyric’).

⁹⁷Cuthbert Mhág Craith, one editor of the poem, suggested that this statement refers to an attempted plantation in 1572-73 (Mhág Craith, II, 163), but Breandán Ó Buachalla takes the more persuasive view that it refers to the major Plantation of Ulster in the years following 1608. Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar*, p. 665, fn. 45.

⁹⁸E.g., ‘Cuid de adhbhar mo ghearain’ (‘Part of my complaint’) (Iain Lom Mac Domhnaill, 1647), §2a-b (published in *ÓIL*, ll. 450-88 (ll. 453-54)) (‘*B’e sin grianan nan Gàidheal | Agus uaisle fir Alba*’) (‘The sun-bower of the Gaels was he | And the noblest of Scotsmen’).

None of the foregoing should suggest that *Alba* is never invoked in bardic poetry as a community for Scottish Gaeldom. There are many examples, from various time periods, of Scottish chiefs being presented in terms of *Alba*: Clann Domhnaill, for example, are ‘*uaithne ána Alban uaine*’ (‘brilliant pillars of green Alba’),⁹⁹ Iain Stiùbhart of Rannoch (†1475(?)) is ‘*taca maithean Alban*’ (‘buttress of the nobles of Alba’),¹⁰⁰ Sir Tormod Mac Leòid of Berneray (†1705) is ‘*én leannán éigseadh Alba*’ (‘the one love of the learned men of Alba’),¹⁰¹ Giolla-Easbuig, Earl of Argyll is ‘*airdbhreitheamh ós Albain*’ (‘high-lawgiver over Alba’).¹⁰² Nevertheless, this rhetorical connection is relatively rare, and in general, there is a feeling of interchangeability: references to Scotland and Ireland can be used almost at random, at least in the earlier period.

One striking example of Scottish association is the relatively early Mac Mhuirich poem beginning ‘*Alba gan díon a ndíaidh Ailín*’ (‘Alba without defence after Ailín’), lamenting the deaths of Ailín and Ragnall, chiefs of Clann Raghnaill, in 1505 and 1509 respectively. The poem is a straightforward elegy in many respects, but its terms are unusual in that the principal frame of reference is *Alba*, with the dead chiefs portrayed as its leaders and protectors. There are other frames of reference as well, however, including the more commonplace *Fionnghall*: Ailín is described as ‘*Ailín ler coisneadh clár Fionnghall*’ (‘Ailín by whom the plain of the Hebrideans was defended’), and Ragnall is said to have held the familiar ‘*ceannas Ghaoidheal*’ (‘headship of the Gael’) (§§ 3a, 4b).

Perhaps the most interesting juxtaposition in the poem occurs when Ailín is compared to Cú Chulainn — a common motif in panegyric bardic poetry — but with Cú Chulainn cast as a defender of Ireland (‘*feithmheoir na Fódla*’, § 17a) and Ailín counterposed as a defender of *Alba*:

*An Cú-sin ag coimhead Alban
Ailín éachtach, anbha an béad;
ag díon a h-oinigh ’s a h-ardmhagh
gníomh doiligh d’Albain a éag.*

That Hound defending Alba,
Ailín of mighty deeds, huge the loss;
a sad hap for Alba is his death who
defended her honour and her lofty plains.
(§ 18; translation adapted)

⁹⁹ ‘Ní h-éibhneas gan Chlainn Domhnaill’, § 5a (l. 889).

¹⁰⁰ ‘Cóir feitheamh ar uaislibh Alban’, § 7a (l. 1831).

¹⁰¹ ‘Do thuim aoibhneas Innsi Gall’, § 35a.

¹⁰² ‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal’, § 13a. It is not clear which Earl Giolla-Easbuig — fourth, fifth, or seventh — is the subject of this poem.

Similarly, in a roughly contemporary poem from the Book of the Dean of Lismore, Cú Chulainn is relabeled ‘Cú Fódla’ — Hound of **Ireland** — and invoked as a comparator for Séamus Caimbeul of Lawers.¹⁰³ This interesting usage does not generate the corresponding personal name *Cú Alban, however, in the way that names like Cú Uladh, Cú Chonnacht, and Cú Midhe (Hound of Ulster, Hound of Connacht, Hound of Meath) become common in medieval Ireland¹⁰⁴ — perhaps yet one more indication of the ‘underimagination’ of Scotland in the bardic tradition in comparison to Ireland.

Dichotomies of this kind, where a Scottish chief is presented as Scottish and likened to an Irish figure, presented as Irish, become a fairly common feature of Scottish bardic poetry. Such a device is used, for example, in ‘Ar sliocht Gaoidheal ó Ghort Ghréag’, where Giolla-easbuig, second Earl of Argyll (†1513) is styled ‘*an Lugh fá dheireadh*’ (‘the latter-day Lugh’), defending Scotland as Lugh did ‘*ar feadh na Banbha*’ (‘throughout Ireland’) (§§ 9b, 8c (ll. 1520, 1517)), and in Cathal Mac Mhuirich’s elegy for Iain Mór Mac Leòid (†1649) beginning ‘Do ísliugh onóir Gaoidheal’, where he compares Iain Mór to the great Irish king Cormac mac Airt, and then likens the suffering experienced after the two chiefs’ deaths:

*Caoi Éirennach d’ég an ríogh,
a sanhuil oirne d’imshníomh;
caoi roighér as brón ré bun
ag slógh oilén na hAlban.*

The lament of the Irish for that king’s death, like thereto is the distress we feel; lament full keen, and sorrow therewith, is among the folk of Alba’s islands.¹⁰⁵

The apparent implication here is that the Gaels of Ireland and the Gaels of Scotland — or, perhaps more properly, the Gaels of the Hebrides or the wider Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* — form two distinct and separate communities. There is also, perhaps, the suggestion that figures from the Irish past like Cormac mac Airt somehow belong to this Irish community and are not to be understood as ‘pan-Gaelic’ figures — an issue that received much greater attention in later centuries in the context of the Ossianic controversy, when national proprietary rights to the Fenian heroes were vigorously debated.

¹⁰³‘Fhuarus rogha na n-óg mbríoghmhór’, § 9d (l. 1072).

¹⁰⁴Brian Ó Cuív, *Aspects of Irish Personal Names* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1986), pp. 11-12.

One must guard against over-interpretation here, however. The anonymous author of ‘Adhbhur tuirsi ag fuil Fhionghuin’ (‘A reason for sadness for the race of Fionghun’) (c. 1645) compares the grieving among the Mac Fhionghuins to that experienced after the death of Naoise ‘*san taluimh thall*’ (literally ‘in the country on the far side’), but makes clear that the grieving after Naoise’s death in Ulster was felt in Scotland as well (§§ 9-14). There are also numerous instances of similar devices being used in Irish bardic poetry, as when Aodh Ó Domhnaill (*fl.* 1616) is styled ‘*Cú Chuluinn bhar dtíre thuaidh*’ (‘Cú Chulainn of the North’ [of Ireland])¹⁰⁶ and — more remarkably for this Ulster warrior famous for his defence against the men of Connacht — Pilib mac Aodha Chonallaigh Ó Raghallaigh (†1596) is described as ‘*Cú Chulainn críche Connacht*’ (the ‘Cú Chulainn of the land of Connacht’).¹⁰⁷ In the same way, the suffering in a particular part of Ireland after some chief’s death can be likened to that experienced by the country as a whole after the death of some great ruler in the past, as in the anonymous elegy to Émonn Ó Braonáin (†1632), where comparison is again made to Cormac mac Airt:

*Aithghin Éirinn dh’aithle a rígh
críoch Mhidhe na magh slis-mhín
fíoch na trén-duilghe ro thogh,
díoth ar nÉmuinn-ne a hadhbhor.*

The land of Meath of smooth-sloped plains
is like unto Ireland after her king,
it has taken a paroxysm of sorrow
and the death of our Émonn is its cause.¹⁰⁸

Certainly there is no suggestion of separatism or divergent identity here, and it may be that the Scottish examples of this motif are better interpreted as a specification of

¹⁰⁵‘Do íslioh onóir Gaoidheal’, § 27.

¹⁰⁶‘A fhir thagras an chaint bhaoth’ (‘My foolish spoken friend’) (Art Óg Ó Caoimh, c. 1616), § 19a (published in McKenna, *Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh*, poem 27)).

¹⁰⁷‘Fada téid teist Roghallach’ (‘Far has Ó Raghallaigh’s fame gone’) (anonymous, before 1583(?)), § 10b (published in *Poems on the O’Reillys*, ed. by James Carney (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1950), poem 8 (l. 1018)); see also ‘Teallach einigh iath Laighean’ (‘A house of hospitality is Laighin’) (Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa, c. 1600), § 32c (comparing Féilim mac Fiachaidh Ó Broin (†1630) to Cú Chulainn in the way that he watches over ‘*Laighneachaibh thoir is thiar*’ (‘the people of Leinster east and west’)) (published in Lambert McKenna, ‘To Féilim Ó Broin’, *The Irish Monthly*, 55 (1927), 591-95, in *DD*, poem 117, and in *Leabhar Branach: The Book of the O’Byrnes*, ed. by Seán Mac Airt (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944), poem 59); ‘Cionnus do mholfuinn mac ríogh’ (‘How should I praise the son of a king?’) (Mac Con Ó Cléirigh, before 1596), § 23c (published in Carney, *Poems on the O’Reillys*, poem 4 (l. 419)) (addressing Pilib mac Aodha Chonallaigh Ó Rathaille as ‘*a Chú Chulainn Clann bhFearghna*’ (‘Cú Chulainn of the kindred of Fearghna’ [the Ó Rathailles])); ‘Cóir feitheamh ar uaislibh Alban’, § 10a (l. 1853) (addressing as Iain Stiùbhart Raineach as ‘*a Chú Chulainn cloinne Ghaltair*’ (‘Cú Chulainn of the kindred of Walter’)).

¹⁰⁸‘Coitcheann cumha chloinne Néill’ (‘Universal is the grief of Niall’s progeny’), § 24 (published in ‘Elegy on Émonn Ó Braonáin’, in Walsh, *Gleanings from Irish Manuscripts*, pp. 12-26).

Gaelic tradition within the broader Gaelic context, rather than as declarations of alienation and separatism.

Finally, in an exceptional version of this usage, notable for an unusual kind of Scottish connection, Somhairle Mac an Bhaird's elegy on Aodh Buidhe Ó Domhnaill (†1649) beginning 'Neart gach tíre ar Thír Chonaill' ('The force of every land is upon Tír Chonaill'), makes a historical analogy not to a hero of Gaelic tradition but to the Lowland Scots leader William Wallace (†1305):

*Alba ar n-éag Ualasd aithigh
dronng nar lé 'gá lánchaitimh
don éing shaoirse is sé as samhail
re ré a daoirse ag danaraibh.*

Scotland after the death of mighty Wallace being totally devoured by a crowd who were not hers, is a likeness to this noble land during her foreigner-imposed slavery.¹⁰⁹

*

One of the most striking differences in the treatment of Ireland and Scotland in bardic poetry is the mythological and symbolic underdevelopment of Scotland. In profound contrast to Ireland, Scotland (or its various parts) is never given any kind of human personality — never, for example, addressed as a living being in the manner so commonly used for Ireland. Both Scottish poets and Irish poets composing for Scottish chiefs draw freely on the many personalizations of Ireland, yet leave Scotland almost completely bare.

Unlike Scotland, Ireland is very frequently imagined and presented as a woman figure, commonly desolate or grieving as a result of some tribulation, typically defilement at the hands of foreign invaders.¹¹⁰ This personalization of Ireland as a woman — originating in the three sovereignty goddesses *Banbha*, *Fódla*, and *Éire* — is one of the fundamental building blocks of bardic poetry and the worldview of the traditional learned classes in general. Notably, this usage extends beyond the 'national' level and is often applied to constituent parts of Ireland.¹¹¹ Flowing from this vision is the deep-rooted concept of Gaelic rulers 'marrying' Ireland, so that Ireland is repeatedly referred to with terms like *bean Chuinn* ('the wife of Conn'), *bainchéile*

¹⁰⁹Printed in Eóin Mac Carthaigh, 'Poems on the Uí Dhómhnaill (circa 1641)' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, TCD, 1995), poem 6 (§ 10). I have revised Mac Carthaigh's translation, most importantly in connecting the Gaelic form *Ualasd* to the English *Wallace*.

¹¹⁰Caball, *Poets and Politics*, pp. 150-51.

¹¹¹E.g., 'Bean do lámhaigeadh Leith Cuinn' ('Leith Cuinn is a woman that has been wounded')

Cuinn is Cathaoir ('spouse of Conn and Cathair') and so on.¹¹² As a result of these complex associations, Ireland — and individual places within Ireland, especially rivers — is often addressed directly in the poetry, as if a living being.¹¹³

Nothing at all of this kind exists for Scotland. As one possible explanation, Colm Ó Baoill attributes this absence — which he perceives in post-classical Scottish Gaelic literature as well — to the constantly shifting, unstable boundaries of Scottish Gaeldom from the Dál Riadic era onwards, which precluded perception of Scotland as a fixed, distinct entity like the island-mass of Ireland, together with a sense among the Gaels that *Alba* was somehow 'merely a province, not a fully fledged country in the same sense that Ireland was.'¹¹⁴ This feeling of ambiguity and uncertainty, a lack of firm attachment to *Alba* as a concept and entity, permeates bardic poetry in its presentation of Scotland.

Just as this sovereignty-marriage principle is absent from Scottish poetry, there is almost no mention of the parallel connection between poet and chief. This connection, a prominent and important feature of Irish poetry, is clearly linked to the notion of sovereignty as a marriage between chief and land, imagined as a female figure or sovereignty goddess: as James Carney expressed the dynamic, the poet is the chief's 'only possible approach to the earth goddess whose husband he was'.¹¹⁵ Only two examples appear in the Scottish corpus, one a single bare reference in a late (c. 1696) poem by Niall Mac Mhuirich, where he describes the returning chief of Clann Raghnaill as '*ar ccéile*' ('my spouse'),¹¹⁶ but the other a strikingly fully developed example of this motif, Cathal Mac Mhuirich's '*Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir*' ('Welcome to him I saw last night'), where the connection between the poet and his lover (*grádh, gaol, searc*), Domhnall Gorm Óg Mac Domhnaill of Sleat (†1643), is

(anonymous, 1632) (published in Walsh, *Gleanings from Irish Manuscripts*, pp. 29-52).

¹¹²'Meisde nach éadmhor Éire', § 3c; 'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg', § 4d; see Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar*, p. 10.

¹¹³Among many examples: 'Do shlán uaim, a Áth Seanaigh'; 'A Shionann Bhriain Bhóroimhe', § 1a; 'Fuilngidh bhur léan, a Leath Coinn!' ('Bear your misfortune, o Leath Cuinn!') (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, before 1424) (published in *AD*, poem 39); 'Fóiridh mo leisge, a Leath Chuinn' (Tadhg Mac Dáire Mac Bruideadha, c. 1600(?)) (published in *DD*, poem 95). One instance of a Scottish river being addressed in a somewhat similar way occurs in Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh's 'Saor do leannán, a Leamhain'.

¹¹⁴Colm Ó Baoill, 'Scotland in Early Gaelic Literature', *TGSI*, 48 (1972-74), 382-94 (pp. 391-92).

¹¹⁵James Carney, *The Irish Bardic Poet: A study in the relationship of poet and patron as exemplified in the persons of the poet Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa and his various patrons, mainly members of the Maguire family of Fermanagh* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1967), p. 11.

¹¹⁶'Maith an sgéal do sgaol 'nar measg', § 8d.

phrased in explicitly physical terms: holding of hands, caressing of neck, even sharing of a bed (§§ 1-10). The intensity of the imagery in ‘Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir’, however, only serves to highlight the absence of anything like it elsewhere.

*

Beyond this fundamental imaginative underdevelopment, moreover, *Alba* seems to be lacking in mythological or metaphorical resonances of a more specific kind. One of the most profound manifestations of this difference in the treatment of the two countries is the relationship of history and mythology to the land itself. The imagery of bardic poetry presents Ireland as a land saturated in history and mythology, a vividly imagined landscape where places are bound to a shared past, and to each other, in a complex network of associations. For Scotland, however, there is very little counterpart imagery.

Along with invocations of the sovereignty goddesses *Éire*, *Banbha*, and *Fódla*, the commonest means of connecting the land of Ireland to history and mythology is the geographical kenning, whereby a particular place is connected to a famous figure from the past, thus anchoring it in Gaelic tradition. Most of these kennings are by-words for Ireland itself, typically based on a geographical element — island, territory, plain, field and so on — and a resonant personal name. Ireland thus appears as *Achadh Ír*, *Clár Éibhir*, *Clár Breagh*, *Iath Fhiontain*, *Inis Ealga*, *Inis Fáil* and many scores of others, in essentially limitless combinations. This pattern goes far beyond the national level, so that specific parts of Ireland, and indeed relatively small local districts, can be grounded in tradition in this fashion: the southern half of Ireland is *Leath Mogha* (‘the half of Mogh [Nuadhat]’), the northern half *Leath Cuinn* (‘the half of Conn [Céadchathach]’), Connacht is *Clár Meadhbha* (‘the Plain of Meadhbh’), Munster *Magh Maicniadh* (‘the Plain of Maicnia’). Such usages are absolutely ubiquitous in Irish bardic poetry, as even the most cursory of readings will show.

Scottish panegyric poetry draws freely on the mythological and historical imagery developed for Ireland — the common inheritance of both Scottish and Irish Gaels, as discussed above — but perhaps without the density and regularity of similar Irish poetry, like the work of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, who uses allusions of this kind in almost every quatrain. At the same time, however, very little of this resonant geographical imagery is used for Scotland. The only real poetic name for Scotland is

the term *Monadh* (yielding in turn combinations like *Clár Monaidh* and *Magh Monaidh*, which, while attested,¹¹⁷ could not really be called common). *Monadh* — perhaps significantly, a borrowing from Brythonic, taken from a ‘foreign’ language to describe a ‘foreign’ country — appears to refer initially to Druim Alban, the dividing range between modern Argyll and Perthshire, but comes to have a more expansive meaning later on, apparently referring to Scotland as a whole. However, as with *Fionnghall*, this term is confined to bardic verse and is not found in vernacular poetry.¹¹⁸

Nor does bardic poetry develop poetic by-names for specific places or regions within Scotland.¹¹⁹ In his translation of the Book of Common Order, *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh* (1567), John Carswell uses the term *Dún Monaidh* to mean Edinburgh, describing it as its *comh-ainm* or ‘alternative name’,¹²⁰ and the term is used with this association in one early seventeenth-century bardic poem;¹²¹ but since bardic poetry almost never mentions any places in Lowland Scotland it is not surprising that this connection does not seem to be made elsewhere. This association with Edinburgh is a late one, however, and the original connection (as expressed in a range of pre-classical sources) may have been to Dunadd, principal seat of the Dál Riadic kingdom in Argyll, or to Dunstaffnage, and thereafter ‘used loosely to denote the seat of the Gaelic kings of Scotland wherever it might be placed’.¹²² There is one instance of a chief being connected to *Dún Monaidh* as building-block for a kenning, in the ‘Irish’ style: Fionnlagh ‘am Bàrd Ruadh’ (‘the Red Bard’) refers to the chief of Clann Griogair as ‘*Mac Ghriogóir ó Dhún Monaidh*’ and ‘*dreagan Dhúine Monaidh*’ (‘dragon of Dún

¹¹⁷*Magh Monaidh* is attested eight times in a total of seven poems (‘Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg’, § 41c; ‘Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain’, § 9c; ‘Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn’, § 32d; ‘Éireóchthar fós le cloinn gColla’, §§ 13a and 46b; ‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaidheal’, § 2a; ‘Do íslioh onóir Gaidheal’, § 41d; and an unidentifiable poem quoted in Bergin, ‘Irish Grammatical Tracts’, l. 1342). *Clár Monaidh* appears twice, in ‘Alba gan díon an diaidh Ailín’, § 2a, and ‘Dual freasdal ar feirg flatha’, § 9c. The similar term ‘*Sliabh Monaidh*’ (‘Mountain of *Monadh*’) is used in ‘Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne’, § 19a (l. 109).

¹¹⁸For example, the term does not appear in any of the poems in *BG*, *EB*, *GC*, *MNAR*, *ÒIL*, or William Matheson, *An Clàrsair Dall*.

¹¹⁹The name *An Dreòllainn* (or *Dreallainn*) for Mull appears frequently in vernacular Mac Gill-Eathain poetry from the 1670s onwards. See *EB*, pp. 233–34. This name appears in medieval prose tales in connection with mythical, possibly Scandinavian lands. See Bruford, *Gaelic Folk-Tales and Medieval Romances*, p. 22. The loss of bardic poetry for Mac Gill-Eathain chiefs renders it impossible to know if it was ever used in classical compositions to them; however, the ordinary name *Muile* is used whenever the island is mentioned in surviving bardic poems.

¹²⁰R.L. Thomson, *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh*, p. 1.

¹²¹‘Ionmholta an t-óglach nach dìongnadh’, § 5a.

¹²²W.J. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Placenames of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1993 [1926]), pp.

Monaidh’) — a reference W.J. Watson suggests may relate ‘to his descent from the kings of Scotland’.¹²³ The term *Dún Monaidh* is also used occasionally in Irish bardic poetry, without any obvious historical referent, as in Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn’s poem beginning ‘Cia do-ghéabhainn go Gráinne’ (‘Whom can I get to send to Gráinne?’) (c. 1420), in which an Aodh mac Domhnaill Ó Néill (fl. 1000) is described as ‘*Aodh mhac Domhnaill Dún Monaidh*’.¹²⁴

Although the bardic poetry of Scotland does frequently refer to specific localities in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*, the place-names almost always stand bare, without the deep historical or mythological associations resonating from the Irish examples. The only obvious counterpart in Scotland to the Irish connection of particular places to figures from legendary or genuine history — and the fit is imperfect — is *Í Chaluim Chille* for Iona. There is no reason why Scotland (or a part of it, like Argyll) could not be recognized as **Clár Fhearghais*, after Fearghas mac Earc, Argyll as **Críoch Dhuibhne*,¹²⁵ or Skye as **Magh Olbhuir*. But forms like these are almost entirely absent.

Three isolated and interesting examples do occur, however, in a poem from the early sixteenth century and two poems from the middle of the seventeenth century. Each of these terms is attested only on this single occasion, though this must demonstrate the loss of source material; they give no indication of having been ad hoc coinages. In the earliest instance, the Mac Mhuirich poet who composed ‘Alba gan díon an déidh Ailín’ — it is not known which member of the family was the author — says that Ragnall, chief of Clann Raghnaill (†1514) defended ‘*crioch Chláir na gColla*’ (‘the bounds of the Plain of the Collas’) (§ 32c), with Scotland as a whole apparently being named after the three mythological Collas. It is unsurprising that this evocative term should appear in a Mac Domhnaill poem, but remarkable that it is not

394-95.

¹²³‘Fhuaras mo rogha theach mhór’, § 2b, 7b (ll. 1434, 1414); W.J. Watson, *History of the Celtic Placenames of Scotland*, p. 394.

¹²⁴Published in *AD*, poem 13 (§ 12a). The poem’s editor, Lambert McKenna, does not identify this reference. *AD*, II, 341. See also ‘Ceannphort Éireann Ard Macha’ (‘Armagh is the chief fortress of Ireland’) (Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe, c. 1270), § 29a (published in Williams, poem 17).

¹²⁵Note, however, that the anonymous mid-seventeenth century poem beginning ‘Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban’ describes Mac Cailein as ‘*Poimpe maighe mhaicne Duibhne*’ (‘Pompey of the plain of Duibhne’s race’) (§ 4b). The poem’s editor, W.J. Watson, chose not to use capital letters here, but the form could be taken as an Irish-style kenning and given as ‘*Poimpe Maighe Mhaicne Duibhne*’, with a root form *Magh Mhaicne Duibhne*.

attested elsewhere.¹²⁶

The term ‘*iath innse h-Earc*’ (‘territory of the island of Earc’) appears in the anonymous elegy for Sir Donnchadh Dubh Caimbeul of Glenorchy (†1631) beginning ‘Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne’ (‘Great the woe-tale the death of Duibhne’s descendant’) (§ 4b).¹²⁷ This term evidently refers to Britain and connects the island to Earc, father of Fearghas, who is credited with heading the first movement from Dál Riata to Argyll in the early sixth century. It may be significant that this usage occurs in a Caimbeul poem, since Britain — as a geographical entity and historical and mythological reality — is a much more prominent feature in Caimbeul poetry than in poetry composed for members of other kindreds, which tend to focus on *Fionnghall*, Ireland, and Scotland alone.

The final kenning of this kind is ‘*iath Lodhairn*’ (‘the territory of Lorne’), used by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin in his panegyric to Séafraidh Ó Donnchadha an Ghleanna (†1678) beginning ‘Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad’ (‘Unhappiness begins when friends part’):

*Monuar nach éintír iath Lodhairn
is Leath Mogha na múr ccorr* [. . .]

Alas that Scotland and Leath Mogha
of the peaked ramparts are not united . . .
(§§ 15a-b)

This term appears to refer to Loarn, mythological brother of Fearghus mac Earc and purported first king of Dál Riada in Scotland, who gave his name to the *Cenél Loairn*, the prominent kindred of the seventh and eighth centuries CE who had their centre at Dunadd. Maol Domhnaigh, however, apparently uses the term to refer to Scotland as a whole — or perhaps the West Highlands or Hebrides — rather than the district now known as Lorne or any other part of Argyll, since he makes clear elsewhere in the poem that his primary ties are to Harris and Skye, *dùthaich* of the Mac Leòids of

¹²⁶Another interesting Mac Domhnaill term, slightly different in nature, appears in Niall Mac Mhuirich’s poem beginning ‘Do thuirliinn seasamh Síol gCuinn’ (‘The standing of Síol Chuinn has fallen’) (published in *RC*, II, 248-59), where Clann Raghnaill, grieving the death of their chief Ailean (†1715), are labeled ‘*sluagh Seile Fearguis*’ (‘the host of Fearghus’s Sheil’) (§ 6b), presumably asserting a connection to Fearghus mac Earc.

¹²⁷The similar kenning ‘*maigen Ercae*’ (‘region of Earc’) appears in the much earlier poem on Colm Cille by Beccán mac Luigdech (†677) beginning ‘To-fed andes i ndáil fíadat findáil caingel’ (‘He brings northward to meet the Lord a bright crowd of chancels’ (published in Fergus Kelly, ‘*Tiughraind Bhécain*’, *Ériu*, 26 (1975), 66-98, and in Thomas Owen Clancy and Gilbert Márkus, *Iona: The Earliest Poetry of a Celtic Monastery* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), pp. 146-51) (§ 11b). Remarkably, there

Dunvegan.

It is impossible to know how widely these terms would have been used, or to what extent similar kennings of this kind formed part of the poets' imagistic stock. Certainly, however, the range of such Scottish kennings must have been far narrower than the Irish, for the corresponding Irish expressions are used with great density and regularity in Scottish bardic poetry, but without the balancing evidenced in 'Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad', where *iath Lodhairn* is counterposed to *Leath Mogha*. The most obvious explanation for the absence of such labels is that 'imagining Scotland' was not a high priority in the bardic schools, so that the poets did not dedicate themselves to coining and teaching them.

The relative underdevelopment of Scotland and the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* in bardic poetry stands in profound contrast to its treatment in later vernacular verse, where, as John MacInnes has summarized, 'landscape, delineated through its place names, and community, delineated through the personal names of its heroes, are both celebrated in one complex whole.'¹²⁸ This development demonstrates the extent to which vernacular Scottish Gaelic literature is vernacular in the fullest sense of the word — cultural as well as linguistic — while the literature and culture of the late medieval poets and other learned orders was, at its heart, something other than indigenous to Gaelic Scotland.

*

One important subgenre of bardic verse is poetry praising Ireland with elaborate descriptions that take in a range of geographical features, especially rivers, spread throughout the national territory. The effect of such descriptions is to convey a sense of Ireland as a perceived *entity*, an integrated place, with a call on the poet's attentions and affections. In contrast, there are no counterparts for Scotland: no enumerations of its great rivers, no catalogues of the virtues of its constituent elements. The effect is twofold: first, there is no sense of Scotland as a total, connected entity, and second, there is no sense of attachment to place at the national level.

Significantly, two of the earliest bardic poems in this vein express this intimate fondness for Ireland against a background of association with Scotland: Muireadhach

appear to be no further examples in the thousand years separating the two poems.

¹²⁸John MacInnes, 'Sorley MacLean's 'Hallaig': a note', *Calgacus*, 1, no. 2 (1975), 29-32 (p. 32).

Albanach Ó Dálaigh's 'Cian ó d'ibheas digh ndearmaid' ('Long has it been since I drank the drink of forgetfulness'),¹²⁹ an exile's lament composed after fifteen years away in Scotland, and Giolla Brighde Albanach's 'Fada dhamh druim ri hÉirinn'. Such poems proliferate from the mid-sixteenth century onwards, including Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird's 'Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn' ('A blessing westward from me to Ireland') (c. 1600),¹³⁰ again written from Scotland, Giolla Brighde Ó hEoghusa's 'Truagh an t-amharc-sa, a Éire' ('Sad is this sight, o Éire') (c. 1605),¹³¹ and Uilliam Nuinseann's 'Diombáidh triall ó thulchaibh Fáil' ('It is pitiful for me to go from the hills of Ireland') and 'Fada i n-éagmais inse Fáil' ('Long absent from Ireland') (c. 1571).¹³² The genre is not confined to exiles' laments, however: such praise occurs in other contexts, including, for example, Gearóid Iarla's 'Ionmhain liom aibhne Éireann' ('The rivers of Ireland are dear to me') (c. 1370(?)),¹³³ and the three poems composed in disputation over the great Shannon.¹³⁴ No counterparts exist from the Scottish side, even among poets 'exiled' in Ireland like Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin.

*

A different aspect of this imagistic thinness in dealing with Scotland is the striking failure of bardic poetry, especially poetry composed by Irish poets, to convey any picture of Gaelic — that is, Highland — Scotland as being in any way physically different from Ireland. The Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* is described in a range of unspecific words and images that utterly fail to convey how its landscape of imposing mountain ranges and deep sea lochs differs from the generally flat and gentle landscape of Ireland. One might expect that some of Scotland's distinguishing characteristics might be highlighted at least occasionally; the almost total absence demonstrates once again the essential Irishness of the bardic idiom, and the relative lack of concern for

¹²⁹Published in appendix to Quiggin, 'Prologomena', pp. 132-33, and, in part, with an improved edition, in Brian Ó Cuív, 'Eachtra Mhuireadhaigh Í Dhálaigh', *Studia Hibernica*, 1 (1961), 56-69 (pp. 68-69).

¹³⁰Published in Osborn Bergin, 'Love of Ireland', *Studies*, 9 (1920), 565-70 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 5)). These poems from the late sixteenth century may reflect a slightly different, Renaissance-influenced sense of nationhood, see Caball, *Poets and Politics*, pp. 130-31, but the point here is how nothing comparable emerges for Gaelic Scotland at any stage.

¹³¹Published in Mhág Craith, I, no. 6, and in Eleanor Knott, 'A Poem by Giolla Brighde Ó Heoghusa', *Gadelica*, 1, 10-15 (1912).

¹³²Published in Gerard Murphy, 'Poems of Exile by Uilliam Nuinseann mac Barúin Dealbhna', *Éigse*, 6 (1948), 8-15.

¹³³Published in Mac Niocaill, pp. 23-25 (poem 9, ll. 285-318).

¹³⁴'A Shionann Bhriain Bhóroimhe', 'A Shionann Chuinn Chéadchathaigh'; 'Bérad breath na himriosna' ('I shall give judgment in the argument') (Tadhg an Ghadhraigh Mac Aodhagáin) (published in Brian Ó Cuív,

matters specifically Scottish.

Of course, bardic poetry is not known for its realistic description of the natural world; stock images of one kind or another are the currency. With respect to land and geography, a standard set of favourable images — a highly conventional ‘panegyric code’ — seems to have been developed based on the physical reality of Ireland, and then applied to other places without regard to their realism or appropriateness as a strictly practical, descriptive matter. In the case of Scotland, the misfit is perceptible and palpable, but when Irish poets use stock phrasings developed in the Irish context to praise countries rather more drastically different to Ireland in their topography or climate, the disparity can become extreme. Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, for example, praises ‘*Labháin na learg ccorcra*’ (‘Louvain of the purple slopes’), and even speaks of ‘*clár fuarfhluach Éigeipte*’ (‘the cold damp plain of Egypt’).¹³⁵

Most bardic descriptions of Scotland, then, consist of ready-made combinations of adjectives and images transferred from the Irish context, lacking any localizing specificity or highlighting of difference: their purpose is conventionally panegyric, not accurately descriptive. Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh proceeds according to convention in describing Scotland — which he interestingly refers to as ‘his country’ — as ‘*Alba fheadhach fhéarach | fhleadhach ardach oilénach*’ (‘Scotland of the woods and the grass, of the feasts and the hills and the isles’),¹³⁶ and some three and half centuries later, Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn uses similarly generic terms of praise (‘*seanAlba fhind fhleadhach | bhinn shreaphardgla shitheamhoil*’ (‘ancient fair festive sweet peaceful Scotland of loud clear streams’)).¹³⁷ Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird gives a seemingly more distinct and realistic image of the country — ‘*críoch bhraonúair na mbeann bhfionn*’ (‘the cool fresh land of the fair peaks’) — in ‘Dursan mh’eachtra go hAlbuin’ (‘My journey to Scotland was a tribulation’); but the presentation of Scotland in the rest of the poem is much more standard — Scotland is ‘*crích sgaithfhinn na ngort ngeal*’ (‘fair-flowered land of the bright fields’), ‘*Alba an fheoir chuirr*’ (‘Alba of the rolling grass’), and ‘*Alba úirghéagach*’ (‘fresh-branched Alba’) (§§ 4c, 9a, 22b).

‘The Poetic Contention About the River Shannon’, *Ériu*, 19 (1962), 89-110 (pp. 92-105)).

¹³⁵‘Fúarus iongnadh, a fhir chumainn’, § 13a; ‘Mór do mhíll aoibhneas Éireann’ (‘The pleasantness of Ireland has destroyed many’) (c. 1608-16), § 37d (edited in Ó Macháin, ‘Poems by Fearghal Óg’, pp. 723-43).

¹³⁶‘Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh’, § 29c-d.

¹³⁷‘Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn’, § 2c-d; see also §§ 8c, 21c. As noted above, the ascription of this poem to Tadhg Dall is uncertain.

So too in Fearghal Óg's poem beginning 'Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais' ('The three crowns in James's charter'), where Scotland appears in a variety of non-specific praise images, alternately as 'Alba iathghorm', 'fionnAlba na n-iath mín', 'tír na n-ardbhragh n-imiolghlan', 'Alba an fhuinn fhóidréidh', 'Alba iobhardhonn', and 'caomhAlba fhinn fhleadach | shlim dtaobhardghlan thaitneamhach' ('dark-earthed Scotland', 'fair Scotland of the smooth fields', 'land of bright-bordered highlands', 'smooth-earthed Scotland', 'brown-yewed Scotland', and 'fair sweet feast-rich Scotland, smooth delightful land of high bright cliffs') (§§ 3b, 7c, 8d, 9b, 11b, 15c-d). Further on in 'Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais', England is described with similar stock images, appearing successively as 'críoch leabharbhragh na long ndubh . . . fonn [seamhar]ghlan Sagsun', 'críoch Sagsun na gcoll gcorcra', and 'Sagsan na sreabh seang' ('the Saxons' land with its shapely fields, its dark ships, its bright sorrel', 'the Saxons' land of purple hazels', and 'fair-streamed England') (§§ 16c-d, 18a, 22a).

Many of the words used as the building blocks for these stereotyped bardic images are clearly rooted in the landscape of Ireland, yet these terms of evident Irish origin come to be used in Scottish contexts where they are not applicable in any meaningful sense, and would border on the ludicrous were they taken literally. The terms *clár* (a level surface, a plain) and *magh* (a plain, a level district) become generics meaning 'land' or 'territory' — as in *Clár Éibhir*, *Magh Fáil* and so on — a usage clearly connected to the relatively flat, plain-like nature of the Irish interior, particularly mythological-heartland areas like Meath. These words bespeaking flat Irish plains then come to be applied to rugged, relentlessly mountainous places in Scotland, like *Clár Sgí* (literally 'the Level Surface of Skye'),¹³⁸ *Clár Rois* (literally 'the Level Surface of Ross'),¹³⁹ or *Magh Muile* (literally 'the Level Plain of Mull').¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ 'Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois', §§ 30c, 63b; 'Díomdhach mé don ghaoith a ndeas', § 4b (l. 258); 'Ar triall bhus ésguigh go Uilliam', § 17a-b; 'Do íslioh onóir Gaoidheal', § 10a; 'Mór a n-ainm a n-iath eile', § 3a. The term also appears in vernacular poetry, but rarely; it is not used, for instance, in any of Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh's work. An Clàrsair Dall uses it twice, in 'A' cheud Di-luain de'n ràithe' ('The first Monday of the quarter') (c. 1688-93), § 5c (published in William Matheson, *An Clàrsair Dall*, ll. 401-604 (l. 451)), and 'A Choinnich, cuiream le chéile' ('Let us aid one another, Coinneach') ('Cumha do Fhear Thalasangair'/'A Lament for the Goodman of Talisker') (c. 1700), § 8a (published in *An Clàrsair Dall*, ll. 1013-72 (l. 1048)). Iain Mac Àidh, Am Piobaire Dall, also uses the term in 'Beannachd dhut o'n ghabh thu 'n t-àm' ('A blessing to you since you took the opportunity'), § 17b (published in MacKenzie, *Sàr-Obair nam Bàrd Gaelach*, pp. 96-97).

¹³⁹ 'Do loisceadh meisi sa Mhuaidh', § 21a; 'Leasg linn gabháil go Gearloch', § 11d.

¹⁴⁰ E.g. 'Adhbhur tuirsi ag fuil Fhionghuin', §§ 7a, 17a; 'Níor ghlac cliath, colg no gunna', § 17a; 'Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal', § 19c ('míonmhagh Muile', 'the smooth plain of Mull'). *Magh Muile* also

On several occasions Scotland is associated with waterfalls¹⁴¹ — an image well suited to a mountainous country of heavy rainfall — but there are similar images in the stock applied to Ireland, and the usage is really best understood as a conventional image suggesting fertility, freshness, and vibrancy, and indeed this association is commonly used to describe Ireland or other territories. Indeed, a fatal counter-example occurs in Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn’s poem beginning ‘Fada cóir Fhódlá ar Albain’ (‘Long has Fódla had a claim upon Alba’), where ‘Alba na sreabh seang’ (‘Alba of the slender streams’) is counterposed to ‘inis Éireann [. . .] na n-eas mbanna’ (‘the island of Ireland of rippling waterfalls’) (§ 3a-d).

Interestingly, the work of Scottish poets does occasionally hint at the rather greater physical harshness of the Scottish environment. Giolla Coluim mac an Ollaimh, for example, speaks of ‘innsi allta Alban’ (‘the wild isles of Scotland’), but his poem is a lament, and images of nature grieving, suffering tempestuous weather amid a range of afflictions, are commonplace in this context, and similar expressions of rough seas and wind can be found in the work of other Scottish classical poets.¹⁴² Ronald Black makes the tentative suggestion that we begin to see a more realistic, distinctively Scottish imagistic landscape in Cathal Mac Mhuirich’s poetry in the middle of the seventeenth century, a shift from the Irish poets’ emphasis on ‘limewashed mansions and green fields’ to a new focus on ‘sea and wind’.¹⁴³ The most striking example speaks of the harsh Highland interior rather than the sea, in Cathal’s poem beginning ‘Leasg linn gabháil go Gearrloch’ (‘I am reluctant to go to Gairloch’), where he speaks of ‘diamhra[] droibhéal [. . .] fá Ghleann Garaidh’ (‘the lonely places of rugged lands . . . throughout Glengarry’).¹⁴⁴ This phrase is not an original one, however, and should not necessarily be understood as a particularized description of Glengarry.¹⁴⁵ At the same time, Cathal also produces a range of more

appears in an example given, in slightly different forms, in both the grammatical and syntactical tracts: ‘Noc(h)an fhuil mo chnú c(h)roidhe . na cnú oile a muigh Muile’ (‘My dear heart is not completely (or ‘not unwounded’) in Magh Muile’). MacKenna, *Irish Syntactical Tracts*, § 228, l. 2; Bergin, ‘Irish Grammatical Tracts’, l. 1776.

¹⁴¹ ‘Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais’, § 22b; ‘Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn’, § 2a-b.

¹⁴² ‘Thánaig adhbhar mo thuirse’, § 12d (l. 828); see also ‘Do thuirling seasamh Síol gCuinn’, § 13; ‘Creach Gaidheal i reilig Rois’, § 31.

¹⁴³ Black, ‘The Genius of Cathal MacMhuirich’, p. 354.

¹⁴⁴ § 12b-c; translation from Black, ‘The Genius of Cathal MacMhuirich’, p. 334.

¹⁴⁵ Compare ‘Foraois airdríogh iath Connacht’ (‘The land of Connacht is a forest of high-kings’) (anonymous, 1566x76), § 51a (published in *Poems on the Butlers of Ormond, Cahir, and Dunboyne (A.D. 1400-1650)*, ed. by James Carney (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1945), poem 7) (l. 883) and

conventional, strikingly unrealistic images, as when he refers to the territories of Clann Raghnaill — whose mainland portion receives some of the heaviest rainfall anywhere in Europe — as ‘*an tiormfhonn tuaidh*’ (‘the dry land of the north’).¹⁴⁶

*

One of the most basic, and striking, illustrations of the different outlooks of Irish and Scottish poets in relation to the two countries is the ways in which the other country is presented, and indeed whether it is presented at all. In contrast to the treatment of Ireland in the works of their Scottish counterparts, poems composed by Irish poets almost never mention Scotland unless there is a specific reason for doing so, most obviously when the patron is himself (or herself, in at least one instance) connected to Scotland.¹⁴⁷ The basic idiom of bardic poetry — for Irish and Scottish poets alike — is unambiguously Irish; if much of panegyric poetry is built upon a complex rhetorical system of name-dropping, then the names to drop are Irish ones.

There are of course a number of stray counter-examples here and there, where Irish poets composing for Irish chiefs invoke Scotland seemingly at random in otherwise entirely Irish litanies of praise. Usually the poetic by-name *Monadh* is used here (‘*flaith Monaidh*’, ‘*laoch lesa Monaidh*’, ‘*saorbharr sluaigh Monaidh*’ (‘prince of Monadh’, ‘hero of the court of Monadh’, ‘noble chief of Monadh’s host’)),¹⁴⁸ or, most

‘Dá roinn chomhthroma an crích Néill’ (‘Two equal parts have been made of Niall’s land’) (Eoghan Mág Craith (?), c. 1400(?)), § 18b (published in *AD*, poem 16).

¹⁴⁶‘Foraois éigeas Innse Gall’, § 2a. *Tioram* (*tirin*) can also have the meaning ‘barren’ or ‘bare’, which would be a more realistic description of Moydart and Morar, but this would be an unlikely interpretation of this adjective, which is very common in bardic poetry to describe places. The best interpretation here, suggested by Ronald Black (personal communication) is simply as a pun on Caisteal Tioram, the principal Clann Raghnaill stronghold on the mainland.

¹⁴⁷Ó Mainnín, p. 27 and fn. 43. A female patron is involved in ‘Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn’. Occasionally Scotland is mentioned because the patron’s wife — often addressed, by convention, in the concluding stanzas of a panegyric poem — is Scottish, as in Tadhg Mór Ó Cobhthaigh’s poem to Maghnas Ó Domhnaill beginning ‘Cia ré gcuirfinn séd suirghe’ (‘Whom should I send as a love token’) (published in Pádraig A. Breatnach, ‘In Praise of Maghnas Ó Domhnaill’, *Celtica*, 16 (1984), 63-72), where Maghnas’ wife Mairead nighean Aonghais (Íle) Nic Domhnaill (†1544) is labeled ‘*slat réidh do ríoghraidh Alban*’ (‘a gentle offspring of the kings of Alba’) (§ 21b).

¹⁴⁸‘Ní beag easbhaidh Inse Fáil’ (‘Not slight is this loss to Inis Fáil’) (Maol Sheachluinn Ó hEoghusa, 1343; for Tomás Mág Shamhradháin (†1343)), § 12c (published in Lambert McKenna, ‘Some Irish Bardic Poems’, no. 71, *Studies*, 33 (1944), 400-04, and in McKenna, *The Book of Magauran*, poem 31 (l. 4223)); ‘Leis féin moltar Mág Uidhir’ (‘Maguire is praised by himself’) (Maoilín Ó an Chainte, for Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir (†1589), § 18a (published in *Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir: The Poembook of Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir, Lord of Fermanagh 1566-1589*, ed. by David Greene (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1972), poem 22); ‘Nodlaig do-chuamair don Chraoibh’ (‘At Christmas we went to the Creeve’) (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1577; for Toirdhealbhach Luineach Ó Néill (†1595)), § 28c (published in *TD*, poem 8). Knott expresses uncertainty (II, 223) as to exactly what is meant by *Monadh* in Tadhg Dall’s poem and cites the general references in Edmund Hogan’s *Onomasticon Goedelicum* (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, 1910) (pp. 542-43); all

commonly, a connection is made to Islay, presumably as the seat of the Lords of the Isles and thus the most prestigious place in Scotland, a sort of Scottish Tara (*'fear Íle'*, *'flaith Íle'*, *'géag Íle'*, *'tuir Íle'* ('man of Islay', 'prince of Islay', 'scion of Islay', 'pillar of Islay')).¹⁴⁹ This sense of Islay as a symbol of Scottish political power is particularly clear in Séamus Ó hUíde's equation of Islay with Ulster and Munster in his poem to Cormac mac Airt Óig Ó Néill († c. 1680) beginning 'Racha mé shúr mo shealbha' ('I will go to seek my property'):

*Táid ar gach taoibh id thimcheall
ríghe Uladh 's Íle thoir,
ríghe na Mumhan meadhraigh.*

They are around you on every side,
the kings of Ulster and Islay in the east,
the kings of joyous Munster.¹⁵⁰

Torna mac Maoilín calls Roisdeard Buitléar, Viscount Mountgarrett (†1571) *'seól chrann Alban'* ('mast of Scotland') and declares that *'téid a bhladh 's a ainm gu hÍle'* ('his name and fame have gone to Islay'); but here Scotland seems to be invoked precisely because of its distance and remoteness, for the poet also boasts that *'lommán dá chlu críocha Sagsan'* ('the bounds of **England** are brimming-full with his fame').¹⁵¹ Scotland is also occasionally mentioned in Irish elegies, included in the catalogue of places grieving for the dead chief, as in the elegy to Donnchadh Ó Briain, fourth Earl of Thomond (†1624), probably by Tadhg mac Dáire Mac Bruaideadha,

these references are to Scotland or to different places there, so the poem would certainly appear to be referring in some way to Scotland, although a connection to the river Monadh (Money) in County Antrim is conceivable. In another poem Tadhg Dall refers to Eóghan Óg Mac Suibhne (†1596) as *'sgoitha slóigh mhéirshing Mhonaídh'* ('the flower of Monadh's slender-fingered host') ('Iad féin chinneas ar chloinn Néill' ('It is they themselves who repress the race of Niall')) (c. 1570), § 31c (published in *TD*, poem 26)), but the Mac Suibhnes of course have a real connection to Scotland, albeit rarely discussed in later poetry for Mac Suibhne leaders.

¹⁴⁹ 'Ar ghuth éinfhir anaid Bréifnigh' ('There is but one man with whose word the Bréifnigh are content') (Mathghamhain Ó hUiginn; for Niall Mág Shamhradháin (†1362)), § 18c (published in Lambert McKenna, 'Some Irish Bardic Poems', no. 74, *Studies*, 34 (1945), 204-18, and in McKenna, *The Book of Magauran*, poem 32 (l. 4367)); 'Lubhghort fineamhna fuil Ír' ('The stock of Íor are as a vineyard'), §§ 37c, 47d (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, before 1596; to Aodh mac Domhnall Óig Mág Aonghusa (†1596)) (edited in Ó Macháin, 'Poems by Fearghal Óg', pp. 381-406); 'Ón aird thuaidh thig an chobhair' ('From the northwest comes assistance') (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, c. 1397-1403; to Niall Óg Ó Néill (†1403)), § 23d (published in *AD*, poem 15). The editor of 'Ón aird thuaidh thig an chobhair', Lambert McKenna, explains this reference as a connection to Cú Chulainn, who he says received martial training from Scáthach in Islay (p. 232). This training, however, is conventionally supposed to have occurred in Skye rather than Islay.

¹⁵⁰ Published in *LCAB*, poem 14 (§ 9b-d (ll. 34-36)).

¹⁵¹ 'Fada re a choimhéid clú Roisdeard' ('Long will the reputation of Roisdeard be preserved') (before 1571), §§ 5b, 15a, 5a (ll. 18, 57, 19) (published in Carney, *Poems on the Butlers*, poem 1) (spelling regularized). A similar linkage of Scotland and England as distant and therefore prestigious places is found in the anonymous poem to Teabóid Buitléar, lord of Cahir, beginning 'Triall gach éinfhir go cúirt tTeabóid' ('Every man journeys to the court of Teabóid') (c. 1566-76) (published in *Poems on the Butlers*, poem 6 (ll. 595-96)).

beginning ‘Eascar Gaoidheal éag aoinfhir’ (‘The death of one man entails the overthrow of the Gaels’), where sorrow is said to be felt ‘*i gcomhghar chuan Alban*’ (‘in proximity to Scotland’s harbours’).¹⁵² Finally, notable in another way, the late sixteenth-century satirist Aonghus Ó Dálaigh (Aonghus na n-Aor) mocks Ó Floinn for his lack of reputation: ‘*Ní raibh lúadh a n-Éirinn air, | ’S ní raibh iomrádh a n-Albain*’ (‘In Ireland he was not noticed | Neither was he spoken of in Scotland’).¹⁵³

Yet the overwhelming majority of bardic poems composed for Irish chiefs — in other words, the overwhelming majority of bardic poems *tout court* — make no mention of Scotland whatsoever. Remarkably, even in poems composed for Irish patrons by Scottish poets like Giolla Críost Brúilingeach and Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, Scotland is only referred to in connection with the poet’s own circumstances as a Scottish poet away in Ireland, not as any part of the poem’s core panegyric rhetoric.¹⁵⁴

Poetry for Scottish chiefs — by Scottish and Irish poets alike — presents a very different picture. Scottish chiefs are very frequently connected to specific places in Ireland; such references are probably not much less common than references to particular places in Scotland. Indeed, in some poems there are hardly any references to Scotland, as against a long litany of Irish names. For example, the anonymous fifteenth-century poem to Eoin, fourth Lord of the Isles, beginning ‘Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill’ makes but a single reference to Scotland — to Islay (§ 8b) — but invokes Ulster, the Bann, Banbha, Meath, Tara, and Aileach. Connections of this kind to specific places in Ireland tend to be commonest in poems composed by Irish poets, then in Scottish poems composed for Mac Domhnaill leaders, and perceptibly less common in Scottish poems to leaders of other kindreds like the Caimbeuls and Mac Leòids. Significantly, too, Irish references tend to diminish over time, particularly in the bardic poetry of the seventeenth century.

¹⁵²Published in Brian Ó Cuív, ‘An Elegy on Donnchadh Ó Briain, Fourth Earl of Thomond’, *Celtica*, 16 (1984), 87-105 (§ 51a).

¹⁵³The poem, which begins ‘Muintir Fhiodhnacha na mionn’ (‘The family of Fiodhnach of the relics’), is published as *The Tribes of Ireland: A Satire, by Aenghus O’Daly*, ed. by John O’Donovan (Dublin: John O’Daly, 1852). This Scottish reference cannot be attributed to a Scottish connection on the part of this Aonghus, who, as William Matheson has shown, had no connection to the contemporary Scottish poet who also bore the nickname *Aonghus nan Aoir*. Matheson, ‘A Case of Mistaken Identity’.

¹⁵⁴‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’, §§ 20-21 (ll. 437-44)); ‘Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad’, §§ 4-5, 15-16.

These Irish connections are of three main kinds. First, and most commonly, there are references (often by means of kennings) to prestigious Irish places of essentially mythological significance, the great seats of power in Irish tradition, like Eamhain Macha and Ailech, Tara and the Boyne, Allen and Assaroe — places the chiefs in question might well never have seen in their lives.¹⁵⁵ Clann Domhnaill are ‘*onchoin Eamhna*’ (‘wolf-hounds of Eamhain’);¹⁵⁶ Aonghus Mór Mac Domhnaill (†1296) is ‘*onchú Banna*’, ‘*leómhan Locha Cé*’, ‘*rí Tuama*’, ‘*flaith Fáil*’, and ‘*slat Teamhra*’ (‘champion of the Bann’, ‘lion of Loch Cé’, ‘king of Tuam’, ‘lord of Fál’, ‘scion of Tara’);¹⁵⁷ Eóin Mac Domhnaill, fourth Lord of the Isles (†1503) is ‘*craobh fhial oinigh | ó fhiadh n-Oiligh*’ (‘hospitable branch of generosity | from the land of Aileach’);¹⁵⁸ Seumas mac Aonghuis Mac Domhnaill (†1626) is ‘*seabhad Bóinne*’ and ‘*eó Duibhlinni*’ (‘hawk of the Boyne’, ‘salmon of Dublin’);¹⁵⁹ Domhnall Gorm Òg Mac Domhnaill of Sleat (†1643) is ‘*eó uaibhreach ó ríghEas Ruaidh*’ (‘proud salmon from royal Assaroe’);¹⁶⁰ Donnchadh Dubh Caimbeul of Glenorchy (†1631) is ‘*fear do chuir a chlu go h-Almhuin*’ (‘a man who spread his fame to Almhu’ [Allen in Leinster, chief seat of Fionn mac Cumhaill]).¹⁶¹ Usages like this are, of course, no different at all from those bestowed upon Irish chiefs throughout the bardic period, and they serve the same purposes.

Secondly, there are references (again often delivered in the form of kennings) to specific places connected to the chief’s kindred by genealogical tradition. Mac Domhnaill poetry, for example, is replete with references to the principal rivers of Ulster: the Bann, the Boyne, the Bush, the Erne, and the Finn.¹⁶² In an interesting fillip of history, these references are underpinned by two independent bases. First, the territory bounded by these rivers was given by Muireadhach Tíreach to the three Collas

¹⁵⁵Cf. Bergin, ‘An Address to Aonghus of Islay’, pp. 58-59 (‘in encomiastic verse the association of a patron’s name with sites famous in legend or history does not necessarily imply that he ever actually saw them’).

¹⁵⁶‘Eireóchthar fós le cloinn gColla’, § 2b.

¹⁵⁷‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’, §§ 6b, 7b, 8a, 14b, 21d. Similar associations of Scottish chiefs to Tara occur in ‘Cumha ceathrair do mheasg mé’, § 8a-b; ‘Treisi an eagla ioná an andacht’, § 17d; and ‘O ’s uaigneach a nochd Clár Ghiorra’, §§ 6c-d.

¹⁵⁸‘Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill’, § 8b.

¹⁵⁹‘Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais’, §§ 25a, 31b.

¹⁶⁰‘Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir’, § 18a.

¹⁶¹‘Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne’, § 1c.

¹⁶²‘Eireóchthar fós le cloinn gColla’, § 2b; ‘Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill’, § 4b; ‘Ceannas Gaidheal do chloinn Cholla’, § 7c-d.

upon their return from Scotland,¹⁶³ and thus resonate deeply in Clann Domhnaill tradition. Second, as discussed earlier, territory adjoining the Bann and the Bush in north Antrim came into the possession of the Mac Domhnaills from the end of the fourteenth century onwards as a result of intermarriage, thus providing a new, more practically relevant rationale for invoking these rivers.¹⁶⁴

An interesting example occurs at the beginning of the late, anonymous elegy for Aonghas mac Alasdair Dheirg Mac Domhnaill of Glengarry (†1680), where a ‘mythological’ reference of the first kind, an invocation of the mighty Shannon, with which Clann Domhnaill had no practical connection, is combined with a ‘genealogical’ reference of the second, an allusion to the Bush and Bann:

*Níor ghlac cliath, colg no gunna
sgíath ré linn, no lann tana
cothrom cruais do ghleó an ghiolla:
eó Sionna, ó’n Bhuais, ó’n Bhanna.*

There grasped not sword, spear or gun,
shield or thin blade in his time who was the
match for the prowess of the lad:
salmon of the Shannon, from the Bush,
from the Bann.¹⁶⁵

The third main category of Irish references consists of references to actual events in the chief’s life, most commonly relating to military activities in particular parts of Ireland, in service to an Irish chief. Aonghas Mac Domhnaill of Dunyveg (†1614), for example, is connected to his various military exploits in Inishowen, Carrickfergus, the Route, Strangford Lough, and the Ards Peninsula in ‘An síth do rogha, a rígh Fionnghall?’, and Ruaidhrí Mór Mac Leòid (†1626) to the scenes of his several campaigns in the north of Connacht and west of Ulster, in ‘Creach Gaidheal i reilig Rois’ (§§ 30c, 63b).¹⁶⁶ Occasionally, the chief’s might and fearful reputation is praised by presenting him as a military threat to mythologically resonant Irish places, with phrasings like ‘*t’eagla ar cách um Bhoinn mbraonghlais*’ (‘You are feared by all around the green-watered Boyne’).¹⁶⁷ Or he may be portrayed as actually exercising control over Ireland or important places there, classically in the form of exacting

¹⁶³LCAB, p. 51; TD, II, 29; Caball, ‘A Study of Intellectual Reaction’, p. 44.

¹⁶⁴‘Eireóchtar fós le cloinn gColla’, § 12c-d.

¹⁶⁵Translation from W.J. Watson, ‘The Gaelic Literature of Scotland’, in *The Highlands and the Highlanders: The Past and Future of a Race* (Glasgow: The Highlands Committee, Empire Exhibition, 1938), pp. 22-44 (p. 23).

¹⁶⁶See also ‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’, §§ 21-24 (referring to various raids in the west of Ireland).

¹⁶⁷‘An síth do rogha, a rígh Fionnghall?’, § 10c (l. 39); see also ‘Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill’, § 7a (‘*measgadh Midhe*’ (‘perturbation of Meath’)); ‘Treisi an eagla ioná an andacht’, § 17a (‘*creachthóir*

tribute: thus Cathal Mac Mhuirich says of Domhnall mac Ailein Mac Domhnaill that ‘*tug tuairim ar Teagh an Trír | sleagh shídh ar luaighill ’na láimh*’ (‘he attacked the House of the Three [Tara] with a charmed lance jerking in his hand’).¹⁶⁸ This device is not specifically Scottish, but is a common figure in Irish bardic poetry as well; it thus demonstrates commonality rather than divergence within the bardic tradition.¹⁶⁹ This commonality is underscored by the relative scarcity of parallel references to endangered Scottish places, evidently because these lack sufficient prestige. There are occasional references in poems to Irish chiefs to raids on Scottish territories, typically Kintyre — one of the closest and most prestigious parts of Scotland, given its centrality within the Lordship of the Isles — but these seem to be rooted in actual fact,¹⁷⁰ as part of a *caithréim* of the chief being praised, rather than mythological images like the invocations of Tara and the Boyne.

An interesting point of comparison here is Artúr Dall Mac Gurcaigh’s ‘*Dáil chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne*’, where the Mac Suibhnes, although identified as ‘*Lochlannaigh*’ and only recently relocated to Ireland from Argyll, are connected to specific places in Ireland to a degree that is almost completely unknown for other Scottish kindreds — the consequence of what Donald Meek describes as Mac Suibhne’s ‘naturalization’ in Ireland.¹⁷¹ Eóin is labeled ‘*leathchrann sgorach codach Cuinn*’ (‘one of two piercing lances from Conn’s portion’) (§ 14d), evidently linking him to *Leath Cuinn*, the northern half of Ireland — a specification not applied to other Scottish chiefs, though extremely common in poems for Irish patrons. He is also ‘*finnfhear Muighe <lusghloin> Luirg*’ (‘the fair-haired man of Moylurg of shining

Clíodhna’ (‘spoiler of Clíodhna’ [Glandore, Co. Cork, a symbol for Munster]).

¹⁶⁸Foraois éigeas Innsi Gall’, § 2c-d. The meaning of ‘*tug tuairim*’ here is not entirely clear; MacBain and Kennedy translate the phrase as ‘made his way to’ (*RC*, II, 225), an interpretation noted, with some doubt, in the *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, p. 611.

¹⁶⁹Among many examples, see ‘*Leath ré Fodla fuil Uidhir*’ (‘The Maguirs are the same as Ireland’) (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaired, c. 1580) and ‘*Tobar fireinigh Fir Mhanach*’ (‘The Maguirs are a spring of true generosity’) (Írial Ó hUiginn, c. 1580) (published in Greene, *Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir*, poems 1 and 12).

¹⁷⁰Raids on Kintyre are celebrated, for example, in the anonymous poem to Tuathal Ó Máille (†1416) beginning ‘*Bráthair don iocht an t-oineach*’ (‘Honour is a brother to clemency’) (published in Tomás Ó Máille, ‘A poem to Tuathal Ó Máille’, *Revue Celtique*, 49, (1932), 166-81 (§ 29c)) and the anonymous poem to Toirdhealbhadh mac Ruaidhrí Mac Suibhne (†1544) beginning ‘*Mór re cuma caithréim dheise*’ (‘Composing the battle-roll of this pair is an enormous task’) (edited by Seán Ó Foghlú, ‘Four Bardic Poems from *Leabhar Chlainne Suibhne*’, unpublished M. Litt. thesis, TCD, 1992, pp. 53-67 (§ 11d)). See also ‘*Eólach mé ar mheirge an iarla*’ (‘I am familiar with the earl’s standard’) (Flann mac Eóghain Meic Craith, to Thomas, 10th Earl of Ormond (†1614)), § 29a (published in Carney, *Poems on the Butlers*, poem 15 (l. 1665)), and ‘*Cúich do leandán, a Lámh Óir?*’ (‘Who is your lover, o Golden Hand?’) (anonymous, c. 1450; to Edmund, Lord of Dunboyne) (published in *Poems on the Butlers*, poem 18 (l. 2219)).

herbs’), ‘*Suibhne Sléibhe Truim*’ (‘Suibhne of Sliabh Truim’), apparently referring to a mountain south of Newtonstewart in modern Co. Tyrone), and ‘*Mac Suibhne Sléibhe Mis*’ (‘Mac Suibhne of Sliabh Mis’) (§§ 23d, 14b, 19b). Sliabh Mis — or more typically simply Mis, as applied to Eóin as ‘*onchú Mis*’ (‘warrior-dog of Mis’) (§ 21b) — is a common kenning-connection in Irish bardic poetry, but is not attested for Scottish chiefs;¹⁷² Meek interprets this reference as relating to Slemish in modern County Antrim, an important site associated with St. Patrick, but in other contexts it seems to represent Slemish in modern County Kerry, site of the first battle between the sons of Míl and the Tuatha Dé Danann.¹⁷³ The process of ‘naturalization’ noted by Meek is evident in later poetry for the Mac Suibhnes — significantly, a corpus of considerable size in comparison to that surviving for any Scottish kindred — which becomes fairly straightforwardly ‘Irish’, with little or no mention of their Scottish or Norse antecedents.

The ways in which Scottish places are used in Scottish bardic poetry are rather different. Kennings connecting a chief to a particular place in Scotland — typically labeling him its lion or some other fearful, fabulous beast — are an important feature here. The basis for invoking these places is rather less complex than with the Irish references: in almost all cases, these geographical connections relate to places within the chief’s *dùthaich* — actual, claimed, or imagined — thereby expressing a relationship between chief and territory, but without such a deep suffusion of historical and mythological connection as is communicated in the counterpart Irish expressions.

Mac Leòid chiefs are thus connected to Skye, Harris, Lewis, and Glenelg, as ‘*ursa chothuighe chláir Sgí*’, ‘*leóghuin Langa*’, ‘*rí Leódhuis*’, and ‘*fear finn-Eilge*’ (‘supporting pillar of the land of Skye’, ‘lion of Langa’ [in the Forest of Harris], ‘king of Lewis’, ‘man of fair Glenelg’).¹⁷⁴ Caimbeuls are tied to the great lochs of Argyll,

¹⁷¹Meek, “Norsemen and Noble Stewards”, p. 19.

¹⁷²Interestingly, in the mid-thirteenth century poem to Aonghas of Islay beginning ‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’, Aonghas is bestowed with a wide range of ‘Irish’ epithets, but only his Irish ancestor Cairbre receives the label ‘*laoch Mis*’ (§ 27b).

¹⁷³For example, his poem beginning ‘Fada an ráitheise romham’ (‘Long shall I feel the next three months passing’), Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn praises Uilleog Ruadh Mac Uilliam Uachtair of Clann Riocaird (†1485) for his raiding activities and notes his ‘*cuairt go Sliabh Mis i Mumhain*’ (‘journey to Sliabh Mis in Munster’), perhaps indicating that a listener would otherwise connect this name to Antrim. *AD*, poem 40 (§ 37c).

¹⁷⁴‘*ursa chothuighe chláir Sgí*’, ‘*leóghuin Langa*’: ‘Do ísligh onóir Gaidheal’, § 10a, § 41a [identification of Langa made in Angus Matheson, ‘Poems from a Manuscript of Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh [I]’, p. 270 fn. 2]; ‘*leoghan Sgí*’ (‘lion of Skye’), ‘*rí Leodhais*’, ‘*mílidh Mighinis*’ (‘warrior of Minginish’ [in western Skye]), ‘*fear finn-Eilge*’: ‘Dual freasdal ar feirg flatha’, §§ 12a, 13a, 15b, 17d.

Loch Awe, Loch Fyne, and Loch Long, as *'leómhan Locha hAbha'*, *'laoch Locha Long'*, and *'leoghan lonn Locha Fíne'* ('lion of Loch Awe', 'hero of Loch Long', 'fierce lion of Loch Fyne').¹⁷⁵ Poetry for chiefs of the different branches of Clann Domhnaill, spread along the west coast and through the Hebrides, presents the most geographically complex picture: they are linked to Islay and Kintyre (*'bláth aibhle ón úir Íligh'*, *'maighre ón chúil Chenntíriugh'* ('apple-blossom from the Islay soil', 'salmon from the Kintyre fastness')),¹⁷⁶ to Ross, Knoydart, Lewis, Skye, and Coll (*'rígh-laoch Rois'*, *'ceann cliartha ó'n choill Chródórduigh'*, *'onchú Leódhuis'*, *'dreagan Dúin Tuilm'*, *'fear Chola'* ('hero-king of Ross', 'head of poet-bands from the wood of Knoydart', 'wolf-dog of Lewis', 'dragon of Duntulm', 'chief of Coll')),¹⁷⁷ to Loch Shiel and Loch Nevis (*'eó Seile'*, *'leoghun Loch Nimheis'* ('salmon of Shiel', 'lion of Loch Nevis')).¹⁷⁸

Interestingly, it is very much the exception for the Scottish place-names given in these kennings to be embellished with any kind of adjective or descriptive phrase, as happens more often than not in similar Irish poetry. The effect, once again, is that Ireland appears as a land saturated with associations, Scotland as a relatively unimagined landscape in comparison, about which there is not a great deal to say. The only Scottish poem where this Irish device is used with any density is Aithbhreac inghean Coirceadail's elegy for Niall Óg Mac Néill († c. 1455-70) beginning 'A phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar' ('O rosary that has roused my tear'), in which she labels Niall Óg *'leómhan Muile na múr ngeal'*, *'seabhag Íle na magh mín'*, *'dreagan Leódhuis na learg ngeal'*, and *'éigne Sanais na sreabh séimh'* ('lion of **white-walled**

¹⁷⁵*'Leómhan Locha hAbha'*: 'Buaidh thighearna ar thóiseachaibh', § 18d (l. 344)); *'laoch Locha Long'*, *'leoghan lonn Locha Fíne'*: 'Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal', §§ 24b, 33c; *'triath oirdhearca fíod Abha'* ('illustrious lord of the sod of Awe'), *'ceannlaoch Locha Fíne'* ('chief warrior of Loch Fyne'): 'Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban', §§ 23a, 25a; *'laoch Locha Fíne'*: 'Mó iná ainm Iarlla Gaoidheal', § 43a.

¹⁷⁶Saoth leam do chor, a Cholla', § 12c-d; *'oighre fuinn Íle'* ('heir to the land of Islay'): 'Níor ghlac cliath, colg no gunna', § 12d; *'bile Chinn Tíre'* ('noble tree of Kintyre'): 'Ionmholta an t-óglách nach diognadh', § 22d.

¹⁷⁷*'slat Nis'* ('scion of Ness'), *'dreagan Dúin Tuilm'*: 'Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir', §§ 15a, 24a; *'ceann cliartha ó'n choill Chródórduigh'*: 'Tuar doimheanmna dul Raghnaill', § 9d; *'onchú Leódhuis'*: 'An síth do rogha, a rígh Fionnghall?', § 20a (l. 77); *'rígh Rois'* ('king of Ross'): 'Treisi an eagla ioná an andacht', § 16a; *'rígh-laoch Rois'*: 'Mionn súl Éireann i nÁth Cliath', § 3d; *'fear Chola'*: 'Ceannaigh duain t'athar, a Aonghas', § 10b. Séamas mac Aonghais Mac Domhnaill is also praised as *'láogh na hoighi ó íadh Muile'* ('fawn of the doe from the land of Mull'), evidently because his mother Màiri was the daughter of Mac Gill-Eathain of Duart. 'Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais', § 33c.

¹⁷⁸*'eó Seile'*: 'Deireadh d'aoibhneas Innsi Gall' ('An end to the joy of the Hebrides') (Niall Mac Mhuirich, 1686), § 11a (published in *RC*, II, 244-49, and in Laoide, pp. 40-42); *'leoghun Loch Nimheis'*: 'Tuar doimheanma dul Raghnaill', § 10c; *'éigne Seile'* ('salmon of Shiel'): 'Níor ghlac cliath, colg no gunna', § 2d.

Mull’, ‘hawk of Islay **of smooth plains**’, ‘dragon of Lewis **of bright slopes**’, ‘salmon of Sanas **of quiet streams**’), and laments the plight of ‘*Giodha an fhuinn mhín*’ (‘**smooth-soiled** Gigha’) after Niall Óg’s death.¹⁷⁹ Styling like this would not be remotely unusual in Irish bardic poetry — it would certainly be reckless to attribute its presence here to female authorship — but this kind of decoration stands out starkly in the Scottish context, even in the work of other amateurs. Also striking is the contrast with the vivid imagined landscape of later Scottish vernacular poetry, with its dense use of placenames and adjectival phrasing.

Interestingly, Scottish bardic poets composing for Irish chiefs freely adopt the ‘Irish’ style of embellishing Irish placenames with adjectives. In his poem beginning ‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’ (‘It is the hand of the one man in Ireland’), for example, Giolla Críost Brúilingeach describes Tomaltach Mac Diarmada (†1458), lord of Magh Luirg (Moyslurg in present-day County Roscommon) as ‘*bradán Sionna na sreabh solta*’ (‘salmon of Shannon of fair streams’) and speaks twice of ‘*Magh Luirg líonmhor*’ (‘the populous plain of Lorg’).¹⁸⁰ Similarly, Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin speaks of ‘*Mumhain Chuiric na ccuach n-óir*’ (‘Corc’s Munster of the golden goblets’)¹⁸¹ and ‘*críoch Ealla na n-uisgeadh mall*’ (‘land of Ealla of the limpid waters’).¹⁸² Unfortunately, the only poems by Giolla Críost Brúilingeach and Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin that survive were composed for Irish subjects, so that it is not possible to make a comparison between the styles of their ‘Irish’ and ‘Scottish’ poems.

*

Ireland is often presented in Scottish bardic poetry as a touchstone of excellence: the place that is best for hospitality, for learning, even for keening.¹⁸³ References to Irish poets — understood as the finest of their craft — are legion in both

¹⁷⁹Published in *SVBDL*, poem 8 (§§ 4c-d, 7c-d, 10a (ll. 571-72, 583-84, 593)). Other isolated examples of this device are to be found in ‘Ríoghacht ghaisgidh oighrecht Eoin’, § 21d (l. 2086); ‘Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn’, § 45c; ‘Leasg linn gabháil go Gearloch’, § 14a; ‘Do thuirilinn seasamh síol gCuinn’, § 35a; and ‘Mó iná ainm Iarrla Gaoidheal’, § 40a. Two examples are found in ‘Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais’ (§§ 4d, 22b), but the poem uses this device with noticeably greater density in referring to Irish places.

¹⁸⁰‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’, §§ 3c, 7a, 8d (ll. 371, 385, 392)).

¹⁸¹‘Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad’, § 10b.

¹⁸²‘Gnáith féile ag fagháil innmhe’, § 28a.

¹⁸³In ‘Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois’, the poet proclaims that his grief is such that ‘*cuirfead geall i ceardaibh caoi | nár bh’fhearr ó mhnaoi Ealgaigh é*’ (‘I shall undertake that in the art of keening | which would not be bettered by an Irish woman-mourner’) (§ 7c-d; translation revised). Note that these lines could

classical and vernacular Scottish poetry. There is no suggestion of a Scottish ‘inferiority complex’ here, however; these usages are entirely positive, communicating praise of Ireland and recognition of its prestigious and preeminent place in the Gaelic world, rather than implicitly negative. In contrast, corresponding references to Scottish poets in Ireland are almost unknown: the position of Scotland, and the Scottish learned classes, within the Irish intellectual and cultural world, as portrayed in the poetry, seems to be a marginal and ambiguous one, sometimes to be included and more often to be left out.

For example, Fionnlagh ‘An Bard Ruadh’ praises the house of Eoin Mac Griogair as his ‘*rogha theach mhór*’ (‘choice supreme of great houses’), observing that ‘*ní taibhéim ar Éirinn soin, pailéis na cléire i nAlbain*’ (‘no reproach to Ireland this, that the palace of the poet-band is in Scotland’).¹⁸⁴ The implication here is surely that one would naturally expect the greatest centre of patronage to be in Ireland rather than Scotland, so that Mac Griogair’s preeminence is truly out of the ordinary. Elsewhere in the poem, however, Fionnlagh appears to qualify this praise somewhat, describing Eoin’s house as the choicest ‘*ar taighibh Gaoidheal a bhos*’ (‘of houses of the Gael **on this side of the sea**’) (§ 17c (l. 1475)), thus implying both that it is matched or excelled in Ireland, on the other side of the sea, and that Irish supremacy in such matters is inevitable. This match on the Irish side is the house of Aodh Mac Diarmada in Connacht (§ 7 (ll. 1433-36)).

Niall Mac Mhuirich echoes this praise-motif in a poem composed about 1696, long after the demise of Irish patronage in its full classical form, when he invokes Aodh Mac Diarmada and Mág Uidhir as paragons of generosity for comparison with the returning chief of Clann Raghnaill,¹⁸⁵ and the anonymous elegy for Niall Òg Mac Domhnaill of Machrihanish claims that Niall was ‘*fiúghantach mar Brian Ó Ruairc*’ (‘generous like Brian Ó Ruairc’),¹⁸⁶ probably referring to the prominent late sixteenth-century Irish chieftain Brian na Múrtha (†1591), who is celebrated in several surviving Irish poems from the late sixteenth century and who appears to have spent some time

conceivably refer to Glenelg rather than to Ireland.

¹⁸⁴ ‘Fhuaras mo rogha theach mhór’, §§ 1a, 14c-d (ll. 1409, 1634-64).

¹⁸⁵ ‘Maith an sgéal do sgaoil ’nar measg’, §§ 4c, 8a-b.

¹⁸⁶ ‘S fada do chodla, ’Néill Òig’ (‘Long is your sleep, Niall Òg’) (before 1748), § 7d (published in *RC*, II, 407-08).

in Scotland.¹⁸⁷

In both bardic and later vernacular poetry, meanwhile, it becomes a common formula to note that a chief is visited by Irish poets and learned men, the implication being that these are the best of their kind and that the chief's reputation is such as to attract them.¹⁸⁸ Thus, for example, Sir Seumas mac Iain Caimbeul of Lawers (*fl.* 1527) is praised as '*síorghaol dámh na hÉireann*' ('ever the love of the poets of Ireland'): '*aicme dhámh nÉireann 'ga iomrádh*' ('Ireland's tribe of poet-bands tell of him').¹⁸⁹ Similarly, Fionnlagh 'An Bard Ruadh' boasts of Eoin Mac Griogair that '*tiogfaid [i.e. fileadha] ón Bhanbha go a mholadh | i nAlbain 'gá shireadh*' ('they [i.e. poets] will come from Ireland to praise him | seeking him in Scotland'), and Aithbhreac inghean Coirceadail says of Niall Óg Mac Néill '*dámh ag teacht ó Dhún an Óir | Is dámh ón Bhóinn go a fholt fiar*' ('poets came from Dún an Óir [in Cape Clear Island, Co. Cork] | poets too from the Boyne to seek his curling hair').¹⁹⁰ Such statements of Irish supremacy rarely relate to explicitly intellectual or literary matters, but a comment by John Carswell in his introductory letter to the reader in his *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh* (1567) demonstrates the prevailing assumptions: Carswell apologizes for the supposedly poor quality of his Gaelic, explaining that '*is tearc neach agá bfuil ceart canamhna na Gaoidheilge, agus ní h-a n-Albain amháin acht a n-Eirind féin*' ('there are few who are masters of the Gaelic language, and not only in Scotland but in Ireland itself').¹⁹¹

On the Irish side, the occasional references to Scottish poets are interesting, as in Maol Sheachluinn Ó hEoghusa's elegy for Tomás Mág Shamhradhain (†1343):

¹⁸⁷Brian na Múrtha is apparently the subject of, among other poems, the short inaugural ode by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaire beginning 'Brian Ó Ruairc mo rogha leannán' ('Brian Ó Ruairc my choice of lovers') (1566) (published in Knott, *Irish Syllabic Poetry*, p. 23). See *TD*, II, 251; Brian Ó Cuív, 'Brian Ó Ruairc', *Éigse*, 9 (1958-61), 254; Breatnach, 'Traidisiún na hAithrise', pp. 40-42. His abortive visit to Scotland is described in *AFM* 1591 and in Carney, 'A Tract on the O'Rourkes', pp. 243-44.

¹⁸⁸E.g. 'Cha súrd cadail | An rún-s' air m'aighe', § 3g (l. 1083); 'Thoir fios bhuam gu Anndra', § 4g; 'An taobh tuath ud cha téid mi', §§ 3e-f, 6i; 'Soraidh no dhà le dùrachd bhuam' ('A salutation or two with good wishes from me') ('Óran do Ruairidh Mòr Mac Leòid, Thriath Dhùn-Bheagain'/Song to Ruairidh Mór Mac Leòid, Lord of Dunvegan') (before 1626), ll. 31-32 (published in Maclean Sinclair, 'A Collection of Gaelic Poems', *TGSI*, 26 (1904-07), 235-62 (pp. 235-36)); 'S mi an diugh a' fàgail na tíre' ('Today as I leave the country') ('Cumha Coire an Easa'/A Lament for Coire an Easa') (Iain Mac Àidh, 'Am Piobaire Dall', c. 1696), § 11a-b (published in *GC*, poem 52).

¹⁸⁹'Fhuaras rogha na n-óg mbríoghmhór', §§ 19b, 17a (ll. 1110, 1101).

¹⁹⁰'Gealladh gach saoi don each odhar' ('Let each wise man pledge for the dun horse') (before 1519(?)) (published in *SVBDL*, poem 17 (ll. 1353-54)); 'A phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar', § 6a-b.

¹⁹¹R.L. Thomson, *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh*, p. 12.

*A-déar ris — gá huair as fhearr? —
d' éigsibh Alban is Éireann
a-tá líon catha dhá chur
a ghríobh Mhacha, gad mholudh. [. . .]*

*Ach rob iomdha ag teacht dod thaigh
dámha a hÉirinn 's a hAlbain;
beith ar th'uaigh, a fhir Oiligh,
do-bhir uainn gan t'ionnsoidhidh.*

I will say to him now — is not the time propitious? — all the ranks of Ireland's poets and Scotland's are drawn up to praise thee, o griffin of Macha.

Alas, many the poet-band visiting thee from Ireland and Scotland; this brings us gathering at thy grave, o hero of Aileach, yet unable to approach thee.¹⁹²

A particularly telling instance here is Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh's poem on Uilliam Ó Ceallaigh's 1351 Christmas feast for the poets of Ireland — significantly beginning with the line 'Filidh Éireann go haointeach' ('The poets of *Ireland* to one house') — which makes only one reference to Scotland in its 52 quatrains:

*Biaidh aca aithne a chéile,
dámha Fódla foinnréidhe,
's dámha Alban — eachtra chian —
ar dteachta a n-ardbhruigh Uilliam.*

The bardic companies of pleasant-meadowed Fódla, and those of Scotland — a lengthy journey — will be acquainted with one another after arriving in William's lofty castle.¹⁹³

This nod seems somehow obligatory and as such not insignificant, yet it is phrased in terms that convey a clear feeling of separation from, and unfamiliarity with, Scotland and its poets. Coming from Scotland requires '*eachtra chian*', a lengthy journey, and it is implied that the Scottish poets would not become acquainted with their Irish counterparts except in the extraordinary circumstances of Ó Ceallaigh's great Christmas feast. Such imagery belies the stereotypical modern vision of free and constant interaction across the sea. Interestingly, a similar poem by Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn beginning 'Nodlaig do-chuamair don Chraoibh' ('At Christmas we went to the Creeve'), celebrating a gathering near Coleraine hosted by Toirdhealbhadh Luineach Ó Néill in 1577, speaks only in terms of '*filidh Éireann*' ('the poets of Ireland'), without reference to their Scottish counterparts, even though Toirdhealbhadh Luineach himself is apparently somehow associated with Scotland, being described as '*saorbharr sluaigh Monaidh*' ('noble chief of Monadh's host') (§ 28c). Annal entries concerning such feasts sometimes mention Scotland, more often not; indeed, the three

¹⁹²'Ní beag easbhaidh Inse Fáil', §§ 14, 25.

¹⁹³Published in Eleanor Knott, 'Filidh Éireann go hAointeach: William Ó Ceallaigh's Christmas Feast to the Poets of Ireland, A.D. 1351', *Ériu*, 5 (1911), 50-69 (§ 13). I have revised Knott's translation by substituting

annal accounts of Ó Ceallaigh's 1351 hosting fail to note any Scottish aspect.¹⁹⁴

A similar sense of non-interaction between the poets of Ireland and Scotland is evident in Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn's poem beginning 'Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh' ('I have received a present I sought not') (c. 1420), where he describes himself as '*ollamh nachar aithnidh do' shluagh n-Alban*' ('a poet unknown to the folk of Scotland'), suggesting that the Scots would be puzzled by the Lord of the Isles' sending a drinking-cup to an unknown Irish poet (§ 12). Yet Tadhg Óg was evidently a well known poet at the time — hence the Lord's tacit invitation to him to come to Scotland — just as he is still considered a major figure in the classical bardic pantheon.

In this respect the poetry is markedly different from the annals of the period, which often make use of the phrase '*Éire agus Alba*', usually in reference to the death of a chief (almost always Irish) who is described as the greatest man of Ireland and Scotland in his time, or the greatest patron of the poets of Ireland and Scotland,¹⁹⁵ or of a poet (again always Irish) who is described as the greatest poet of Ireland and Scotland.¹⁹⁶ Much more frequently, however, the frame of reference for death-notice is Ireland only,¹⁹⁷ and many of the individuals given the 'Ireland and Scotland' label in

'lengthy' for 'distant' to translate '*cian*'.

¹⁹⁴Michelle O'Riordan, 'Professors and Performers and "others of their kind": Contextualising the Irish Bardic Poet', *The Irish Review*, 23 (1998), 73-88; *AClon*, *AFM*, *ALC* 1351; *AU* 1387; *AU* 1433; *AFM* 1451; 'The Annals of Ireland, from the Year 1443 to 1468, translated from the Irish by Dudley Fribisse', ed. by John O'Donovan, in *Miscellany of the Irish Archeological Society*, I (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1846), pp. 198-302 (p. 227, entry for 1451); see also *ALC* 1540, 1549.

¹⁹⁵*AClon* 1407; *AConn* 1407.5, 1410.13; *AFM* 1482; *AU* 1433; *AU* 1395, 1443, 1444, 1458, 1480, 1481, 1482; see also *ALC* 1582. The only two Scottish Gaels who appear to receive this treatment are Alasdair Mac Domhnaill, '*in fer rob ferr einch 7 maithis etir Éirinn 7 Albain*' ('the most generous and bounteous man of Ireland and Scotland together') (*AConn*, *AU*, *ALC*, *AFM* 1299) and Aonghas Óg Mac Domhnaill, murdered by an Irish harper in Inverness in 1490, as '*ant aon nduine dob ferr a n [E]rinn 7 a nAlpain*' ('the single best man in Ireland and Scotland') (*AConn*, *ALC* 1490).

¹⁹⁶*AConn* 1441.2, 1448.3, 1476.5; *AFM* 1185, 1448, 1507, 1536, 1554; *ALC* 1181, 1185, 1476, 1536, 1553; *AU* 1328, 1448, 1476, 1502.

¹⁹⁷E.g. *AClon* 1333, 1384, 1398, 1399; *AConn* 1224.1; 1272.6, 1274.7, 1274.9, 1281.3, 1293.2, 1302.9, 1307.2, 1310.5, 1314.7, 1338.3, 1343.9, 1368.14, 1368.16, 1371.4, 1384.19, 1388.4, 1398.25, 1399.2, 1399.6, 1400.24, 1403.6, 1404.15, 1414.21, 1416.28, 1417.2, 1419.9, 1425.6, 1433.7, 1441.3, 1458.2, 1461.2, 1462.29, 1463.15, 1464.16, 1481.6, 1504.3, 1511.2, 1512.4, 1527.20; *AFM* 1281, 1291, 1306, 1369, 1371, 1395, 1398, 1407, 1416, 1441, 1444; 1451, 1458, 1485, 1503, 1505, 1514, 1518, 1531, 1568, 1595; *ALC* 1272, 1281, 1282, 1293, 1302, 1307, 1338, 1343, 1376, 1383, 1419, 1440, 1458, 1481, 1498, 1504, 1527, 1533, 1535, 1549, 1553, 1555, 1561, 1577, 1579, 1581; *AU* 1306, 1314, 1316, 1336, 1339, 1343, 1345, 1353, 1368, 1372, 1374, 1393, 1407, 1419, 1428, 1431, 1435, 1441, 1450, 1451, 1460, 1462, 1471, 1478, 1481, 1498, 1511, 1512, 1521, 1524, 1528, 1533, 1535, 1536, 1538, 1586; *MIA* Fragment III 1392.16, 1403.11. Interestingly, the death of Tomaltach mac Conchobhair Mac Diarmada in 1458 is described in 'Irish only' terms in all the annals, yet he was evidently patronized by Scottish poets, as shown by Giolla Críost Brúilingeach's surviving poems '*Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn*' and '*Dá urradh i n-iath Éireann*'.

Similar 'Irish only' styling is also predominant among poets and other men of art: e.g. *AClon* 1350, 1404; *AConn* 1350.11, 1356.16, 1371.8, 1385.15, 1399.12, 1443.6, 1461.16, 1469.7, 1474.25, 1476.8, 1502.4,

one set of annals will be described in other annals without any mention of Scotland.¹⁹⁸ As Michelle O’Riordan observes, ‘the tendency to formula in such entries was overwhelming’,¹⁹⁹ and thus these phrases in the annals appear to be entirely rhetorical in nature, perhaps dependent on the vagaries of a particular scribe. Other entries of this kind speak not in terms of Ireland or Scotland but of Ulster, Connacht, Munster, or Leinster; Leath Cuinn or Leath Mogha, the north of Ireland or the east of Ireland; Clann Domhnaill, Cenél Eoghain, or Dal gCais: the choices seem essentially arbitrary.²⁰⁰ The linkage of Ireland and Scotland in such entries cannot, then, be understood as having concrete significance indicating real involvement by these individuals in Scottish cultural life, or as indicating the vitality of a ‘pan-Gaelic’ vision, as has been suggested by some commentators.²⁰¹ A more general reading of the annals demonstrates a striking lack of attention to Scottish affairs in the late medieval period;²⁰² the only Scottish families who are made the subject of annal entries, for example, are the Mac Domhnaills, the Caimbeuls, and the Stewart Kings of Scots, and such references are scattered rather than continual. Yet, empty or not, it is interesting that such ‘Scotland and Ireland’ formulae are hardly ever used in the poetry,²⁰³ even when they might be

1506.3, 1536.6; *AFM* 1317, 1350, 1357, 1375, 1387, 1441, 1450, 1461, 1475, 1476, 1487, 1488, 1490, 1506 1510, 1545, 1556, 1575; *ALC* 1432, 1506, 1507, 1511, 1542, 1543, 1561, 1579, 1582; *AU* 1349, 1372, 1387, 1405, 1419, 1441, 1461, 1462 (Text A), 1498, 1506; *MIA* Fragment III 1395.7, 1405.19.

¹⁹⁸Compare *AU* 1443 with *AConn* 1443.3 (Maghnus Mag Mathgamhna); *AU* 1444 with *AConn* 1444.2 (Aodh Buidhe Ó Néill); *AU* 1458 with *AConn* 1458.3 (An Calbhach Ó Conchobhair); *AU* 1481 with *AConn* 1481.6, *ALC* 1481 (Slaine inghean Conaire Ní Bhriain); *AU*, *AFM* 1482 with *AConn* 1482.11 (Conn mac Aodha Buidhe Ó Néill). In each of these instances *AU* gives a Scottish reference absent from *AConn*; yet no such Scottish references occur in *AU* after 1505. Compare also *AU* 1395 with *AClon*, *AFM* 1395 (fame of Pilip mac Aedha Mag Uidhir). A similar pattern can sometimes be seen with poets. Compare *AConn* 1441.2 with *AFM* 1441 (Maoilín mac Tanaidhe Ó Maoilconaire); *AU* 1502 with *AConn* 1502.4, *AFM* 1501 (Domhnall mac Briain Ó hUiginn); *ALC*, *AFM* 1536 with *AConn* 1536.6 (Tomás Ó hUiginn).

¹⁹⁹O’Riordan, ‘Professors and Performers’, p. 83.

²⁰⁰E.g., *AConn* 1419.24, 1421.4, 1451.2, 1462.20, 1482.11, 1496.3, 1512.4, 1513.3, 1516.13, 1528.3, 1532.11, 1536.3; *AFM* 1352, 1356, 1369, 1421, 1437, 1439, 1455, 1458, 1472, 1503, 1528, 1529, 1536, 1542, 1565, 1568, 1580; *ALC* 1444, 1464, 1466, 1473, 1482, 1505, 1512, 1513, 1516, 1528, 1529, 1532, 1580; *AU* 1310, 1368, 1369, 1474, 1488, 1491, 1501, 1510, 1512, 1519, 1521, 1524, 1528, 1532. *AFM* 1573, recording the death of Giolla-Easbuig, fifth Earl of Argyll, speaks in terms of the Gaels in Scotland, while *AConn* and *ALC* 1529, recording the death of Cailean, third Earl, speak in terms of Argyll; *ALC* 1581, describing the death of Alasdair mac Domhnaill Ballaigh Mac Domhnaill, refers to him as ‘*an mac Albanach is dóchuissidhi bharamhlaidhe, ocus dob oirbertaighi urramhanta, tánic a Connachtuibh re cian daimsir*’ (‘the most hopefully regarded, and bravely distinguished, son of an Albanach that had come into Connacht for a long time’).

²⁰¹E.g. Thomson, *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, pp. 38-39 (suggesting that this usage ‘helps to show that the two countries were regarded as a cultural unit’); Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, p. 252 (contending that the increased frequency of such usages ‘from the later fifteenth century’ ‘is hardly coincidental’).

²⁰²See Duffy, ‘Ireland and the Irish Sea Region’, pp. 67-68.

²⁰³Examples occur in Giolla Íosa Ó Dálaigh’s ‘Damh féin choiglim an Chathuir’ (‘Cathair I reserve for myself’) (c. 1575), § 37 (published in Carney, *Poems on the Butlers*, poem 8 (ll. 1063-66)), where he queries

useful for the purely utilitarian purpose of filling out a line for metrical purposes.

*

A striking feature of bardic poetry touching on the Irish-Scottish connection is the evocative description of travel between Scotland and Ireland. Almost every reference to journeying between the two lands emphasizes the difficulty of the voyage in vivid terms. This perception tends to work a kind of distancing from the Irish standpoint: Scotland seems far away, separated by a great barrier. Although this theme is more extensively developed in Irish poems than Scottish, it is a common motif in the Scottish poems as well — an important counterweight to modern writers' sometimes rosy and simplistic rhetoric about the constant and easy use of the sea as a connecting channel.²⁰⁴

The use of these images and descriptions in the poetry is not a purely literary device, moreover, as demonstrated by occasional glimpses from more straightforwardly historical sources. The *Annals of Ulster* for 1513, for example, record that Aodh Ó Domhnaill returned from a visit to the Scottish court in Edinburgh after '*fagháil cunntaberta moire ar fairci*' ('encountering great peril on the sea').²⁰⁵ *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill* (*The Life of Aodha Ruadh Ó Domhnaill*) gives a vivid description of an army of six hundred redshanks who had come from the Hebrides under Ruairidh Mór Mac Leòid of Harris to fight in Ulster on behalf of Aodh Ruadh in the summer of 1595,²⁰⁶ and goes on to note that the warriors were billeted among Ó Domhnaill's tenants '*go relccet a scís iarna mórshathar muiridhe 7 combtar ellmha a lóinte*' ('until they got rid of their fatigue after the great toil of the sea and their supplies were got ready').²⁰⁷ The annals of the period are replete with accounts of losses at sea, perhaps most dramatically a great disaster in June 1413, when a storm off the coast of Scotland sank six ships belonging to Tuathal Ó Máille, with the loss of

whether the like of Tioboid Buitléir's '*ardbhruigh fial fionn*' ('fair and hospitable great hall') is to be found anywhere '*a bhfiadh Alban nó Éireann*' ('in the land of Scotland or Ireland'), and in Peadair Ó Maolchonaire's poem beginning '*Díol toile caoinmheas Cormaic*' ('Cormac's mild reputation is grounds for pleasure'), § 32d (published in *LCAB*, poem 45 (l. 128)), where he describes Niall Naoighiallach as '*lóchrann Alban is Éireann*' ('guiding light of Scotland and Ireland').

²⁰⁴E.g., Delargy, p. 29 ("The seas but join the lands they do divide").

²⁰⁵The account in *AFM* uses the word *guasacht* (also meaning 'peril') here: '*iar ffaghail guasachta móir for muir*'.

²⁰⁶Quoted above, p. 42.

²⁰⁷Walsh, *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill*, § 55, pp. 98-99.

almost two hundred and fifty lives.²⁰⁸

One of the most illuminating, and certainly the most amusing, presentations of the harshness of the sea journey between Ireland and Scotland appears in the anonymous mid-thirteenth century poem to Aonghas Mór Mac Domhnaill (†1296), great-grandson of Somerled, beginning ‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’ (‘Purchase thy father’s poem, o Aonghas’). The poet urges the new chief to assume his father’s apparent obligation to purchase a poem, but makes clear his deep reluctance actually to come to Scotland to present his composition:

*Tnúth leamsa édáil na n-ollamh
úait, a leómhain Locha Cé:
gá fios an tnúth cáir, a chara,
do mhúch gráin an mhara mé.*

I envy the masters of the craft for the wealth
they win from thee, o lion of Loch Cé:
who knows whether it be fitting envy, my
friend — horror of the sea has stifled me.

*Coire dhá Ruadh, a rí Tuama,
atá eadroinn, eagail linn,
Coire Bhreacáin blagh dar gconair,
do ghabh creatán omhain inn.*

Between us, o King of Tuam, is Coire dhá
Ruadh, I fear it: Coire Bhreacáin is part of
our path, trembling terror has laid
hold of me.

*Ní lugha as cáis Coire Bhreacáin
do bheith romhainn, a rí Ceóil:
a úabhar an tann as teasbhach
ag sdúaghadh crann seasmhach seóil.*

Not less is it a trouble that Coire Bhreacáin
is before me, o King of Ceól,
its pride when it is sultry
bends the firm masts.

*Canaim ar omhan an anfaidh,
a fhir Chola, charuid mná,
tar an gcúan go Áonghas Íle
trúagh nach áonfhras tíre²⁰⁹ atá.*

I declare, for dread of the storm,
o ruler of Coll, beloved of women,
would that there were but one shower of
land over the sea to Aonghas of Islay.

*An dara cos ’gá cur romhum,
a rí Leodhais, isin luíng,
an dara troigh thiar ré taca,
ag tríall soir, a dhata dhuinn.*

One foot I put forward into the ship,
o King of Lewis, the other foot behind
as a support, when going to the east,
thou comely brown-haired one.

*Dobadh olc meisi ar mhuir ngáibhthigh
do ghabháil ráimhe, a rosg gorm:
bím ar abhainn chiúin ar creathaibh,
mar ghabhuim sdiúir eathair orm.*

I should be an ill hand at the oar
against the perilous sea, o blue-eyed prince:
on a calm river I tremble when
I take charge of a boat’s rudder.

*Gá córughadh budh cóir orum
ní fhe[a]dar ré ttocht tar tuinn:
ní fheadar an budh fhearr suidhe,
eagal leam luighi san luíng.*

How to settle myself I know not,
when going over the wave:
I know not whether it were better to sit,
I fear to lie down in the ship.

²⁰⁸ *AConn* 1413.8, *AFM* 1413; see also *AConn*, *ALC* 1251; *AClon*, *AConn*, *AFM*, *ALC* 1268; *AClon* 1288; *ALC* 1357; *AFM*, *AU* 1396; *AConn* 1417.4; *AFM* 1507; *AConn* 1517.2, *ALC*, *AFM*, *AU* 1517.

²⁰⁹ Professor William Gillies suggests (personal communication) emending to ‘*aonros tíre*’ ‘a single promontory of land’ here, which is more concretely meaningful than Bergin’s version.

*As é mo ghreim ghabhuim chugum
chongmhas an loing, a fhlaith Fáil:
go nach brisi tolg na tuinne,
misi is bord na luingi um láimh.*

*Fiarfaighthior 'nar fearann dúthaigh
dénamh na loingi, a fhlaith Gall:
ní mór as léir as don fhairrgi
don thsléibh chas as airde ann.*

*Dámadh tír go turgháil gréini,
gáibhthighi leam dar do láimh,
a bhfuil, a Áonghas, go hAlbain
do mhuir bhráonghas bhalgaigh bháin.*

It is the grip wherewith I draw it towards me
that holds the ship together, o Lord of Fál:
lest the surging billow should break it,
I keep my hand on the ship's gunwale.

In my native district men ask about the form
of a ship, o prince of the Islanders:
little of the sea is visible from the highest
steep mountain in it.

Were there nothing but land as far
as the sunrise, more perilous, by thy hand,
Aonghas, I deem the green-sprayed
billowy-white sea from this to Scotland.

(§§ 7-16)

In a similar vein, if not quite as plaintively, Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn seeks to duck a sea voyage to Scotland in his poem to Alasdair mac Domhnaill Mac Domhnaill, Lord of the Isles from 1420 to 1449, beginning 'Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh'. The poet recognizes that Alasdair's unsolicited gift, a drinking-cup, represents an invitation to come to Scotland — an invitation he declines:

*Aithnim is dom iarraidh soir
táinig chugam an cornsoin;
re chois a mbliadhna do bheinn
Iarla Rois acht nach roicheim.*

*Tuigim féin nach dolta dhamh
d'iarraidh cruith i gcrích n-Alban
gen go mbeadh cuan oile ann
acht Coire Dhá Ruadh romham.*

*Cúis eile nar áirim mé
bhacas díom dul tar fairrge
ar n-aireine re hiath Cuinn
ag triath dhaighfhine Dhomhnuill.*

I recognize that it was to invite me
over thither that this cup is given me;
this very year I would (fain) be
with the Earl of Ross — but I cannot.

I feel I cannot go over seeking wealth
in Scotland, even though there be
no other sea to cross besides
Coire Dhá Ruadh.

There is another reason I have not yet
mentioned which prevents me from
crossing the sea, namely, my thought
of Conn's Land belonging in future
time to Mac Domhnaill's brave host!

(§§ 13-15)

Other evocations of the sea voyage between Scotland and Ireland are somewhat less vivid, but they uniformly present a vision of the journey as lengthy and difficult; never is there any hint of casualness in the matter. In his poem beginning 'Tugadh oirne easbhaidh mhór' ('A great loss has been brought upon me') (before 1500), a

lament for his son Fearchar, who has been killed by the *Goill* while on a poetic *cuairt* in Ireland, the poet Máol Chíaráin describes Sruth na Maoile as ‘*an gleannmhuir go ngné rúaidh*’ (‘the chasmed sea of red aspect’) and describes his own subsequent journey across it as a slow or tedious one (‘*mall*’) (§§ 8b, 7b). Similarly, as noted above, in his ‘*Filidh Éireann go haoiteach*’, Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh notes that the poets of Scotland have had to undergo ‘*eachtra chian*’ (‘a lengthy journey’) (§ 13c) in order to reach the patron Uilliam Ó Ceallaigh’s court in Connacht.

In his panegyric to Tomaltach Mac Diarmada (†1458) beginning ‘*Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn*’ (‘It is the hand of the one man in Ireland who will succour’), the Scottish poet Giolla Críost Brúilingeach places himself in the opposite position to that of Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn in his ‘*Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh*’, seeking the gift of a harp and describing the difficult journey he has undertaken to reach Tomaltach’s court:

*Tánag d’iarraidh athchuinge oraibh,
a hAlbain, a fholt mar ór,
ar an chuan ghagánach ghailbheach
uar bhradánach mhaighreach mhór.*

I have come to crave a boon from thee,
from Scotland, thou with hair like gold,
upon the stormy sea of clustering wave-
tops, chill and huge, the home of grilse
and salmon.

*Cláirseach ar leath dom dhán damhsa
tabhair mar iarraim, a rí [. . .]*

A special harp for my poem,
grant me as I request, o king [. . .]

(§§ 21-22 (ll. 441-46; translation amended))

The seventeenth-century Scottish poet Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin speaks of the distance between Scotland and Ireland — indeed the most distant part of Ireland, south Munster, where he was then based — in more personal terms:

*Monuar nach éintír iath Lodhairn
is Leath Mogha na múr ccorr
go breith dom úidh ar na hEaradh
's bheith dúinn gach re sealadh sonn. [. . .]*

Alas that Scotland and Leath Mogha
of the peaked ramparts are not united,
that I might alternately give my attention
to Harris and sojourn here. [. . .]

*Leath mo thoile ag triall go Leodhas
's an leath oile ag anmhuin tiar
go tabhair m[e]jisi ar mhoing moire
treisi roinn mo thoile ag triall.*

Half my mind journeys to Lewis,
whilst the other half remains in the west;
more pronounced is the division of my mind
as I proceed — till it bear me out to sea (?)²¹⁰

²¹⁰‘Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad’, § 15, § 5 (translation revised).

Lewis and Harris seem far away indeed from this Cork perspective, and the barrier of the sea appears crucial: the distance would somehow not be as great if the land were continuous (*éintír*). A similar perception of distance is apparent in Niall Mac Mhuirich's 'Labhradh Tríán Chonghuil go ciúin', written in Uist and dispatched to Ulster as part of the Disputation of the Red Hand, where Niall emphasizes that the messenger delivering the poem is embarking on a lengthy journey (*urchuir imchian*) (§ 23b).

These attitudes towards the sea are properly to be taken as negative and apprehensive; by way of comparison, smooth and gentle seas, like smooth and gentle land, have consistently positive connotations in the poetry, often being associated with just sovereignty and successful kingship. In an anonymous address to Séamas mac Aonghais Mac Domhnaill of Knockrinsay (†1626), for example, the poet praises Kintyre as '*eang abaigh fán míne moir*' ('that fertile land around which the sea is smoothest'),²¹¹ and Donegal is praised for the same quality in Eóghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaire's poem beginning 'A bhean fuair faill ar an bhfeart' ('O woman that has found the tomb unguarded') (c. 1610).²¹² On the other hand, when nature grieves the death of a chief, '*ní faghtar muir 'na muir mhín*' ('no sea is left smooth').²¹³

This fearful negativity is also expressed in the context of other sea journeys besides those between Ireland and Scotland: this treatment appears to reflect deeper Gaelic cultural attitudes towards the sea more generally.²¹⁴ In his poem to Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill following his flight for Spain in the wake of the Battle of Kinsale in 1601, beginning 'Rob soruidh t'eachtra, a Aodh Ruaidh' ('Happy be thy journey, Aodh Ruadh'), Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaire wishes Aodh Ruadh a safe journey '*tar muir nduaibhsigh ndoighiordha*' '*ngríste nguasachtaigh*' ('across the gloomy raging

²¹¹'Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais', § 2d. I have substituted 'fertile' for Bergin's 'vigorous' to translate *abaigh*.

²¹²Published in Eleanor Knott, 'Mac an Bhaire's Elegy on the Ulster Lords', *Celtica*, 5 (1960), 161-71 (§ 4a).

²¹³'San Sbáinn do toirneadh Teamhair' ('In Spain has Tara been laid low') (Domhnall mac Eoghuin Ó Dálaigh, 1618), § 13a (published in R.A. Breatnach, 'Elegy on Donal O'Sullivan Beare (†1618)', *Éigse*, 7 (1953), 162-81). A more powerful expression of grief expressed through stormy seas is found in 'S cianail, gruamach, coimheach guarach | A d'fhàs am fuar mhon ard', where the strait between Duart and the mainland is said to be '*salach, molach, baileach*' ('boisterous, rugged, high rolling') since the death of the chief's wife, and the chief's plight is a wretched one: '*Chaill thu iùl a' chuain ghàbhaidh | An uair a b'àirde dò-shion*' ('You lost the compass of the perilous ocean | When the storm was at its height') (§§ 1c, 4g-h) (revisions to text and translation).

²¹⁴See Clancy and Márkus, pp. 157-60, for a discussion of 'sea-bound exile' in earlier Gaelic tradition.

'roiling perilous sea').²¹⁵ Similarly, in his poem beginning 'Maith an sgéal do sgaoil 'nar measg' ('Good are the tidings that have spread amongst us'), Niall Mac Mhuirich celebrates the chief of Clann Raghnaill's return from France in 1696 '*tar monghair mara nach mín*' ('across a roaring sea that is not smooth') (§ 1c).

An especially interesting example occurs in a poem composed by Maol Pádraig Mac Naimhin on the imprisonment of Tomás Mág Shamhradháin in 1338, beginning 'Ní beag an léansa ar Leath Cuinn' ('Heavy is this affliction on Leath Cuinn'), in which the poets of Ireland react to the news of Tomás's capture by fleeing eastward across the sea. Their intended destination in the east is not specified, though it may well have been Scotland:

*Ó 'd-chiad i n-idh fhear nGaillmhe
do-ní gach cliar comhairle,
tocht ar cuan mar nar lúdh linn
is cúl man-uar re hÉirinn.*

Seeing the Man of Galway in chains,
all of us, poets, resolved to go to sea
— a thing we liked not! —
and to turn our backs alas! on Éire.

*Do bhí ag éigsibh Inse Fáil
d'éis dreagoin Ghaoil do ghabháil
ag triall tar searbsháile soir
mian dearmháile ar na dámhoibh.*

When the Dragon of Gál was captured,
a mournful desire seized the poets of Inis
Fáil, all their poet bands, passing over
the salt seas to the East.

*Dámha Fódla láimh do láimh
do-niad chomhairle an chéadáir;
druim re braontaradh chlár Chuinn
rob áil d'aontaghadh aguinn.*

The poet-bands of Fódla, all of them,
take counsel forthwith;
we all with a single wish choose to leave
the soft fruitfulness of the Plain of Conn.

*Gluaistear le fileadhaibh Fáil
imirche aidhbhseach anbháil,
gan rian coinnmhe [sgeanma] ar sgoil,
go ndearna an Coimthe a gcabhoir.*

The poets of Fál set forth
on a dreadful terrible exile;
terrors threatened the scholars left
unprovided until the Lord sent help.

*Gach neach uainn 's a cheann ma choim
ag faisgin an chuain chugoinn,
do fhuair a moludh an mhoir
uainn re homhun an anfoidh.*

As we come in sight of the sea,
each of us has his head sunk on his breast:
the sea got a song of praise from us
in our fear of storm!

*Mar dob áil linn tocht ar tuinn
táinig glaoth cudhnóidh chuguinn;
snaidhm do tháth na dtuath ag teacht,
gairm chuach re cách a chloisdeacht.*

While we were thus anxious to set forth
on the wave, consoling cry reached us that
the binding of the land's reunion was at hand;
the news was as the cuckoo's cry for us all.

²¹⁵ §§ 2d, 16d (published in Osborn Bergin, 'Looking Towards Spain', *Studies*, 10 (1921), 73-78 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 3)) (translation revised).

*Éisdmid ann sin — suairc an glór —
neach gá rádha rinn iompódh;
binne an ghlóir do labhradh leis,
ba cóir adhradh dá aithris.*

We then heard — how pleasant the word!
— a man telling us to return;
the sweetness of that word of his,
we should keep telling of it forever.²¹⁶

This tale of flight must surely be entirely imaginary, but nevertheless serves as a fascinating illustration of bardic attitudes.

On the other hand, some element of stereotype and convention is certainly at work here as well: just as images of the land in bardic poetry tend to be drawn from a relatively limited, often-reused inventory of terms and formulas, treatments of the sea seem to require presentation and description with these tested, familiar styles. Similarly, the posture of the daunting sea journey not undertaken allows the poet to address his patron from afar, a well rehearsed device in itself.

There is also a minority strain in the poetry, both bardic and especially in the Scottish Gaelic vernacular, where a more rounded and realistic view of the sea is given, and, in particular, where a chief's skill and mastery at sea is celebrated. Perhaps the most striking Irish example is the anonymous poem beginning 'Bráthair don iocht an t-oineach' ('Honour is a brother to clemency'), presented to Tuathal Ó Máille (†1416), head of the Ó Máilles, long the pre-eminent sea kindred on the west coast of Ireland. The poet celebrates vigorously the raids and plundering by Tuathal and his warriors around the coasts of Ireland and Britain:

*Ní bhía an tonn-mhuir gan treabhadh,
th'fhoghlaidh do sía dá siobhal;
ge atá a theagh' na thigh fholamh,
fear foladh fil gan ionadh. [. . .]*

The wave-tossed sea will not be
unploughed, your reivers set out to travel it;
although his house is an empty house
his enemy (?) is without an abode.

*Leomhain an oirir úaine,
eolaigh oirir na Sbéinne,
ag búain chruidh do Cheann Tíre,
gearr míle ar muir d'íbh Máille. [. . .]*

They are the lions of the green sea,
the men acquainted with the coast of Spain:
when taking cattle from Kintyre a mile on
the sea is short to the Ó Máilles.

*Ar maoilinn an tráicht toinngil
maoidhim isin bháirc bheinngil:
cosg laoich dob usa i n-iorghail,
diongmhuidh tusa an ngaoith gheimhridh.*

On the slope of the bright-waved strand,
I boast, in the white-peaked barque,
you ward off the wintry wind,
a more difficult thing than to check a
warrior in combat.

²¹⁶Published in McKenna, *The Book of Magauran*, poem 22 (§§ 18-24, ll. 2848-75).

*Móid re t'oireacht ní hiontnúith
ód roineart, a óig fhalt-úir,
sibh ag léim do linn bhreic-mhín
fa sheintír Ching fhéil Artúir.*

Nobody desires to conspire against your
people as a result of your great strength, o soft
haired warrior, as you make an onslaught
from the smooth speckled sea against
the old country of generous King Arthur.

(§§ 21, 25, 27, 29; translation revised)

Unfortunately, this is the only poem to an Ó Máille chief known to have survived; the circumstances underlying its composition were unusual, and it appears that the kindred was not generally able to retain or support poets of the highest rank, the composers of the kinds of poetry preserved in surviving manuscripts.²¹⁷ A larger corpus of Ó Máille poetry might well show a broader and more diverse Irish view of the sea and seafaring.

This alternative view of the sea also appears in some seventeenth-century Scottish bardic poetry, notably Cathal Mac Mhuirich's 'Foraois éigeas Innse Gall' (§ 7) and, especially, Niall Mac Mhuirich's 'Fáilte d'ar n-Ailín, rígh na Raghnaillach' ('Welcome to our Ailean, king of Clann Raghnaill') (c. 1686), where Niall praises the chief's skill on land and sea:

*Ar ttriath da n-athbrosdadh ar ath gan uchmosgladh
's do-níodh ar léirg chúain san chithfeasgar
frithfhreasdal ar a feirg do sdúiaigh gan sruth
fhosgadh ge magh lán a long gan lathbhasgadh
re athasgnamh na ttonn go trágh gan tothosnadh*

Driving them forth again at a ford without provoking a groan
and on the open sea on a showery evening
counteracting the wrath of the billow of unchecked current
although his ship was full, sheltering her without harm to warriors,
in recrossing the waves to the shore there were no cries from women.

Generally speaking, vernacular Scottish Gaelic poetry presents a complex and varied view: sometimes portraying the sea as something to be feared, sometimes as something to be mastered with skill, and occasionally even as something to take delight in, as with several of Iain Lom's poems, including 'A Dhomhnaill an Dùin' ('O Domhnall of the Fortress') ('Òran do Dhomhnall Gorm Òg'/'A Song to Domhnall Gorm Òg')²¹⁸ and,

²¹⁷ Simms, 'Bardic Poetry as a Historical Source', p. 67.

²¹⁸ Published in *BG*, ll. 5942-6019, and in *OIL*, ll. 104-81 (§§ 14-17)

especially, in Murchadh Mór mac mhic Mhurchaidh Mac Coinnich's well known 'Tha m'aighe fo ghruaim' ('My spirits are under gloom') ('An Làir Dhonn'/'The Brown Mare') (c. 1650).²¹⁹

Despite these qualifications, however, a certain sense of discomfort remains: the sea does seem to have operated as a physical barrier and, more importantly, a psychological barrier to interaction between the two countries. This must surely have been a factor of considerable importance in the overall relationship.

This sense of Scotland as distant and hard to reach, moreover, seems qualitatively different from the sense of regionalism conveyed in Irish bardic poetry, especially Ulster poetry. Here, although a regional identity is commonly expressed, most obviously in defensive, military terms, there is no feeling of separation from, or non-interaction with, other parts of Ireland.

A poem conveying an especially strong feeling of Ulster's separateness is Maoilsheachluinn na n-Uirsgéal Ó hUiginn's 'Foraire Uladh ar Aodh' ('Ulster's guarding is given to Aodh') (c. 1490),²²⁰ in which Aodh mac Airt Mág Aonghusa is described as vigorously patrolling Ulster's boundaries and coasts against all outsiders, both *Goill* and the people of '*críoch Chonaire is Chuire Chaisil*' ('the land of Conaire and Corc of Caiseal', i.e. Munster) (§ 4c). Indeed, Aodh is explicitly compared to Cú Chulainn as defender of Ulster against another province of Ireland, here Munster (§ 30). Yet the feeling is precisely one of closeness and connection; there is a sense that the inhabitants of these other places are near, familiar and ever capable of producing a sudden attack, and it is this that drives the vigilant defence. To similar effect is Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa's 'Fúar liom an adhaighsi dh'Aodh' ('Too cold I deem this night for Aodh') (1600),²²¹ where the poet worries about the harsh conditions faced by his patron Aodh Mág Uidhir (†1600) on a campaign in Munster, described in one stanza as '*críoch choimhoidheach*' (a 'foreign land') (§5b). Yet the overall presentation of Munster is as a real and immediate place; and it was, of course,

²¹⁹Published in *BG*, II. 5794-5865. See Sorley MacLean, 'Notes on sea-imagery in seventeenth century Gaelic poetry', in Sorley MacLean, *Ris a' Bhruthaich: The Criticism and Prose Writings of Sorley MacLean*, ed. by William Gillies (Stornoway: Acair, 1985), pp. 83-105.

²²⁰Published in Lambert McKenna, 'To Mág Aonghusa', *The Irish Monthly*, 55 (1927), 435-38, and in *DD*, poem 96; see Damien Ó Muirí, 'Tírghrá agus Grá Tíre i bhFilíocht Chúige Uladh', in *Éire Banba Fódla*, ed. by Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, Léachtaí Cholm Cille, 13 (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1982), 166-90.

²²¹Published in Osborn Bergin, 'A Winter Campaign', *Studies*, 10 (1921), 417-21 (repr. in *IBP*, poem 29).

involvement in its practical political affairs that drew Aodh there.

A more typical example of the regionalism of bardic poetry is Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa's 'Teallach einigh iath Laighean' ('A house of hospitality is the land of Laighin') (c. 1595), composed for Féilim mac Fiachaidh Ó Broin, in which the supremacy of Leinster for hosting and patronage is exalted more or less according to convention. Féilim is also portrayed, if rather less vividly, as a defender of his territory, and again compared to Cú Chulainn (§§ 29-33). Significantly, the poem's imagery moves between Leinster and all-Ireland figures: Féilim takes up the burden of patronage when the hospitality of Fál's men become exhausted ('*caitheamh einigh bhfear bhFáil*', § 23a), and he is proclaimed the destroyer of Ireland's great woe ('*díoghbadh anorchra d'Éirinn*', § 44d).

Eochaidh's famous poem 'Atám i gcás idir dhá chomhairle' ('I am in a dilemma between two counsels') (c. 1590)²²² is also a useful illustration of the relationship between different parts of Ireland as presented in bardic poetry. The poet is torn between staying in Munster, where he has gone to put the final polish on his bardic training, or returning home to Ulster and his patron Aodh Mág Uidhir. Journeying between the two places is not portrayed as difficult or threatening, and both inspire praise and affection, though, predictably, more of both is lavished upon Ulster. To similar effect is Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird's 'Slán agaibh, a fhiora Mumhan' ('Farewell to you, men of Munster') (c. 1600(?)), where the poet praises Munster warmly and effusively as he prepares to return to his native Tír Chonaill.²²³

One of the clearest illustrations of the relationship between different parts of Ireland as presented in bardic verse is the *Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh*, the seventeenth-century disputation over the primacy of the two traditional halves of Ireland. A superficial view of this disputation might take it as a demonstration of rivalry and alienation between different parts of the country, but it is actually better understood as showing the tightness of their connection and inter-relationship. In seeking to advance the causes of their own regions, the participating poets demonstrate detailed knowledge of and keen interest in other, rival parts of Ireland. Nothing in the surviving corpus shows anything even remotely comparable for Scotland, whether by Scottish or Irish

²²²Published in *DD*, poem 70, and Knott, *Irish Syllabic Poetry*, pp. 72-77.

²²³Published in Osborn Bergin, 'Farewell to Munster', *An Reult*, 1, no. 4 (1925), 24-25 (repr. in *IBP*,

poets.

*

One of the most striking features of the treatment of Scotland in Irish bardic poetry is its apparent discomfort and uncertainty at the very existence of Scottish Gaeldom. Again and again, and in a wide variety of ways, the Gaelic presence in Scotland is presented as an unstable, impermanent phenomenon — something that will, or at least should, come to an end with the return of the Scottish Gaels to Ireland, which is understood as the only natural and normal place for Gaels to exist. The dominant theme is exile, and the semantic field of the poetry is studded with a range of words conveying unfamiliarity, alienation, and disconnection. In this vision, Scotland is no ‘*dúthaigh mhátharbhunaidh*’ (‘original-motherland’) for the Gaels, but ‘*andúthchas allmhardha*’ (‘a strange, foreign land’) where they do not belong.²²⁴ The propagation of such a vision a thousand years and more after the Gaels began to settle in Scotland is a remarkable demonstration of the strikingly conservative, Hibernocentric worldview of the bardic orders.

Perhaps the clearest and most distilled statement of this understanding is given in Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh’s poem to Ragnall Mac Domhnaill, first Earl of Antrim (†1636), which begins with the remarkable first line ‘Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochlainnaigh’ (perhaps best translated as ‘These Hebrideans are Irishmen indeed’):

*Tír dúthaigh cláir chríchfhionn Mhonaídh
dháibh níor dhúthaigh mhátharbhunaidh;
fan tír fhoirbhte fhéithinnbhearaigh
díbh níor ghoirthe achd gnáthallmhuraigh.*

The land of the plain of fair-bordered
Monadh was for them no original-
motherland; in that perfect land
of calm estuaries they could be styled
only as mere foreigners.²²⁵

Again and again Irish poetry depicts Gaels in Scotland as exiles, most directly in its treatment of individual Irish Gaels who find themselves in Scotland for one reason or another. Colm Cille often reconstructed as the first of these exiles, as in the anonymous pre-classical poem from the early twelfth century beginning ‘Dá mada liom

poem 7).

²²⁴ ‘Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochlainnaigh’, § 6b; ‘Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain’, § 11d.

²²⁵ §6. Translations from this poem are based on McKenna’s editions and on Mícheál B. Ó Mainnín, “‘The Same in Origin and Blood’: Bardic Windows on the Relationship between Irish and Scottish Gaels, c. 1200-1650”, *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 38 (1999), 1-52 (pp. 23-25), with some minor alterations

Alba uile’ (‘If all of Scotland were mine’), styled as Colm Cille’s farewell to Ireland, where the saint is made to declare ‘*saoth liom mo thoisg ar ardmhuir | ag triall go hAlbain mbroinigh*’ (‘a tribulation for me is my journey across the high sea | travelling to Alba of the peaks’), where he is to be cast amidst an alien people (*anbhfine*).²²⁶

In later centuries Irish Gaels in Scotland, like the poets Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh and Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, readily adopt this posture of the exile: for them Scotland is no extension of Ireland but an alien, alienating place. Having fled Ireland for Scotland after murdering his patron Domhnall Ó Domhnaill’s tax collector in 1213,²²⁷ Muireadhach Albanach begs Ó Domhnaill to take him back home on the first boat Ó Domhnaill sends out from Ireland; in a later poem, apparently composed after fifteen unfulfilling years away from Ireland and its munificent patronage, Muireadhach vents fears that he is no longer known in Ireland after his lengthy ‘*amhsuine*’ (literally ‘hired service’).²²⁸ Fearghal Óg, visiting Scotland in 1581 in connection with the diplomatic initiatives of a later Ó Domhnaill chief, echoes the famous first line of ‘Dá mada liom Alba uile’ and prays not to die in Scotland, where he cannot receive the Mass:

*Dámadh liom uile a hór bog
dá bhfaghúinn a bhfuil d’argod
i gcrích bhraonúair na mbeann bhfionn
do b’fhearr aonúair an t-Aifríonn. [. . .]*

Had I all [Scotland’s] smooth gold and
if I could get all the silver
in this cool fresh land of fair peaks —
better once to hear Mass than it all!

*Ó nach faicim é innte
an corp diadha doimhillte
fairche ghrianfhuinn na ngéag gcuir
iarruim gan m’éag i nAlbain.*

As I see not in this
sunny-earthed lawn of planted trees
God’s imperishable body
I pray I may not die in Scotland.²²⁹

of my own.

²²⁶Published in O’Rahilly, *Measgra Dánta*, II, poem 46 (§ 12c-d, 10d, ll. 47-48, 40). To similar effect is the slightly earlier poem on Columba’s ‘exile’, again phrased in the first person singular, beginning ‘Robad mellach, a meic mo Dé’ (‘It would be pleasant, o Son of my God’) (published in Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics: Eighth to Twelfth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998 [1956]), pp. 66-69, and in James Carney, *Medieval Irish Lyrics Selected and Translated with The Irish Bardic Poet: A study in the relationship of Poet and Patron* (Mountrath, Portlaoise: Dolmen Press, 1985), poem 35). Here the saint is presented as being ‘*taideóir toirseach*’ ‘*san tír ainéoil*’ (‘tearful and sad in a strange land’) (§3d, c).

²²⁷AFM 1213.

²²⁸A Dhomhnaill, *deadhlan fá shíodh* (‘O Domhnall, let us part in peace’) (c. 1220), § 11 (published in appendix to Quiggin, ‘Prologomena’, pp. 130-32, and, in part, with an improved edition, in Ó Cuív, ‘Eachtra Mhuireadhaigh Í Dhálaigh’, pp. 60-61); ‘Cian ó d’ibheas digh ndearmaid’, § 11d.

²²⁹‘Dursan mh’eachtra go hAlbain’, §§ 7, 21 (translation revised).

Fearghal Óg expresses his absence from Ireland in a different way in his poem beginning ‘Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn’ (‘A blessing westward from me to Ireland’). This poem is a fairly conventional praise of Ireland from afar, taking in its different parts, of the kind produced by exiles in England and the Continent; its significance here is that being in Scotland is apparently ‘absence from Ireland’ in just the same way, and is not tempered by being in another ‘Gaelic’ place. Giolla Brighde Albanach’s ‘Fada dhamh druim re hÉirinn’ is in much the same vein as ‘Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn’, lending support to the view that Giolla Brighde was not actually Scottish but an Irishman who spent considerable time in Scotland. The opening line of this poem is interesting in itself, for it echoes Colm Cille in another way, suggesting the famous by-name *cùl ri Éirinn* (‘back to Ireland’) that the saint was said to have adopted as a symbol of his separation from Ireland.²³⁰

The theme of exile is expressed more explicitly in a series of poems by Irish poets to Scottish chiefs — all, significantly, members of Clann Domhnaill — where the Gaelic presence in Scotland is portrayed as some kind of military expedition or campaign, an inherently temporary venture. The Scottish Gaels themselves are presented here as exiles who should return home, both as a matter of right and for the purpose of rescuing Ireland. This depiction thus echoes the role of Scotland in earlier mythology and history, in which various kings and warriors, most obviously the Collas, take flight from Ireland to Scotland for refuge or assistance,²³¹ and foreshadows the theme of the saviour coming over the sea that becomes pre-eminent in seventeenth and eighteenth century Gaelic poetry.

The use of such terminology and casting cannot be considered to demonstrate the poets’ genuine assessment of the social and political realities in the late medieval period, but it is nevertheless worth examining this rhetoric at face value, as in this example from Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn’s ‘Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh’, a classic example of this strain in the poetry:

²³⁰This tradition is noted in ‘Dá mada liom Alba uile’, § 17d.

²³¹See W.J. Watson, ‘The History of Gaelic in Scotland’, *TGSI*, 37 (1934-36), 115-35 (p. 122); *FFÉ*, II, 243-44, 359-65, 383-85. Fearghal mac Lughaidh Mac Eochadha speaks in this vein in enumerating a series of historical examples in counseling his chief, describing the three Collas as being in exile (*ionnarbadh*) in Scotland, ‘*s tuatha fionnAlban fúthoibh*’ (‘with the lands of fair Scotland under them’), before they returned to Ireland to prosecute their claim to the kingship of Ireland. ‘Égcóir do fógradh Féilim’ (‘It is an injustice that Féilim has been proclaimed [a rebel]’), §§ 24-26 (published in Mac Airt, *Leabhar Branach*, poem 57 (ll. 5426-37)).

*Cúis eile nar áirim mé
bhacas díom dul tar fairrge
ar n-aireine re hiath Cuinn
ag triath dhaighfhine Dhomhnuill.*

*Síol gColla Uais nochan fhuil
acht ar amhsaine i n-Albain;
a chairte ciodh nach osglann
cion ga aicme ar Alostrann. [. . .]*

*Mithidh dhóibh dluthaghadh rinn;
is é a n-adhbhar a hÉirinn
na sluaigh a hinnsibh Alban
a sinnsir uainn d'ionnarbadh.*

*Gaol re huaislibh aicme Cuinn
a-tá ag seabhcaibh síl Domhnuill;
nach truagh ealta dar n-éanaibh
uann ar eachtra i n-oiléanaibh. [. . .]*

*Leis Banbha do bhuain a glas
an tí dá dtabhrad ceannas;
moille a thabhaigh ag teacht rinn,
tearc 'n-a aghaidh fa Éirinn. [. . .]*

*Aithris a ndearna is tír thall
Colla Uais nar ob chomhlann
faghair ó bhfuil ar a shliocht;
a-noir do thabhaigh treiseacht. [. . .]*

*Géabhaidh Mac Domhnaill Dúin Breagh
ráth Logha ar lorg a shinnsiar;
do-ghéabha lios Eamhna as
sgéala dearbha an fios fuaras.*

There is another reason I have not yet mentioned which prevents me from crossing the sea, namely, my thought of Conn's Land belonging in future time to Mac Domhnaill's brave host!

The race of Colla Uais is only on a campaign in Scotland; do not his family papers tell Alostrann of the love which his own folk (in Ireland) bear him?

'Tis time for the folk in Alba's isles to join us; the reason for their not being in Ireland is that their ancestors were driven forth from us.

The hawks of Domhnaill's race are akin to the nobles of Conn's race — a pity a flock of our birds should be away from us on an expedition in the islands.

To free Banbha from bondage is the privilege of him to whom they (men of Banbha) give headship; his slowness in claiming her is to our disadvantage; few will oppose him.

Undaunted Colla Uais too came from the East to seize the power; let those of his race there now imitate his exploit.

Like his ancestors Mac Domhnaill of the Fort of the Breagha will seize the Fort of Lugh; sure news is what I have heard, it says he will possess the Fort of Eamhain.

(§§ 15-16, 18-19, 26, 30; translation amended)

Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn expresses a similar sense of abnormality in the Gaelic presence in Scotland in his poem to Somhairle Buidhe Mac Domhnaill (†1590) beginning 'Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain' ('Long has Fódla had a claim upon Alba'), urging the descendants of Colla Uais to return to Ireland like the descendants of his younger brothers Colla dhá Chríoch and Colla Meann, with the absence of this senior branch being the claim (*cóir*) invoked in the first line that Ireland holds over Scotland:

*Na trí Colla, críoch a sgéal,
clann Eochaidh díomsoigh Dhoimléan,
déanamh dóibh ar fhiadh nAlban,
triar ris nár chóir comhardadh.*

*Dias don triúr do theacht i lle
go crích Bhreagh na mbeann sídhe;
rogha an tsluaigh i Moigh Mhonaigh
ó shoin uainn ar n-anamhain.*

*Longna do fhuilngeadar féin,
fir mhaordha na n-arm n-aignmhéil,
Colla 'sa shéinshliocht ó shoin,
a n-eighriocht orra d'easbhoidh.*

*Créad fa tiobhradh clann Cholla,
ar son ar fhás eatorra,
tar magh mbarrúrchas mBanbha
tal d'andúthchas allmhardha?*

The three Collas, children of haughty
Eochaidh Doimhléan, this is the end of
their story: they went to the land of Alba,
three with whom it were unfitting to vie.

Two of the three came hither to Bregia's
land of fairy hills; the choicest of the host
have ever since remained away from us
in the Plain of Monadh.

It is strange that Colla himself and his
ancient race, stately men with perilous
weapons, from that time suffered
their inheritance to be lacking to them.

Why should the Children of Colla,
for whatever arose between them,
render allegiance to a strange, foreign
land rather than to Banbha's plain of
brightly waving crops? (§§ 8-11)

The theme of deliverance is seen in this poem as well, in a parable of Caesar's leaving Rome and journeying to Spain, only to encounter there a beautiful woman — the figure of Rome — with streams of tears down her bright cheek, reproaching him for abandoning her:

*'Caomhna longphuirt nách libh féin,
iongna duit, a óig airmghéir,
'sdo thír féin arna faghuil,
dá béim dhíbh ag danaruibh.'*

'To defend a fortress that is not thine own
is astonishing for thee, thou keen-weaponed
soldier, whilst thine own land, after being
ravaged, is being wrested from thee by
barbarians'. (§ 26)

In a similar vein, the author of 'Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais' connects the return of the Scottish Gaels to ancient prophecy that Ireland will be rescued from overseas, urging Séamas (great-nephew of Somhairle Buidhe) to awake from his 'slumber' (*cadal*) (§ 2c) in Scotland and arise and succour Ireland:

*Aithnidh d'Éirinn, giodh iúl fada —
Fionn mac Cumhaill do chan súd —
do bheith tar sál ar thí teachta;
Clár Dá Thí ar an eachtra úd.*

It was known to Erin, though 'tis an old story
— Fionn son of Cumhall told it —
that thou shouldst come over the sea;
Dá Thí's Plain depends upon that expedition.

*Ar do leithéid, lór dod mhaoidheamh,
mac Cumhaill na gcraoisíoch ndonn,
feacht n-aon do labhair a Laighnibh,
craobh tharaid do thairrngir tonn.*

Concerning one like thee — ground enough
to boast of thee — Cumhall's son of the
red spears, fruitful branch foretold by wave,
spoke once in Leinster.

*Laithi a nAlmhain na n-eas tirmgheal
do thairrngir Fionn, fíor an sdair,
go ngébdais Danair Clár Criomhthain;
glár falaigh ní hionchuir air.*

*'Beid Gaoidhil a nglasaibh Danar',
adubhairt Fionn, folt na gcorn;
'lónfuid Saxain ar fheadh nÉireann,
gasruidh mear na ngéibhionn ngorm.'*

*'An bhfuil choidhche,' do chan Oisín,
'ar fhóir nDanar, día do ghúais,
fortacht a ndán d'Inis Eachaidh,
clár milis go gceathaibh cnúais?'*

*Do ráidh Fionn ag freagra dh'Oisín,
'D'furtacht Gaoidheal na ngleó mear
tiofca cabhlach tar sál sreabhruadh
go Clár n-abhlach mbeannbhúan mBreagh.'*

*'Fóirfidh Fódla', ar Fionnmhac Cumhaill,
'ar chathuibh cniocht chleachtus gúais,
maicne bhus orra re héachtuibh,
aicme Cholla éachtaigh Uais.'*

*'Cia dá gcreidfid', do chan Oisín,
'an ealta churadh cholg sídh,
anoirin a ttráigh mar thrállfuid
shoighin Chláir íathbhuig Ír?'*

*'Gég dibh féin', ar Fhionnmhac Cumhaill,
'creidfid dó, ní damhna bróin:
as fáoi chláonfas Fine Féilim,
bile sháorfás Éirinn óigh.'*

*Ar Fionn, 'D'furtacht Innsi Banbha
bíaidh iar n-uair, nochan iúl claon,
rí dhíbh féine ar chloinn na gColla,
croinn réidhe nach orra áor.'*

*Fionn mac Cumhaill nár char maoine,
a mheic Aonghuis fhuilngios frais,
do chlú níor úaisligh gan adhbhar;
tú an úairsin do labhradh leis.*

One day in Allen of the dry-white waterfalls
Fionn foretold — a true story —
that foreigners should seize Criomhthan's
Plain; the tale must not be hidden.

'The Gael shall be in bondage to foreigners',
said Fionn with locks like drinking-horns;
'Saxons shall swarm over Ireland,
active soldiery of the dark fetters.'

'Is there ever', said Oisín, 'against the host
of foreigners — what a hazard! — help in
store for Eochaidh's Isle, sweet plain
with showers of fruit?'

Fionn said in answer to Oisín:
'To help the Gael of active combats
there shall come a fleet over the strong-
streaming brine to the Plain of Breagha of
apple trees and everlasting hills'.

'Fódla shall be delivered', said Cumhall's
fair son, 'from hosts of warriors practised
in danger, by a breed that shall be a warrant
for exploits, the race of valiant Colla Uais'.

'In whom', said Oisín, 'shall the flock of
champions with elfin swords put their trust,
when they shall sail from the east to the
shore, to Ír's Plain of the soft meadows?'

'A shoot from their own stock', said Fionn
son of Cumhall, 'in him they shall trust —
no ground for sorrow. Under him shall
Féilim's House bow down, the great tree
that shall deliver virgin Ireland'.

Said Fionn, 'To help the Isle of Banbha
there shall be in due course — it is no false
knowledge — a king of their own race over
the Children of the Collas, smooth trees that
are no warrant for satire!'

Fionn son of Cumhall who loved not riches,
O son of Angus, thou that withstandest the
shower [of spears], did not without reason
exalt thy fame: 'tis of thee he spoke then.

*Cuir a gcrích ar chan an fáidhsin,
fóir ar Bhanbha na mbrogh bfionn,
ná dearg a ghruaidh um Ghort Éibhir:
ort do lúaidh an féinnidh Fionn.*

*A Shémais, a shúil le flaithios,
fóir a hAlbain na n-eas mbinn
ar Bhóinn ttrédghlain na ttrágh sídhe;
ná bréagnaigh glár fire Finn.*

Accomplish what that seer uttered;
help Banbha of the white castles;
cause not the cheek of Éibhear's Field
to blush; of thee the hero Fionn spoke.

O Séamas, thou hope of lordship, bring help
from Scotland of the melodious waterfalls
to the Boyne, bright with flocks of the elfin
strands; make not vain Fionn's true voice.
(§§ 10-22)

Significantly, these suggestions that Scottish chiefs should take the kingship of Ireland should be understood as a version of the stereotyped rhetoric that is regularly applied to Irish chiefs in bardic poetry. In other words, these Scottish leaders are being treated as ordinary 'Gaelic' figures, and the use of such imagery underscores their inclusion within the fold, as it were, rather than expressing their exclusion from it. Brian Ó Cuív suggests that this convention of claiming that a chief is either fit to be or destined to be king of all Ireland may be rooted in the political conditions of the twelfth century, prior to the Anglo-Norman invasion, 'when it must have seemed that the High-kingship could be won by a member of any sept provided he was sufficiently powerful'.²³² Nevertheless, there is never any suggestion in this poetry that the kingship of *Scotland* is a worthwhile or appropriate goal, or that Scottish Gaelic chiefs should have any aspirations outside Ireland.

Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh's 'Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochlainnaigh' expresses similar ideas about the Gaels in Scotland as military campaigners, but uses the familiar theme of ending the exile for the purpose of justifying the return of Clann Iain Mhóir to Ireland and the Earl of Antrim's manoeuvring in the new post-conquest political context of early seventeenth-century Ireland:²³³

*Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochlainnaigh
dá bhfréimh ó na fínghealChollaibh,
an fheadhain shaor shuilbhearchonnail
nar thaobh Eamhain innbhearthonnaigh.*

These Scottish Gaels are Irishmen indeed
owing to their springing from the fair-
bright Collas, the noble, well-spoken
worthy band that stayed not in Eamhain of
the wave-girt estuaries.

²³² Ó Cuív, 'Literary Creation', p. 256.

²³³ Caball, 'A Study of Intellectual Reaction', p. 232.

*Aicme ad-roigh re robhuanaimsir
tar moir ngoilthe ngoibhéilnnsigh,
lucht sealbha na seinÉireann-soin
ó Ghurt Eamhna oiléininsigh.*

*Triallaid tar cuan gcormbhogabaigh
sluagh dá bhfianaibh formaideagair
do ladh druim gérdhearmadobair
le clár Cuinn far chomhraigeadair.*

*Dronga go gcéill chomhairlemhir
do fhréimh Cholla chridhiorghalaigh
ó shoin um fhád n-oirearMhonaidh
a-tád thoir 'n-a dtighearnadhaibh.*

*Ré cian fa chuing fhéinnidheachta
ó fhiadh Fhloinn don leomhainealta;
deigh-sheal raith an ríoghoireachta;
maith deireadh na deoraidheachta.*

*Tír dúthaigh chlár chríchfhionnMhonaidh
dháibh níor dhúthaigh mhátharbhunaidh;
fan tír fhoirbhthe fhéithinnbhearaigh
díbh níor ghoirthe achd gnáthAllmhuraigh.*

*Fillid díobh táin tromthuiniithe
go tír bhFáil na bhfearchoinshirthe,
do léim tár fál n-anfadhaithbhe
i gClár Néill is neamhchoimhghithe.*

*Gasraidh do dhruim dúthrachttogha
tar tuinn anfaidh áithneartmhara,
Fád Dá Thí ar tí a luathrochtana
's a-tád ar tí a tháithrechtana.*

The race that long long ago sped
across the boiling sea of isles and bays,
the folk that had possessed Ireland of yore
leaving the field of island-Eamhain.

They pass out over a sea [reminiscent] of mild
matured ale, that host with their bands of
enviable array; backs were turned — though it
was mistaken work — to Conn's Plain
for which they had fought.

Hosts of quick decisive spirit
of the race of Colla the joyous-fighting
abide ever since in the coast-land of Monadh
in the east as rulers.

For long, under yoke of military service,
that lion-band stayed far from Flann's land;
an upturn in fortune (?) for the royal
assembly; and happy, too, the end of their
exile.

The land of the plain of fair-bordered Monadh
was for them no original-motherland;
in that perfect land of calm estuaries
they could not be called anything but
mere foreigners.

Of their number a strong-established (?) band
returns to Fál's land of the hero-forays,
leaping over its fence whereon storms die
away(?) to Niall's Land they come not as
strangers (?)

A band of set choice coming over
the stormy surface of the keen strong sea,
the land of Dá Thí awaits their speedy
arrival, and they are set on reaching it.

(§§ 1-8)

These *Fionnlochlannaigh* properly belong back in Ireland; in Scotland they are forever strangers (*aoighe* (§ 28c)).

Although rhetoric of this kind is commonplace, 'Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochlannaigh' should perhaps be read with some caution, in that, as noted above, it was composed in an attempt to justify the integration of the Mac Domhnaills of Antrim into the Irish polity, which was becoming more consciously *Éireannach* rather than simply *Gaedhealach* at this point. The specific argument advanced for this

identification — the connection to the Collas (§ 1b) — is significant here, for this claim would not extend to imbue **all** *Fionnlochlannaigh* with *Éireannachas*. Additionally, the Ó Gnímhs themselves appear to have relocated to Ireland from Scotland at a relatively late date,²³⁴ and Fear Flatha's poetry may perhaps not be the most reliable expression of 'Irish' attitudes, either in general or with respect to the specific matter of membership in the 'Irish' polity.

Fear Flatha's use of the term *Fionnlochlannaigh* as a label for the returning members of Clann Domhnaill is interesting in itself. The term appears to be otherwise unattested in bardic poetry, although it occurs occasionally in prose, and it may have been prompted by the roughly contemporary semantic change by which *Fionnghall*, the commonest name for the Scottish Gaels in bardic verse, was coming to be associated with the 'Old English' community in Ireland. The fact that the term *Fionnlochlannaigh* could function as a readily understandable label for Scottish Gaels, however, demonstrates the continuing significance of the Norse link in the bardic worldview.

Although it speaks in somewhat similar terms to those of Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn's 'Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh', using the same word to describe the presence of the Gaels in Scotland — *amhsaine* or 'military campaign' — Domhnall mac Briain Ó hUiginn's poem to Eoin, last Lord of the Isles (†1503), beginning 'Meisde nach éadmhor Éire' ('It's unfortunate that Ireland is not jealous'), inverts the more common treatment of these ideas and appears to draw a rather different conclusion from the situation:

*Drong do Ghaoidhioluibh Ghuirt Bhreagh
do fhás ó mhacuibh Míleadh
san áird thuaidh a tír oile
do shín uainn ar amhsoine.*

A host of Gaels from the Field of Bregia
who grew from the sons of Míl
set off away from us on a military campaign
in the northern region in another land.

*Mairg tír re ttugad druim
aithreacha fola Domhnuill
tríar fear gan bhrígh a mbagar:
mo chean tír a ttangadar.*

Woe to the country to whom their backs
were turned, the forefathers of the blood of
Domhnall, three men [i.e. the Collas]
without power for threatening:
my love the country that they reached.

²³⁴McDonnell, 'Agnews and O'Gnámhs'.

*Gin go mbeith fáth oile ann
ma nfanfadaois ón fhearann
gan rún d'fhéachain tar anoir
ar Dhúin mBreatain do bheardais.*

*Adhbhar aontogha d'Iath Airt
áilne a bhfuinn fad a radhairc
fúair fhochain ó Innsi Gall
's ó shrothuibh millsí Mhanann.*

*Do gheibh Eóin, a fhanmhain thall,
rogha na hAlban d'fhearann:
ní fearr ó Íle a fhosdadh —
Ceann Tíre as da thúarasdal.*

*'Ga bhrosdadh ní bhíam a-noir,
Mac Domhnuill dhiúltas comhaidh,
aithnidh dhamh nach diognadh Eóin
ar Mhagh na n-Longnadh aindeóin.*

*Gion go ttí d'uáim an achaidh,
bláth cráoibhe Cuinn Chéadchathaigh,
ní fhuil d'urraidh ag crú Chuinn
acht cnú mullaigh an mhoguill.*

Although there should be no other reason
why they should stay away from the land,
to Dumbarton they headed.
without a desire to look back from the east

A reason for the Land of Art's unwedded
state [is] the beauty of their land as far as
the eye can see — he [Eóin] received
a reason from the Hebrides and from the sweet
streams of Man.

Eóin receives for staying over there
the choicest land in Scotland:
it is not better to seize him from Islay —
Kintyre is part of his reward.

I am not encouraging him from the east,
Mac Domhnaill who declines protection;
I recognize that Eóin would not unwillingly
make for the Plain of Wonders.

Even if should not come to join the field,
the bloom of the branch of Conn
Céadchathach, there is no chief of the race
of Conn but the nut at the top of the
cluster.²³⁵

Above and beyond this apparent acquiescence in the Mac Domhnaills' remaining in Scotland, so different from the statements of other poems in this vein by Irish poets, the poem is also interesting from a different standpoint. The theme of the opening verses is dominated by the image of Ireland as a spouseless woman, needing Mac Domhnaill to marry her symbolically — hence the reference in quatrain 29, quoted above, to the bounty of Scotland as providing a reason for celibacy (*aontadh*) for the Scottish Gaels:

*Meisde nach éadmhor Éire,
a cíall is cúis toibhéime;
aigneadh mná is bréag ag Banbha:
má tá, créad a chomhardha?*

*A fhad go n-aiseagthar dhí
a fir féin, is fáth tuirsí;
is é a mhéad is meisde linn
leisge fa éad ar Éirinn.*

It's unfortunate that Ireland is not jealous,
Her prudence is a cause for reproach;
It is false [to say that] Banbha has the spirit
of a woman: if she does, what is its indication?

How long it may be until her own men are
returned to her is a cause of anguish;
it is to that extent that Éire's reluctance
to be jealous troubles me.

²³⁵ Text and translation here are based on my own reading and on Ó Mainnín, "The Same in Origin and Blood" (pp. 15-17).

*Ní cosmhuil re ceird na mban
uathud bean acht bean éadmhar
bheith banamhuil acht bean Chuinn
's gan fear d'fhanamh[uin] againn. [. . .]*

*Cuirthear éad — ní h-iongnadh dhi —
ar mhnáoi is ísle ná Éire;
dleaghar éad ríamh um ríoghuibh —
créad nach biadh ar bainríoghain?*

*Do cuireadh craobha toraidh
uainn san fhiodhbhaidh Albanuigh:
gá hoidheadh éada dob fhearr,
na géaga a hoirear Éireann?*

*Síol na cColla nár chlaon breath,
dlighidh Alba bheith buidheach
d'aisgidh do Bhanbha do bhean,
gabhla gaisgidh na nGaoidheal. [. . .]*

*Iomardadh mall ag mnáoi Chuinn
fá a h-áontugha ar fhuil nDomhnuill:
aithreach lé a h-úain ag Albain —
nír bh'é uair an iomardaidh.*

*Ó fhuighluibh ban bréagthar fir:
atá Banbha bean Éibhir
ag guidhe an ríogh na fhrithing —
bíom uile na oirichill.*

It is not like the way of women,
except the wife of Conn, for a solitary
woman to be womanly, and to be other than
a jealous woman, without a husband
staying with us.

Jealousy is put — no wonder for her —
upon a woman lower than Éire;
jealousy was ever appropriate for kings;
why would it not be for a queen?

Fruitful trees were planted
away from us in the Scottish grove:
What cause for jealousy would be better
than shoots from the soil of Ireland?

Seed of the Collas not false in judgments,
heroic branches of the Gaels,
it is appropriate for Scotland to be grateful
for the gift received from Banbha.

The wife of Conn has a belated reproaching
concerning her unmarried state with the
blood of Domhnall: she is sorrowful that her
lambs are Scotland's — it was not the time
for reproaching.

Men are deceived by the utterances of
women: Banbha wife of Éibhear is
beseeching the king to return —
Let us all be ready.

(§§ 1-3, 5-7, 9-10)

Themes of sovereignty, reunion, and return are handled rather differently again in the late sixteenth century poem beginning 'Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn' ('The enticement of an exchange for Ireland'), composed for Máire (†1582), wife of Somhairle Buidhe Mac Domhnaill and daughter of Conn Bacach Ó Néill. Pádraig Ó Macháin argues that this poem is the work of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, and if so it can be read as a companion piece to 'Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain', with which it shares obvious thematic similarities. The exchanges at issue are in the nature of intermarriages between Scottish and Irish Gaels: the poet praises six Scottish women who have taken Irish husbands and borne illustrious children in Ireland, and presents Máire as the Irish counterpart who can entice the descendants of Colla Uais back to Ireland, as a sort of Helen figure:

*Ni har iomlaoid tugadh tusa
ar tús on iath Fhodlása
lá do snadmaighthe, a gruadh glan,
re sluadh narmgairthe nAlban.*

*Acht siol gColla clann nDomnaill
soir o Eirinn iobordhuinn
gan teacht tairsibh na bhfiadh fein
ar triall re haimsir imchein.*

*Nir fhuiling Eire an fheoir thais
beith an fadsoin na bfeagmois;
gur meall finnsliocht caom Colla
le hinnliocht saor seghanna. [. . .]*

*Fada ata Banba bean Floinn
ag iarraidh fola Domhnoill
do bí rú gur theilg thusa
do sheilg an cru Collasa.*

*Do teilgeadh thusa, a taobh seang,
da tabairt go tír nEireant
re ceann deagsluaigh moir Monaidh
ó foir armruaidh Albonoigh.*

*Maith an toisg da ttanuig diott
don chursa, a chiabh na nóirliog,
Clann nDomnoill do theacht asteagh
da gcomroinn ar ghort nGaoideal.*

*Deileóchthor clanna Colla
dod thaobhsa, a taobh seaganna,
re Ceann Tire na gcladh gcorr,
re hille, re madh Manand.*

*Anfoid agoibhsi on tír thoir
sirfithear leo a los cogaidh
roinn eigriochta ar caomcloinn cCuinn
saorcroinn deigshleachta Domnuill.*

*A ngioll ar do ceib clannoigh
do fhuireochdais eachtrandaigh;
sliocht fionnGaoidil o as iad sin
ni hionmaoidim iad danmhuin.*

It is not on an exchange that you were taken from this land of Fódla in the beginning on the day of your 'entanglement', o fair cheek, with the heated-armed host of Scotland.

But the seed of Colla, Clann Domhnaill, (went) eastwards away from brown-yewed Ireland without mention of them in their own land away on a journey since long ago.

Ireland of the damp grass did not endure being without them for that time; she enticed the fair tribe of gentle Colla with her noble distinguished ingenuity.

Long has Banbha wife of Flann been desiring the blood of Domhnall: it was her purpose that sent you out to seek the race of Colla.

You were sent out, o slender side, to bring to the land of Ireland the head of the noble people of great Scotland from the red-armed Scottish host.

Good are the circumstances that happened because of you in the matter, o hair of the golden locks, Clann Domhnaill coming in to join in the field of the Gael.

The kindred of Colla will be separated from Kintyre of the peaked ramparts, from Islay, from the plain of Man, because of you, o noble side.

They will stay with you (away) from the eastern land, they will seek on account of war a share of inheritance from the gentle kindred of Conn, the noble trees of the excellent lineage of Domhnall.

In pledge to your luxurious hair foreigners would stay; since they are the offspring of the fair Gael their remaining away is not to be recommended.²³⁷

As with 'Éireannaigh féin Fionnlochlannaigh', the reality of the political situation behind this poem puts some flesh on the poem's rhetoric. Mac Domhnaills

²³⁷ §§ 33-35; 42-47. The text is given in fairly raw form, lightly edited from the version given in Ó

from the traditional Scottish territories were moving to Antrim in very considerable numbers during the period in question, and Somhairle Buidhe and other leaders were endeavouring to consolidate their political position in Ireland. The final stanzas of the poem, addressed to Somhairle Buidhe himself in an inversion of the usual convention of praising the chief's wife, make clear that he is to secure '*a chuid d'Éirinn iobhardhuinn*' ('his share of yew-brown Ireland') (§ 51b), following in the footsteps of his ancestor Colla Uais, who secured the kingship of Bregia and Teltown upon his return from Scotland (§ 52). This claim to a share — reiterating the rhetoric of stanza 46b, quoted above — is perhaps somewhat more practical and realistic than the more standard stereotyped assertions, discussed above, to the effect that sovereignty over all Ireland is to be forthcoming; it also echoes another famous poem of the period, more certainly attributable to Tadhg Dall, asserting that the De Búrcas, although incomers of Norman stock, are also entitled to '*a gcuid féin d'Éirinn*'.²³⁸ Interesting too is the suggestion in stanza 34 that Clann Domhnaill were not spoken of in Ireland after their departure for Scotland, reiterating the sense that Ireland tended to operate on its own terms, within the confines of its own horizons. A final point of note is the poem's punning use of the term *fionnGhaoidhil* in § 47c; the Scottish Gaels are usually labeled *Fionnghoill*, of course, and this new name underscores the poem's reintegrative theme.

*

A rather different expression of these feelings of Scotland as unfamiliar and out of the ordinary comes in the remarkable poem beginning 'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg' ('It is fitting for an *ollamh* to journey on an embassy'), composed for Giolla-Easbuig, fourth Earl of Argyll, by the unnamed *ollamh* to An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill in connection with An Calbhach's mission in 1555, described earlier. Much of the poem appeals to Mac Cailein as an exiled Gael to 'succour dewy Banbha' ('*fóir ar Bhanbha mbraointeachtaigh*') (§ 8b) and so on — even though An Calbhach's campaigns were principally directed at his Ulster rival Seaán Ó Néill rather than the English — but the *ollamh* also draws two fascinating analogies from the Bible and from Gaelic tradition to describe his own relationship to Mac Cailein.

Macháin, 'Tadhg Dall'.

²³⁸'Fearann cloidhimh críoch Bhanbha' ('The land of Banbha is but swordland') (c. 1571-80), § 18b

First, the *ollamh* retells the story of Noah and the Ark, and how, once the Flood waters had begun to recede, Noah released a raven²³⁹ to see if it could find dry land:

*Críoch a dála — dearbh an stair —
níor phill sé ó sin suasuín,
go mac Láimhiach, craobh chumhra,
an cnáimhfhiach daor danardha.*

The end of its circumstances — certain the account — the severe carnivorous raven did not return from then onwards, to the son of Láimhiach [Noah], fragrant branch.

*Teachtaireacht an fhiach ón áirc
níor phill ar ais don rí-bháirc;
ní am aghaidh atá ag toidhíocht
samhail trá dom theachtaireacht.*

The message of the raven from the ark
Did not come back to the royal boat;
This does not come against me —
It is comparable then to my embassy.

(§§ 28-29)

Like the bird abandoning the refuge of the boat, never to return after discovering better things in his journey into the great unknown, Ó Domhnaill's *ollamh* has left Ireland on a venture into unfamiliar territory, but having discovered the court of Mac Cailein, he announces 'ó rígh Ghaoidheal ní ghluaisfí': 'a toil dom Breat-Ghaoidheal a bhus | ní fhéadabh a dhol dom dhúthchus' ('from the king of the Gaels I shall not move': 'from desire of my British-Gael here I cannot go to my own country') (§§ 30d, 31c-d).

This can be taken as fairly routine, if impressively creative, flattery, but its terms are nevertheless worth exploring in more depth. The image of Ireland as the Ark occurs elsewhere in bardic poetry — both Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn and Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird use this device, for example, styling the English menace as the Flood²⁴⁰ — but it is certainly interesting that Argyll should seem to a Tír Chonaill man to be territory as unfamiliar as the land re-exposed to Noah's captive bird after the great Flood. At the very least, this imagery certainly does not betray any kind of easy intimacy, a sense of Scotland as ordinary, familiar and close.

These feelings are confirmed in the poem's second mythological analogy, in which the poet compares his position in Mac Cailein's court — 'múr beanglan fa mbinn tonn | dar ceangladh inn gan íarann' ('the rampart of fine peaks around which

(published in *TD*, poem 17).

²³⁹As in Sir Donnchadh Caimbeul of Glenorchy's 'Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin', § 6, the raven is described as having 'deviated from its mission for Noah in order to devour carrion' — a detail not given in the biblical account. Gillies, 'Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell (I)', p. 24.

²⁴⁰'Iomdha sochar ag síol Néill', § 42; 'Mór an lucht áthraigh Éire' ('A heavy ship-load, Ireland itself') (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, c. 1607), § 24b (published in Lambert McKenna, 'The Flight of the Earls', *The Irish Monthly*, 54 (1926), 471-75, and in *DD*, poem 107).

waves are sweet | by which I was bound without iron') (§§ 34c-d) — to that of Fionn mac Cumhaill and his warriors, who accept an invitation to the fabulous Rowan Hostel (*Bruidhean Chaorthuinn*) and find themselves trapped, stuck to the hostel's floor, which is spread with the magical soil of Innis Tile. Mac Cailein's floor is covered with the same soil as the Rowan Hostel, the *ollamh* says, and thus he is unable to return to Ireland:

*Úir Innsi Tile — dearbh an dáil —
atá fós feadh a h-urláir
buirt nuaidhe na ttamhan ttiobh
. . . uaidhe ó nach éidir.*

*An té re tteaghadh a h-úir
uaidhe ní fhéadadh impúdh
buaidh do bheadh ar tír Innsi Til
fa linni 'na lios an uair sin.*

*A mBruidhin Caorthain cian d'Fhionn
agus drong da dheagh shluagh;
is lé do ceangladh druim ar druim:
is dearbh hé a n-abruim.*

*An chré sin ler ceangladh Fionn
a mbruidhin, b'aidhbhe an eilionn:
a mac samhla dó is sí sin
así tarla far troighibh.*

The soil of Innis Tile — the matter is certain — there remain throughout its floor fresh boards from thick trunks . . . getting away from it is impossible.

Whoever would touch its soil could not move away from it (Because of) the power that the soil of Innis Tile would have he would be in its fairy-fort for ages then.

Long was Fionn in the Rowan Hostel and a group of his goodly host; by it they were bound back to back: It is certain that which I say.

That earth to which Fionn was bound in a hostel, dreadful(ly difficult) was the escape from it; its likeness is that [earth] here that has happened beneath my feet.
(§§ 36-39)

Here too, then, the comparison of Mac Cailein's court to a distant, otherworldly place of magic powers conveys a sense of Scotland as something very much out of the ordinary. The image of the *bruidhean*, moreover, is hardly the most obvious source of flattering comparison: these are stories of menace and danger, involving enticement to a hostel by an enemy of the Fianna, who become trapped there until eventually being rescued. In the story of the Rowan Hostel, the enemy is the young king of Norway (Lochlann), and the artifice that traps the Fianna is the soil of Innis Tile, spread there by the three kings of Innis Tile, who are in service to the king of Norway; only when the blood of these three kings is rubbed on Fionn and his men can they be freed. The point of using this analogy here can hardly be to equate the Earl of Argyll with the king of Norway in the story, but it is not easy to jettison the tale entirely and recast the host

and the magical soil in unambiguously favourable terms.²⁴¹

*

The vision of the connection between Ireland and Scotland in bardic poetry is a hazy one, whose outlines are less than sharp or clear. So much of what is said is only half-said, and often not as careful implication or subtle statement, but as offhand comment or haphazard suggestion. Attitudes, perceptions, and outlooks are difficult to discern, almost impossible to set out with certainty or finality. Two conclusions of a sort seem paramount. First is the extent to which the poetic class functioned at a supra-national level — the extent to which a fully common, pan-Gaelic body of creative styles and images was set in place and continually regenerated by professional poets saturated in a highly specific, consciously constructed imagined worldview that transcended ‘national’ boundaries. If this worldview was focused almost exclusively on Ireland, and Scotland was consciously ‘under-imagined’, this meant no exclusion for Scottish Gaeldom, which seems to have accepted this order as natural and entirely normal; never is there any sense of perceived exclusion or marginality. Second, then, is this way in which Gaelic Scotland was at once marginal to the Gaelic world and a fully fledged, fully accepted participant in it. If Gaelic Scotland is rarely mentioned in Irish bardic poetry — perhaps rarely thought of by the poets or their patrons — this did not necessarily require exclusion in any deeper sense. This paradox is also seen in the ubiquitous theme of exile: although Gaelic Scotland is somehow foreign and alien, the corollary is not that Scottish Gaels are foreigners or aliens who should be pushed into greater separation, but that these ‘wild geese’ should come back and join with the rest of Gaeldom — Irish Gaeldom. This is a problematic form of unity and connection; and, as will be seen in the following chapter, the process by which this unity broke down and connection turned to separation, is equally ambiguous.

²⁴¹For discussion of the *bruidhean* tales in general and the story of the Rowan Hostel in particular, see Bruford, *Gaelic Folktales and Mediaeval Romances*, pp. 115-22, and Breandán P. Ó Cróinín, ‘Bruidhean Chaorthuinn Ón Lámhscríbhinn is Sine i Leabharlann Náisiúnta na hAlban’ (unpublished M.A. thesis, St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth, 1995). The tale of the Rowan Hostel would certainly have been known in sixteenth-century Argyll: indeed, the earliest surviving version of the tale is found in a manuscript (NLS Adv. MS 72.1.34) written at Dunstaffnage in 1603. Ó Cróinín, pp. 16-17.

Chapter 4

Separation and Breakdown

The breakdown of the established Gaelic world over the course of the seventeenth century began a process of fundamental transformation in the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland. As English control of Ireland grew tighter, and central government's power in Scotland more restrictive, traditional political and cultural links between Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland were weakened and broken, and the two countries became less and less prominent in each other's mental and imaginative fields. This separation is rarely made the subject of direct discussion in the writings of the era, however, with the absence most evident on the Irish side, where the collapse of the old order is the overwhelmingly dominant theme of seventeenth-century literature, yet the impact of that transformation on the relationship with Gaelic Scotland is scarcely ever mentioned. Michelle O Riordan's controversial recent study of the Irish poets' worldview during this period, *The Gaelic Mind and the Collapse of the Gaelic World*, reflects both the nature of the sources and more modern Irish biases: there is no indication whatsoever that Scotland played any role at all in this 'Gaelic' mind and world. Yet even on the Scottish side, where the Irish connection was always more prominent in cultural life and imagination than vice-versa, there is surprisingly little commentary on the changes in Ireland and their impact on Gaelic Scotland.

Isolated comments from a few seventeenth century poems do provide some insight into perceptions of changing relationships as the traditional Gaelic world was being broken asunder. In the anonymous poem (c. 1645) beginning 'Mór mo mholadh ar mhac Colla' ('Great is my praise for the son of Colla'), to Alasdair mac Colla Chiotaich Mac Domhnaill — the Irish-born leader of a predominantly Irish army in Scotland, destined to die in battle in Munster in 1647, serving within a larger Irish army — the poet urges pan-Gaelic solidarity in the following terms:

*Gaoidhil Éireann ocus Alban,
aimsir oile,
ionann a bfrémha is a bfine:
sgéla ar sgoile.*

The Gaels of Ireland and of Scotland
at another time
were the same in origin and blood,
as our schools relate. (§ 14)

The quatrain can be read in two very different ways, however, depending on the interpretation of the phrase ‘*aimsir oile*’. If, as given above, it is taken as meaning ‘at another time’, the suggestion is that Irish and Scottish Gaeldom were drifting apart at the actual time in question, that their underlying unity required reiteration and the freshening of memories, and that the learning of the bardic schools — the font of specialist knowledge — is needed to substantiate a claim that might otherwise be difficult to believe and accept. But ‘*aimsir oile*’ could also mean ‘once again’,¹ and the ancient connection reasserted for the purpose of inciting united military action. The next stanza of the poem speaks in terms of the Gaels as a single, unified group, not as Irish and Scottish Gaels, pronouncing that the schools, learned authors, indeed all men know what is proper for *Gaoidhil* and *Goill* to do in battle. The phrasing is prospective and immediate, and the rest of the poem predicts bloody victory for the Gaels, with ‘*cuirp ina ttuar sínte ar sléibhtibh*’ (‘bodies like clothes a-bleaching stretched out on hillsides’) (§ 25a). This second interpretation, emphasizing ongoing connection, certainly seems the more persuasive, although the poem must of course be understood as an exercise in wartime political propaganda.

More strictly historical evidence of the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland in the seventeenth century is often equally ambiguous. Political interaction across *Sruth na Maoile* was ongoing during much of the seventeenth century, especially in the 1610s and 1620s, when the Scottish dimension played an important role in the political strategy of the exiled Gaelic Irish leadership and its Continental allies, and during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms during the 1640s, when Irish Gaels fought in Scotland, Scottish Gaels fought in Ireland, and Alasdair mac Colla Chiotaich assumed the role of the traditional pan-Gaelic warrior. Indeed, Alasdair mac Colla’s death at the battle of *Cnoc na nDós* in Co. Cork in 1647 is

¹The same phrase is used in the second line of stanza 6, dealing with Clann Domhnaill’s traditional rights, and is translated by W.J. Watson as ‘once again’, which seems clearly appropriate given the future form of the verb in line 3. Watson’s translation of the same phrase in stanza 14 as ‘long ago’, therefore, seems

sometimes used, as an alternative to Kinsale (1601) or Culloden (1746), as a marker of the end of the old Gaelic world. Direct Scottish Gaelic military involvement in Ireland came to an end after the Cromwellian period, although events in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* continued to capture the Irish imagination throughout the Jacobite era, as demonstrated by a range of surviving poetry, and exiled Irish troops returned from the Continent to serve in the Scottish Jacobite risings of 1689, 1715, 1719, and 1745-46.

Although the changes within the Gaelic world tend to be labeled with drastic and violent terms — collapse, breakdown, or, in Irish, *tonnbhriseadh* ('great smashing') — the process was actually gradual, multifaceted, and inconstant. Changes in perceptions and attitudes were equally gradual, but tracking the shifts is a hazy endeavour. More depends on inference from silence than from interpretation of explicit statements. It bears emphasis, moreover, that many of the most important and obvious developments that brought about a separation of Gaelic Scotland from Gaelic Ireland — the absorption of Scottish Gaeldom into the British imperial enterprise, the mass adoption of evangelical Protestantism — took root well after the calamities of the seventeenth century, and thus lie outside the scope of this study.

*

A crucial aspect of the breakdown of the old Gaelic order, and the relationships and perceptions within the Gaelic world, is the effect of the Reformation, both in Scotland, where Protestantism, in one form or another, eventually took root among the great majority of Gaelic kindreds, and in Ireland, where the re-forging of national identity in the context of the English conquest was centred on continued adherence to Roman Catholicism.² The process was slow and complex, however, and its effects on reworking cultural attitudes can be difficult to assess.

Crucially, the Reformation that took root in the Scottish Lowlands in the early 1560s had only a very limited impact on the *Gàidhealtachd* in the first instance. The principal effect of the Reformation in the *Gàidhealtachd* was not a change of religion

tendentious.

²Marc Caball, 'Faith, culture and sovereignty: Irish nationality and its development, 1558-1625', in *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, ed. by Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 112-39 (pp. 131-37).

but the collapse of the institutions of the Catholic church: many priests fled or went into hiding, and very few were replaced, so that by the early seventeenth century there does not appear to have been a single Gaelic-speaking priest left in Scotland.³ The Protestant reformers did little to fill this spiritual vacuum, however, and it was not until the better part of a century after the Reformation in the Lowlands that Protestantism became the majority faith in Gaelic Scotland. Even then, Episcopalianism tended to prevail over the Presbyterianism of the Lowlands, which many Gaels associated with the hostile and alien culture of the *Galldachd*.⁴ The pattern of religious change was anything but sudden or sweeping. A few kindreds adopted Protestantism very early, most obviously the Caimbeuls, whose role in spreading the new faith was immense, and the Mac Gill-Eathains of Duart, in the 1550s and 1570s respectively. Others, like the Mac Leòids of Harris and Mac Domhnaills of Sleat, took on the reformed faith in the wake of the Statutes of Iona (1609), when new chiefs, educated in the Lowlands as required by the Statutes, and thereby immersed in Protestantism from childhood, succeeded their Catholic predecessors; and others, notably some of the remaining branches of Clann Domhnaill North like Clann Raghnaill and the Mac Domhnaills of Keppoch, maintained their adherence to the Catholic church.⁵

The complexities of the situation have often been overlooked or oversimplified, as if working backward from the modern situation in which 'Scotland' is understood as an inherently Protestant country and Gaelic Scotland in particular is stereotyped as being fervently Calvinist, with the consequence that Scotland as a whole is treated as if the reformed religion came in throughout the country as quickly as light fills a room from the flick of an electric switch. The importance of the Reformation must be qualified in another way, moreover, for as discussed below, religious affiliation in Gaelic Scotland in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries did not serve as a determinant of political affiliation and action in the way it did in Ireland.

³James A. Stewart, Jr., 'The Clan Ranald: History of a Highland Kindred' (unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1982), pp. 66-67; *Irish Franciscan Mission to Scotland 1619-1646: Documents from Roman Archives*, ed. by Cathaldus Giblin (Dublin: Assisi Press, 1964), p. viii. In 1623, there appear to have been a total of fourteen Scottish priests in Scotland, but none of them were Gaelic speakers. Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, p. viii and fn. 6 thereto.

⁴Stiùbhart, p. 84; James A. Stewart, 'The Clan Ranald and Catholic Missionary Successes, 1715-1745', *Innes Review*, 45 (1994), 29-46.

⁵Ó Macháin, 'Poems by Fearghal Óg', pp. 56-61; Stiùbhart, pp. 62-63, 119.

The most striking statement of the change in religion in Scotland as seen through Irish eyes is Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird's celebrated poem beginning 'Dursan mh'eachtra go hAlbuin', in which he laments, in highly personal and pained terms, how he cannot take Mass while on a visit to Scotland, apparently in 1581:

*Baoghlach leam a agra orm
teacht go hAlbuin na n-órchorn;
i gcrích sgaithfhinn na ngort ngeal
ní chaithim corp an Choimheadh. [. . .]*

I fear reproach for coming to Scotland
of the golden drinking-horns;
in this fair-flowered land of bright fields
I receive not the Lord's Body.

*Dámadh liom uile a hór bog,
dá bhfaghuinn a bhfuil d'argod
i gcrích bhraonuaire na mbeann bhfionn,
do b'fhearr aonuaire an t-Aifrionn. [. . .]*

Had I all [Scotland's] smooth gold and
if I could get all the silver
in this cool fresh land of fair peaks —
better once to hear Mass than it all!

*Tánag san tír nach adhair
don abhluinn ghil ghrásamhail;
mó do mheall an saoghal sinn —
baoghal 'n-a cheann ní chuirim. [. . .]*

I came to the land which rejects
the white grace-giving Host;
the world had beguiled me overmuch —
I know no danger like it.

*Ó nach faicim é innte,
an corp diadha doimhilde —
fairche ghrianfhuinn na ngéag gcuir —
iarruim gan m'éag i nAlbain.*

As I see not in this
sunny-earthed lawn of planted trees
God's imperishable body
I pray I may not die in Scotland.

§§ 4, 7, 19, 21)

Crucially, however, Fearghal Óg seems to have been in unambiguously Protestant Edinburgh and speaking of the situation there — *not* the *Gàidhealtachd*.⁶ Some scholars appear to have missed this point, reifying 'Scotland' unduly and taking the poem as a statement of the breakdown of the old Gaelic world,⁷ even though Protestantism had only made limited inroads into the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* by the time in question.

Unfortunately, this poem, whose relevance to developments in the *Gàidhealtachd* is limited, is almost the only piece of literary evidence that presents

⁶Ó Macháin, 'Poems by Fearghal Óg', p. 56; Stiùbhart, p. 78. Stiùbhart notes that Fearghal Óg's lament at the unavailability of the Mass would have been just as true of the *Gàidhealtachd*, but as a result of the collapse of the Catholic Church there, not because Protestantism had become rooted (p. 79).

⁷Brian Ó Cuív, 'The Irish language in the early modern period', in *Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691*, ed. by T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin, and F.J. Byrne, A New History of Ireland, 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 509-45 (p. 527); Mícheál Mac Craith, 'The Gaelic reaction to the Reformation', in *Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State*, ed. by Steven G. Ellis and Sarah Barber (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 139-61 (pp. 157-58); Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, p. 259.

Irish attitudes to the Reformation in Scotland. Nor, in striking contrast to Irish poetry of the period, in which religious identities and conflicts stand at the centre, and political opponents are routinely given labels like *eiricigh* (heretics) and *Clann Liútair* (Progeny of Luther), is there much literary evidence from Scotland that treats these matters in an explicit fashion. Indeed, this absence is a remarkable attribute of seventeenth-century vernacular Scottish Gaelic poetry: alliances and rivalries are not expressed in religious terms, even in the work of Iain Lom, a steadfastly Catholic poet whose relentless and ferocious antipathy to the Caimbeuls is never stated in confessional terms.⁸ More important, in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* the Protestant-Catholic divide did not drive political action: each of the Royalist and Jacobite risings from 1645 to 1746 received support from both Catholic and Protestant (especially non-Presbyterian) kindreds, who consistently fought together — with the latter group being far more numerous.⁹ It appears, then, that changes in religious adherence did not bring about a sea-change in perceptions of the various players in the Gaelic world, at least within Gaelic Scotland, and it would be rash to assume that Irish Gaelic attitudes towards Scotland were immediately transformed by changes in religion, and varied absolutely according to whether a given Scottish kindred had taken up the Reformed faith. In later centuries, especially after evangelical Presbyterianism became secured in most parts of the Highlands from the later eighteenth century onwards, the difference in religious adherence did of course become a major separating factor between the two parts of the Gaelic world, with important ramifications that continue today, but there are dangers in interpolating too far backwards in time, and inferring a fundamental and early shift in attitudes.

Gaelic Scotland, especially Clann Domhnaill, continued to play an important role in the political thinking of the exiled Irish leadership after the Flight of the Earls to the Continent (1607).¹⁰ Sometimes this link is described in confessional terms,

⁸McCaughey, 'Bards, Beasts and Men', pp. 107-08.

⁹Allan MacInnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart*, pp. 93-94, 176. MacInnes estimates that Catholics represented little more than 20% of the pro-Stewart forces mustered during the Jacobite era. *Id.*, p. 176.

¹⁰See Micheline Kerney Walsh, '*Destruction by Peace*': *Hugh O'Neill After Kinsale* (Armagh: Cumann Seanchais Ard Mhacha, 1986), pp. 207, 231-32, 316-17, 364-67, 374-77; David Stevenson, 'The Irish Franciscan Mission to Scotland and the Irish Rebellion of 1641', *Innes Review*, 54-55.

sometimes in kinship terms, sometimes in purely military terms. Perhaps the most famous statement of this continuing pan-Gaelic solidarity comes from the Scottish side, in the letter of Iain Mùideartach Mac Domhnaill (†1670), chief of Clann Raghnaill, to Pope Urban VII in February 1626, where he denounces ‘the darkness . . . of error, which the turbulent detested followers of the accursed faithless Calvin had introduced’, and declares the readiness of the Gaels to rise up in defence of the Catholic faith and against southern oppression:

We, the aforementioned clan [i.e. Clann Raghnaill], together with that numerous and distinguished clan than which there is none more noble in the whole kingdom [i.e. Clann Domhnaill], from whose bosom we the younger are descended, shall with the help of our kinsfolk and friends subdue the greater part of Scotland, though we could not keep it long against the power of the King unless aided by your Holiness or by the power of Catholic kings [. . .] If we receive help of this kind we shall easily reduce the whole of Scotland to obedience to the faith of Christ and of your holiness [. . .] All the Gaelic-speaking Scots and the greater part of the Irish chieftains joined to us by ties of friendship, from whom we once received the faith (in which we still glory), from whose stock we first sprang, will begin war each in his own district to the glory of God . . .¹¹

The practical political realism of Iain Mùideartach’s letter is certainly open to doubt, but the terms of its rhetoric are nevertheless worth noting at face value as an indicator that an explicitly pan-Gaelic worldview retained considerable vigour in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. While the Catholic idiom is striking — and exceptional in the Scottish context — more important is the emphasis on solidarity amongst ‘all’ Scottish Gaels and the continuing link to Ireland, expressed in terms of common origins and ‘ties of friendship’.

*

Both Reformation and Counter-Reformation in Gaelic Scotland endeavoured to work within traditional Gaelic institutions, practices, and values. Indeed, it could hardly have been otherwise; but the dynamic was fundamentally different from that at work in Ireland, where the Protestant faith was associated from the outset with conquest and imposition from outside. The class structure of the Scottish

¹¹J.L. Campbell, ‘The Letter Sent by Iain Muideartach, Twelfth Chief of Clanranald, to Pope Urban VII, in 1626’, *Innes Review*, 4 (1953), 110-16 (pp. 115-16).

Gàidhealtachd, still essentially a warrior-aristocracy, was very different from that of Lowland Scotland and the Continent, where a rising merchant class often served as a driving force behind Reformation. As Terence McCaughey explains, ‘if reforming ideas were to gain ground and if the Reformed church was to be organized in the Highlands, that had to depend on the same forces as had always controlled Highland society’.¹² The new faith could, for example, be introduced as part of the chief’s traditional *cuairt* around his territory, with a minister forming part of a larger retinue and Protestant services being tied in with more established and familiar customs.¹³ Protestant religious practice could also be incorporated into traditional Gaelic feasting and entertainment: an evening at Mac Cailein’s court was said to consist of ‘*greis aig seanchas, greis aig salmuibh*’ (‘a time at lore, a time at the psalms’), and at Duart in the time of Sir Lachlann Mac Gill-Eathain (†1649), the usual drinking, music, and gambling were on offer, but ‘*bhiodh na Sgrìobtuir ’gan leughadh | Ann ad thalla mun éireadh do bhòrd*’ (‘the Scriptures would be read | In your hall before [those at] your table would arise’).¹⁴

A different aspect of this cultural continuity was the way in which members of hereditary clerical families — Mac Phàil, Mac Lachlainn, Mac Eoghain, Mac Fhionghuin, Mac Shuibhne — emerged to staff the new Protestant ministry in the *Gàidhealtachd*. At the same time, members of families traditionally engaged in other aspects of Gaelic intellectual culture made similar moves as established patronage disappeared.¹⁵ As Jane Dawson summarizes the situation, ‘serving the [Reformed] church in the Highlands was exclusively a family affair in the Highlands until the severe dislocation’ caused by the intra-Protestant schism of 1690.¹⁶ Thus, although Protestantism may in the first instance have been viewed by most Scottish Gaels as

¹²Terence McCaughey, ‘Protestantism and Scottish Highland Culture’, in *An Introduction to Celtic Christianity*, ed. by James P. Mackey (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), pp. 172-205 (p. 177).

¹³Jane Dawson, ‘Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd in Scotland’, in *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620*, ed. by Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, and Gillian Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 231-53 (p. 249).

¹⁴‘Is truagh m’imtheachd ó chuir Mhic Cailin’, § 5a; ‘Thriall bhur bunadh gu Pharao’, § 15f-g (*BG*, ll. 5596-97).

¹⁵Martin MacGregor, ‘Church and culture in the late medieval Highlands’, in *The Church in the Highlands*, ed. by James Kirk (Edinburgh: Scottish Church History Society, 1998), pp. 1-36 (p. 23).

¹⁶Dawson, ‘Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd’, p. 237.

something alien thrust upon them from outside,¹⁷ such inroads as it did make were based upon structures and connections established under the old order.

Protestant reformers also endeavoured to work within the Gaelic context by sending Gaelic speakers from Scotland for conversion efforts in Ireland. Denis Campbell, a close relative of the Earls of Argyll, became the Dean of Limerick at the end of the sixteenth century,¹⁸ for example, and a number of Gaelic-speaking ministers, most of them also from Argyll, went over to Ireland, mostly to Donegal, in connection with the Plantation of Ulster in the early 17th century. Their efforts bore little fruit. All Scots coming to Ireland during this period were part of the process of conquest and expropriation, and these Scottish Gaels, working within English-run, English-speaking institutions, were tied in to that process from the Irish perspective. The diversion of these Gaelic-speaking ministers to Ireland, moreover, caused the evangelization of the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* to suffer, for the reformed church was still greatly understaffed through much of the Highlands.¹⁹ The earliest and perhaps the most familiar demonstration of Scottish Protestant initiative being directed to Irish Gaeldom as well as Scottish is Carswell's *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh* of 1567, which is explicitly and self-consciously directed to *Gaoidhil Alban agus Eireand* and phrased in the first person plural.²⁰

The most remarkable example of Gaelic cultural norms being put to use for conversion purposes arose in 1624 during the course of the Irish Franciscan mission to Scotland (discussed in detail below), when Father Conchobhair Mac an Bhaird (Cornelius Ward) succeeded in securing the conversion of Sir Iain Caimbeul of Calder, a pillar of the government's control over the area who had been a key figure in the suppression of the large-scale Mac Domhnaill rising in the southern Hebrides in 1615. Mac an Bhaird — a member of the famous Ulster poetic family of that name — was

¹⁷Stiùbhart, p. 84.

¹⁸Among other activities, Campbell compiled an intelligence report dealing with the Hebrides for the English government in 1595 or 1596 (published as 'Observations of the Deane of Limerick for the West Isles of Scotland', *Miscellany of the Maitland Club*, IV, Part 1 (Glasgow: Maitland Club, 1847), pp. 37-57).

¹⁹Fiona MacDonald, p. 270.

²⁰R.L. Thomson, *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh*, pp. 10-13; see Donald E. Meek, 'The Reformation and Gaelic culture: perspectives on patronage, language and literature in John Carswell's translation of "The Book of Common Order"', in *The Church in the Highlands*, ed. by James Kirk (Edinburgh: Scottish Church History Society, 1998), pp. 37-62.

aware that Caimbeul of Calder held poets in great esteem, and thus presented himself as an Irish poet and delivered a panegyric poem to him, accompanied by a 'singer' (Latin *cantore*, though surely reflecting the traditional Irish *reacaire*), with a harp. After three days, Mac an Bhaird ventured to reveal his identity and to broach theological matters, eventually managing to win Caimbeul's conversion.²¹

Another significant conversion to Catholicism, albeit rather less dramatic in its circumstances, was that of the eighth Earl of Argyll, Gill-Easbuig Gruamach Caimbeul (†1638), who had also been instrumental in the suppression of the 1615 rising and served as the government's principal agent and enforcer in the *Gàidhealtachd*. After leaving Scotland for the Low Countries for health reasons in 1618, Gill-Easbuig began associating with exiled Catholic chiefs and attending mass under the influence of his second wife, the English Catholic noblewoman Lady Anna Cornwallis. Gill-Easbuig was promptly dispossessed, and although subsequently reinstated he never returned to Scotland; control of the earldom passed first to his brother and then to his son.²² Again, this episode demonstrates the fragility of the Protestant grip upon the Scottish Gaels, even in its linchpin, the Caimbeul aristocracy, during this time. Plainly, no fundamental and irreversible transformation had taken place.

*

The various Counter-Reformation efforts in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* in the early and middle decades of the seventeenth century represent one of the most significant aspects of the religious and cultural history of this period. These efforts involved a number of initiatives and missions, by Jesuits, Dominicans, Vincentians, and especially Franciscans, intermittently from the 1610s onwards. These missions are important for a number of reasons. First, they achieved striking successes, particularly those of the Franciscans, and if better funded and staffed might have secured the Catholic faith in the *Gàidhealtachd* much more widely than they did, thereby changing the cultural complexion of the region and, perhaps, providing a more secure basis for the preservation of traditional links with Ireland.²³ Second, these initiatives were

²¹Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, pp. 53-55. This was followed by more conversions among Caimbeul of Calder's relatives. Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, pp. 79-81.

²²Stiùbhart, pp. 98, 131.

²³John Lorne Campbell, *The Catholic Church in the Hebrides, 1560-1760* (Glasgow: St. Antony's [1983]),

almost entirely directed from Ireland and staffed by Irish priests, who used their command of the Gaelic language to reach the people, and a range of documents survive that yield fascinating insights into the attitudes of these Irishmen towards Scottish Gaeldom. Third, because of this Irish link, the missions worked within a Gaelic cultural context, and relied on Gaelic cultural norms and values to achieve their ends, most strikingly in the famous conversion of Caimbeul of Calder described above. In sum, the history of the Counter-Reformation demonstrates the extent to which matters were in a state of flux in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* in the early and middle decades of the seventeenth century, and the extent to which a distinctly different outcome to the processes of Reformation and Counter-Reformation in Scotland was possible. Again, this situation shows how the traditional Gaelic world, and the traditional connection between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland, broke down slowly rather than suddenly.

The first of these Counter-Reformation initiatives was launched by the Jesuits in the 1610s. Activity was based in the Lowland northeast, with limited incursions made from there into adjoining areas of the central Highlands, including Braemar, Glenlivet, and Strathglass.²⁴ More significant was the effort of Father David Gawley, originally from Cork, who made a successful visit to southern Argyll in 1619, reaching Texa, Islay, Jura, Colonsay, Arran, Kintyre, and Gigha, where he conducted masses and made numerous conversions. Given the repressive anti-Catholic climate — the region had been the scene of the rising of 1615, which had been brutally suppressed — the prevailing atmosphere among the people was one of considerable fear, and Father Gawley's activities were tightly circumscribed.²⁵ It appears that two other visits were also made to the area as part of the Jesuit mission, but details of these are unknown.

The most important Counter-Reformation initiative, however, was the Franciscan mission of 1619-46. The mission was hampered throughout its duration by a lack of human and material resources, but it nevertheless achieved striking successes, both in securing the Catholic faith in districts where it remains today (Moidart, Arasaig, South Uist, Barra and so on) and in winning large numbers of converts in

p. 7.

²⁴Allan I. MacInnes, 'Catholic Recusancy and the Penal Laws, 1603-1707', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, 23 (1987-89), 27-63 (p. 30).

²⁵Fiona Macdonald, p. 292.

areas that subsequently turned to Protestantism, including Skye, Harris, North Uist, Mull, Ardnamurchan and Morvern.

The mission was under the direction of the Irish Franciscan College of St. Anthony of Padua in Louvain, then led by Aodh Mac Cathbhail (Hugh McCaghwell) — an institution that played an enormously significant role in sustaining and developing Irish Gaelic intellectual life during the seventeenth century. The first two Franciscan missionaries, Fathers Éamonn Mac Cana (Edmond McCann) and Pádraig Bairéad (Patrick Brady), arrived in Scotland in March 1619, accompanied by a Scottish lay brother, John Stewart. Bairéad served the mainland, and Mac Cana the isles, until he was captured late in 1620, imprisoned for two years, and ordered not to enter Scotland or England again under penalty of death.²⁶ In the wake of Mac Cana's capture, the mission was expanded, with twenty Irish priests at Louvain volunteering for the assignment — an indication that enthusiasm for the project was not lacking amongst the Irish clergy.²⁷ As a result, three more missionaries were added in September 1623, Fathers Pól Ó Néill (Paul O'Neill), Conchubhair Mac an Bhaird (Cornelius Ward), and Pádraig Ó hÉigearthaigh (Patrick Hegarty), accompanied by Mac Cana, who chose to defy the banning order imposed upon him. The new recruits arrived in Scotland in early 1624.²⁸ Ó Néill left Scotland in early 1626, and does not appear to have been replaced, and from then until the end of the mission in 1637 the provision consisted of only four priests — Bairéad, Mac Cana, Mac an Bhaird, and Ó hÉigearthaigh — to cover the entire Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*.²⁹ The mission was tiny compared to the scale of Franciscan enterprise in Ireland, where more than two hundred brothers served in thirty-two monasteries, above and beyond the functioning network of diocesan priests.³⁰

The Franciscan missionaries concentrated their efforts in the southern half of the *Gàidhealtachd*, especially the Hebrides, Kintyre, and the western mainland of

²⁶Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, pp. ix-x.

²⁷Fiona MacDonald, p. 326.

²⁸Fiona MacDonald, p. 326.

²⁹Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, pp. x-xi. The actual extent of missionary activity was even less than this: Hegarty left Scotland in 1631 to direct the mission from Bonamargy Friary in Antrim, while Ward spent time on the Continent and in prison in London. *Ibid.*

³⁰Stiùbhart, p. 83.

Inverness-shire. Mainland Argyll, under the firm control of Mac Caillein Mór, was of course perilous territory, and relatively little attention was given to the mainland north of Kintail. Mac an Bhaird perceived this northern area as more densely provided with Protestant ministers and harsher in its anti-Catholic climate,³¹ a perception that seems justified given the significant acceptance of Protestantism among the aristocracy of the region and the relatively greater provision of ministers in the synods of Caithness, Ross, and Moray, as compared to that of Argyll.³² The missionaries also contended that north of Kintail differences of dialect became a problem for the Irish priests (all of them, perhaps not coincidentally, Ulstermen), but this was probably more in the nature of an excuse than a genuine reason for their lack of success in the north.³³ The success of the missionaries in performing baptisms and winning converts (a term used to include both Calvinist apostates and Catholics whose faith or observance had lapsed due to the collapse of the Church over the preceding sixty years) was so striking as to prompt unease in Rome about the veracity of the missionaries' reports, but sufficient proof was eventually provided to dispel these doubts. In 1633, Mac an Bhaird calculated that as of that date the missionaries had succeeded in 'converting' 6,627 and baptizing 3,010 — impressive figures considering that the total Hebridean population at the time was perhaps 45,000.³⁴

Throughout its duration, however, the mission was hampered by a lack of resources, not least the financial support promised from Rome, which was chronically delayed. Eventually the various missionaries withdrew from the project, with Mac an Bhaird being the last to return to Ireland, in August 1637. Various proposals were made to relaunch the mission in the 1640s, but these do not appear to have come to fruition.³⁵

³¹Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, p. 55.

³²Fiona Macdonald, p. 359 fn. 67.

³³John Lorne Campbell, *Canna: The Story of a Hebridean Island* (Oxford: Oxford University Press/National Trust for Scotland, 1984), pp. 53-54; Fiona Macdonald, p. 325. Note, however, that Father Bairéad laboured mostly in Sutherland, and the picture may be somewhat distorted by the lack of surviving documents relating to his activities compared to those of Mac an Bhaird in the south. Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, p. xii.

³⁴Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, pp. xii-xiii, 149. The population figure is based on Hayes-McCoy's interpolated estimate for 1593 (Hayes-McCoy, *Scots Mercenary Forces*, p. 357). Note that Ward's figures include converts and baptisms on the mainland, though these would have formed a relatively small proportion of the totals.

³⁵Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, pp. xiii-xiv.

Above and beyond its basic significance as a historical episode, the Franciscan mission is also important for the light it sheds on Gaelic cultural outlooks and on Irish attitudes towards Gaelic Scotland. The conversion of Caimbeul of Calder has already been noted. Significantly, there are indications of limited enthusiasm for the project amongst the Irish clerics at Louvain: their main concern was securing the Catholic faith in Ireland, and they do not seem to have considered working in Scotland to be a natural or obvious aspect of their work. Mac Aingil's initial response to the proposal, communicated to the papal nuncio Lucio Morro in October 1618, for example, took pains to emphasize the great difficulty of the task and communicated an insistence on proper funding to make the project acceptable.³⁶ This hesitation should not necessarily be taken as demonstrating Irish indifference, however: Mac Aingil's concerns were reasonable on their face, and were later to be proven justified by experience.³⁷ In addition, the evident interest in the project amongst the rank-and-file brethren at Louvain, described above, should not be overlooked.³⁸

Particularly fascinating are the numerous references in surviving documents submitted by the Irish Franciscan missionaries that express a perception of the Hebrides as isolated, barren, wretchedly poor, even barbarous, using words like *impervius*, *inops*, *incultus*, *remotus*, *asperus*, and *barbarus*.³⁹ These statements on the part of Irish Gaels are some of the earliest comments in such an analytic vein from within the Gaelic world, and are thus of considerable value; it is tempting to try to fit them into a broader construct of Irish condescension and perceptions of superiority. On the other hand, these perceptions of ignorance and barbarism surely relate primarily to the priests' assessments of the state of the Catholic faith in the region, which was

³⁶Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, document 5 (pp. 14-18).

³⁷Cathaldus Giblin, 'Hugh McCaghwell, O.F.M., Archbishop of Armagh (+1626) — Aspects of His Life', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, 11, no. 2 (1985), 259-90 (pp. 275-76).

³⁸Little enthusiasm was apparent among Irish priests for a proposed Dominican initiative in the late 1630s, however. The Master-General of the order noted that 'Irish Fathers will scarcely go to Scotland, deterred by the wildness of the mountains, the poverty of the country and the other inconveniences which put them off even more than the prospect of work in their own country, which they sometimes refuse'. Anthony Ross, 'Dominicans and Scotland in the Seventeenth Century', *Innes Review*, 23 (1972), 40-75 (p. 46). For proper interpretation, the entire sentence needs to be understood: these priests had opportunities to undertake missionary activity in many different parts of the world, many of them safer and more attractive than Ireland or Scotland, which was only slightly less appealing than Ireland itself.

³⁹Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, document 19 (pp. 47-50), document 20 (p. 56), document 69 (pp. 173, 176). See also the reports of Father Dermot Duggan to St. Vincent de Paul in 1652 (Mac Guaire, pp. 359-62).

very clearly in bad decay after sixty years of near-total neglect, and which contrasted unfavourably with the situation in the missionaries' native Ireland, where the continuity of Catholic tradition and knowledge had not been broken in the same way.⁴⁰ Mac Caingil's 1618 assessment of the viability of the project, for example, contends that '*ci vi sono moltissimi Scozzesi della lingua Ibernese che sono ciechi e smarriti nella fede*' ('there are very many Gaelic-speaking Scots who are blind concerning the faith or have strayed from it'), indeed '*che restano come mezzi gentili*' ('that they remain half-pagan'), but makes clear that this is '*non per malitia ma per pura ignoranza*' ('not through malice but through pure ignorance') and the unavailability of the basic sacrament of baptism.⁴¹ The same balanced view permeates the missionaries' subsequent reports: the poor position of the Hebrideans is consistently explained in terms of the collapse of Catholic institutions and not as some deep-rooted cultural characteristic.

In addition, the missionaries' statements came in the form of letters and reports to church superiors who were unaware of the most basic facts about the region — as demonstrated by the famous instruction to the missionaries, scattered throughout the West Highlands and Hebrides, to meet at least once every three nights to review their work.⁴² The implied comparison underlying these evocatively negative descriptions, then, is not between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland but between Gaelic Scotland and the urbanized Continent. Moreover, the accounts provided by the missionaries have a general flavour of exaggeration: there was clearly an incentive to play up the hardships and risks involved in the enterprise, so as to obtain additional resources from the hierarchy, which consistently provided the bare minimum or less.⁴³ The presentation of the Hebrides as barren and barbarous must, therefore, be considered in this context. All in all, these critical comments, though tantalizing, cannot properly be taken as more general Irish assessments of the cultural position of Scottish Gaeldom, and certainly not as assessments of the situation a century or two earlier.

⁴⁰Stiùbhart, p. 90.

⁴¹Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, document 5 (pp. 15-16).

⁴²Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, document 11 (pp. 24-26).

⁴³Fiona MacDonald, p. 322; see Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, document 20 (pp. 56-59), document 23

Recalling the notion of Scotland as exile so familiar from the poetry, the Franciscan missionaries explicitly invoked the example of Colm Cille as a model for their work, claiming to be following in his footsteps in bringing the faith to the Hebrides, a task appropriately given to Irishmen for that reason.⁴⁴ Fiona MacDonald has contended that this vision represented a feeling on the part of the Franciscans that they had 'to fall back on an ancient link to stress their common heritage' with the Scottish Gaels,⁴⁵ but it is better understood within familiar and traditional Gaelic paradigms, as discussed above, not as some kind of strategic sleight-of-hand.

The Franciscan missionaries also expressed a Gaelic perspective in a different way, emphasizing the hostility of Lowland Scots towards the Highlanders and suggesting that Catholic institutions run by Lowland Scots were allowing this enmity to override the need to produce Gaelic-speaking priests for the *Gàidhealtachd* — a neglect that had caused the Roman hierarchy to look to the Irish in the first place.⁴⁶ Indeed, the missionaries took pains to emphasize the loyalty and devotion of the Hebrideans, and argued that papal resources were much better spent on them than on the Lowlanders, who had shown little interest in the various Counter-Reformation efforts organized, at considerable expense, by Lowland Scots institutions.⁴⁷ Anti-Highland prejudice on the part of these institutions, such as the Scots College at Douai, remained a major factor in later Counter-Reformation efforts as well, ensuring that Irish priests continued to take responsibility for the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* well into the eighteenth century.⁴⁸ Again, this ongoing connection between Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic Scotland demonstrates how links, though weakened, were not completely broken during this period.

Ongoing Irish interest in, and a perceived connection to, Gaelic Scotland from a Counter-Reformation perspective can also be seen in devotional works of the

(pp. 94-98), document 24 (pp. 99-100).

⁴⁴Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, document 19 (pp. 47-50).

⁴⁵Fiona MacDonald, p. 354.

⁴⁶Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, document 23 (pp. 90-92, 94-95).

⁴⁷Giblin, *Irish Franciscan Mission*, document 23 (pp. 89-92). Here, too, the contrast to Ireland is significant: the 'Old English' in the urban Pale were the primary driving force behind the Counter-Reformation in Ireland, and Catholic initiative in Gaelic Ireland was dependent upon this. Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, pp. 240-41.

⁴⁸Fiona A. MacDonald, 'Irish Priests in the Highlands: Judicial Evidence from Argyll', *Innes Review*, 46 (1995), 15-33 (p. 17); Stewart, 'Catholic Missionary Successes'; Mac Guaire.

seventeenth century. Aodh Mac Aingil expressed such feelings of connection in his *Scáthán Shacramuinte na Aithridhe* — published in 1618, the same year that he expressed his concerns about the difficulties of the mission to Scotland — where he describes Scotland as Ireland’s dear daughter (*‘a hinghean ionmhuin’*) and portrays the two countries as long-standing bastions of uncorrupted faith.⁴⁹ Similarly, in the introduction to his handbook of Catholic teaching *Lóchrann na gCreidmheach* (1676), Froinsias Ó Maolmhuaidh laments the state of the faith in Ireland, and still more, in Scotland, lamenting *‘gur fhás a chomhmórsin do cheó ainbhfis a n-aos óg’* (*‘that such a fog of ignorance has developed within the youth’*) of Ireland, adding *‘ní áiridhim Alban bhoicht na nGaoidheal, tar a ttáinig an tonn timchioll le h-iomad do bhliadhnuibh’* (*‘I do not mention poor Scotland of the Gaels, where the wave broke many years ago’*). Ó Maolmhuaidh goes on to explain that his work is intended to bring light both to Ireland and to Scotland.⁵⁰ The overall sense that emerges from these statements and the reports of the Franciscan missionaries is one of ongoing perceived connection to Gaelic Scotland, albeit with hints of condescension or pity.

*

The weakening of traditional connections between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland over the course of the seventeenth century is clearly perceptible in the poetry of the period. This shift is rather less noticeable on the Irish side, for Irish poetry of the classical era had only very occasionally included Scotland within its frame of reference, as discussed above, and the poetry of the seventeenth century pays equally little attention to Scotland: certainly there is no sense at all of Scotland as a last bastion of ‘Gaeldom’, surviving still after the disaster of Kinsale. Scotland may actually be more prominent in the Irish poetry of the early eighteenth century than of any other period, but this is due to the politics of the Jacobite era and the crucial role of Gaelic Scotland therein.

On the Scottish side, however, a number of changes are perceptible in seventeenth-century poetry. In general, late seventeenth-century bardic poetry in

⁴⁹ Aodh Mac Aingil, *Scáthán Shacramuinte na Aithridhe*, ed. by Cailleach Ó Maonaigh, Scribhinní Gaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr, 1 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1952), p. 190 (ll. 6288-89).

⁵⁰ Ó Maolmhuaidh, pp. 11-12 (reprinted in Ó Lochlainn, *Tobar Fíorghlan Gaedhilge*, p. 163, and in Ó Súilleabháin, *Lucerna Fidelium*).

Scotland shows a distinct movement away from the classical ‘Irish’ style, becoming closer in feeling and idiom to the aristocratic vernacular poetry that comes to the fore in — indeed dominates — that century. Phrasing tends to become more personal, more emotional, stripped of the constant kennings and references to mythological history that embellish the earlier poetry. In the process, the imagistic geography of the poetry becomes much more Scottish, with references to particular places in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* becoming much more frequent, and the frame of reference now marked out with exclusively Scottish bounds: ‘*ó Maoil Íle go h-Asain*’ (‘from the Mull of Islay [the Oa] to Assynt’), ‘*ó Mhaoil go hArcaibh*’ (‘from the Mull [of Kintyre] to Orkney’); ‘*ó chrích Rois gus an Roinn Íligh*’ (‘from the bounds of Ross to the Rhinns of Islay’).⁵¹ Vernacular poetry is similarly more grounded in the reality of the Scottish Highland landscape, taking pains, for example, to emphasize the roughness of the Scottish terrain and the chiefs’ skill in negotiating it, typically in the context of the hunt: ‘*cha bu chuing ort an garbhloch*’ (‘rugged country was no hindrance for you’).⁵²

Ireland, meanwhile, seems to become hazier and more distant in Scottish bardic poetry of the seventeenth century. There are fewer references to specific places in Ireland, fewer kennings rooted in ancient Irish history and mythology; Ireland typically appears just as *Éire*, entire and undifferentiated, usually invoked simply to provide a vague sense of prestige. The pattern is very similar — though rather more pronounced and obvious — in vernacular poetry of the period.⁵³ This development is eminently understandable given the steady fraying of cultural and political relations between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland (or what remained of it) over the course of the seventeenth century. The fading of Ireland from the reality of Gaelic Scotland was an unambiguous fact of life.

⁵¹‘Níor ghlac cliath, colg no gunna’, § 10b; ‘Do thuirinn seasamh Síol gCuinn’, § 7a; ‘Fuaras cara ar sgáth na sgoile’ (‘I have found a friend on behalf of the school’) (Niall Mac Mhuirich, after 1661), § 8a (published in *RC*, I, 132-33; improved edition in *CW* 137A, pp. 107-09). Similar Irish bounds are common in Irish bardic poetry, both from the seventeenth century and earlier, perhaps classically ‘*ó Thoraigh go Cliodhna*’ (‘from Tory to Cliodhna’ [Glandore, Co. Cork]) (used, for example, in Gearóid Iarla’s ‘Ionmhain liom aibhne Éireann’, § 3c).

⁵²‘Thriall bhur bunadh gu Pharao’, § 7c (*BG*, I, 5539).

⁵³E.g. ‘Cha sùrd cadail | An rùn-s’ air m’aighe’, § 3g (l. 1083); ‘Thoir fios bhuam gu Anndra’, § 4g; ‘An taobh tuath ud cha téid mi’, §§ 3e-f, 6i; ‘Soraidh no dhà le dùrachd bhuam’, ll. 31-32; ‘S mi an diugh a’ fàgail

Thus Cathal Mac Mhuirich's lament beginning 'Leasg linn gabháil go Gearrloch', for Catriona, daughter of Domhnall Gorm Mac Domhnaill of Sleat and wife of the chief of Clann Mhic Coinnich, composed around 1635, refers to Gairloch, Ross, Glengarry, Lochaber, Sleat, Duntulm, Uist, and Alba itself, without a single mention of Ireland anywhere in its 35 quatrains, and the anonymous lament beginning 'Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne', for Donnchadh Dubh Caimbeul of Glenorchy (†1631), mentions Alba (by its own name and as '*íath innse h-Earc*' ('territory of the island of Erc')), Finlarig and Balloch, Loch Earn and Loch Tay, with no reference to Ireland in 23 quatrains except the nod that the chief's fame had reached Almhu, chief seat of Fionn mac Cumhaill in Leinster (not, it is worth noting, the more traditional Tara).⁵⁴ Three late elegies make no mention of Ireland at all: Niall Mac Mhuirich's 'Deireadh d'aoibhneas Innsi Gall', for Domhnall mac Iain Mhùideartaich, chief of Clann Raghnaill (†1686), Donnchadh Ó Muirgheasáin's 'Rug an fheibhe a terme as teach', for Sir Tormod Mac Leòid of Berneray (†1705), and the anonymous 'Ar ttriall bhus ésguigh go hUilliam' ('My journey to Uilliam will be eager'), for Uilliam Mac Leòid (†1705).

This pattern is especially clear in the seventeenth-century Caimbeul poetry, from which Ireland is almost entirely absent, and in which Britain provides a principal frame of reference — an indication of the Caimbeuls' orientation to Edinburgh and London and, necessarily, away from Ireland. The anonymous mid-seventeenth century poem 'Triath na nGaidheal Giolla-easbuig' ('Giolla-easbuig is the Lord of the Gaels'), for instance, praises Mac Cailein as '*as uaisle don fhuil Bhreatnaigh*' ('noblest of British blood'), for being obeyed by 'Pádraig óig Breatan' ('the youths of Britain'), and visited by '*sgaoth aos ealadhna fhuinn Bhreatan*' ('a swarm of the learned men of the land of Britain'): '*meadh da h-uaisle ní bía a mBreatuin*' ('a balance to weigh his nobility will not be found in Britain') (§§ 35a, 8b, 24a, 4c). The poem also gives much attention to King Arthur, the great 'British' hero, and Ireland is almost invisible. Praise for the Caimbeuls' partly British origins, emphasized along with their Gaelic pedigree, is also an important feature of earlier Caimbeul poetry; in a unique formulation, An

na tíre'.

⁵⁴This reference may also be understood as purely Scottish, with the connection being to the Caimbeul

Calbhach Ó Domhnaill's *ollamh* describes the fourth Earl of Argyll (†1558) as a *Breat-Ghaoidheal* or 'British-Gael'.⁵⁵

This connection to seats of power in Britain also finds expression in other ways. Loyalty to the Crown, united between Scotland and England from 1603 onwards, receives new emphasis in the poetry, though this fidelity could be manifested in a range of quite different political choices, especially after 1688-89 and the deposition of the Stewart line. Perhaps the most remarkable statement here is the anonymous poem composed in connection with the imprisonment of the eighth Earl (first Marquis) of Argyll in 1661 (an imprisonment that culminated in his execution), where the poet describes Argyll as '*buachaill an Chrúin*' ('shepherd of the Crown') and observes that '*ba cleathach calma don Chrún sibh ó thús ó linn go linn*' ('You were stout champions of the Crown from the beginning through the ages') — praise one cannot imagine being applied to a traditional Gaelic chief in earlier centuries.⁵⁶ The poem is also an outstanding example of bardic non-realism, for the Earl was executed precisely because he had been a stout Covenanter and vigorous *opponent* of the Crown during the wars of the 1640s.

Similarly, the bardic poets take pains to note the Caimbeuls' Protestantism. Mac Cailein is described as '*triath chothuighthe a ccreidimh*' ('a lord who defends their faith') and '*go n-ardbhladh n-eaglasda*' ('of high fame within the [Established] Church'),⁵⁷ and references to the psalms are frequent: Donnchadh Dubh of Glenorchy (†1631) is described as '*ó Duibhne úr salmach súaghach*' ('noble descendant of Duibhne [i.e. Caimbeul] who loved psalms and sages') and an evening's entertainment at Mac Cailein's court is said to consist of '*greis aig seanchas, greis aig salmuibh*' ('a time at lore, a time at the psalms').⁵⁸

One of the more interesting developments in seventeenth-century Scottish panegyric poetry, especially the vernacular but also the bardic, is the prominent use of what John MacInnes labels the motif of the allies — the invocation in a great roll-call

stronghold near Alva in Clackmannanshire. I am grateful to Ronald Black for this suggestion.

⁵⁵'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg', § 31c.

⁵⁶'Is maith mo leaba, is olc mo shuain', §§ 1c, 14a-b. Breandán Ó Buachalla observes that references to *an choróin* (the crown) were unknown in Irish bardic poetry before the seventeenth century. Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar*, p. 65.

⁵⁷'Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban', § 6b-d.

of kindreds who are connected to the chief addressed in the poem, some of them subordinate to the chief in question, some superior in might, some of them related by blood, some by political allegiance. Important rivals or even enemies may be included in the enumeration; the purpose is to locate the chief in his ideal imagined community, not to lay out a realistic political presentation. Typically these ‘allies’ are portrayed as rising with the chief in battle, or, in the case of elegies, grieving the chief’s death.⁵⁹

This motif is an occasional feature of Irish bardic poetry,⁶⁰ but much more striking is the traditional ‘convention of ignoring the existence of powerful contemporary persons other than the chief to whom a given poem was addressed’.⁶¹ The emphasis in bardic poetry, according to William Gillies, is on ‘personal autonomy and . . . descent’, while the vernacular tradition, in a form of ‘medieval union demarcation’, stresses ‘relatedness and connections’.⁶²

The two traditions seem to come together in seventeenth-century Scotland, and significantly, these ally-lists consist entirely of kindreds based in Scotland, with the regular exception of the Mac Domhnaills of Antrim, who appear in almost all Clann Domhnaill examples and even in poems composed for members of various other kindreds.⁶³ Relatedness and connections are perceived in almost exclusively Scottish

⁵⁸ ‘Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne’, § 11c; ‘Is truagh m’imtheachd ó chuir Mhic Cailin’, § 5a.

⁵⁹ John MacInnes, ‘The Panegyric Code’, pp. 448-49. Significantly, this feature occurs in two of the earliest surviving vernacular poems, ‘S cianail, gruamach, coimheach guarach’ and ‘An Duanag Ullamh’ (‘Triallaidh mi le m’ dhuanag ullaimh’). In ‘S cianail, gruamach, coimheach guarach’, grief over the dead lady’s death is expressed by invoking the kindreds — Mac Gill-Eathains, Mac Domhnaills, Stiùbharts, Clann Chatain, and Caimbeuls — that would have risen up in revenge had she been slain by an enemy rather than dying a natural death (§§ 6-7); in ‘An Duanag Ullamh’, the Mac Leòids and Mac Gill-Eathains, together with Seumas nan Ruag of Clann Iain Mhóir — indeed ‘*uaisle Innse Gall an coimhlion*’ (‘the nobles of the Hebrides all’) — are invoked as allies of Gill-Easbuig, (fourth?) Earl of Argyll, ‘*rìgh Ghaoidheal*’ (§§ 13-15, ll. 6915-25). Other relatively early examples include Iain Lom’s ‘A Dhòmhnail an Dùin’ (before 1643) (§§ 12-13; *BG*, ll. 5975-80, *ÒIL*, ll. 137-42) and Eachann Bacach’s ‘Mhic Mhoire na gréine’ (‘Son of Mary of the sunshine’) (‘Iorram do Shir Lachann’/‘Iorram to Sir Lachlann’) (c. 1635(?)), §§ 14d, 15a (published in *EB*, poem 2, and in *GC*, poem 16).

⁶⁰ E.g., ‘D’fhior chogaidh comhailtear sóthcháin’, §§ 49-55; ‘Sealbh Éireann ag aicme Néill’ (‘The possession of Ireland is to the race of Niall’) (Mac-con Ó Cléirigh, c. 1590(?)), §§ 37-45 (unpublished (RIA MS 23 F 16, p. 76; British Library Egerton MS 111, f. 68 b.)).

⁶¹ William Gillies, ‘The Classical Irish Poetic Tradition’, in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by D. Ellis Evans, John G. Griffith, and E.M. Jope (Oxford: Jesus College, 1983), pp. 108-20 (p. 112); *TD*, I, xlvi.

⁶² Gillies, ‘The Classical Irish Poetic Tradition’, pp. 112 and 119 fn. 11.

⁶³ E.g., ‘Tha ulaidh orm an uamharrachd’, § 13 (ll. 983-88); ‘S fhad tha mi ag èisdeachd ri ur diochuimhn’ (‘Long have I been listening to your oblivious ramblings’) (‘Luinneag Mhic Neachdain’/‘Mac Neachdain’s Song’) (anonymous, c. 1680-85), § 2c-e (published in *GC*, poem 35). Unusually, Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair notes several Irish septs of Clann Domhnaill, including ‘*na Galloglaich bho’n Bhana*’ (‘the

terms; the imagined community does not extend to Ireland.

Perhaps the first, and most impressive, example of this new style in bardic poetry is found in the anonymous poem to Giolla-easbuig, Earl of Argyll, beginning ‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaidheal’, where the various ‘*ármuinn uaisle Innsi Gall*’ (‘noble warriors of the Hebrides’) are presented in battle-roll for Mac Cailein. Clann Domhnaill are announced first — as is *cóir* or ‘proper’, according to the poet, if highly unrealistic in political terms — followed in turn by Clann Ghill-Eathain, Clann Raghnaill, ‘*fine Leóid*’, and Clann Fhionghuine, together with other unnamed kindreds from Kintyre, Islay, and Barra (§§ 17-24). A geographically and politically interesting variant occurs in the roughly contemporary elegy for Donnchadh Dubh Caimbeul of Glenorchy, where the kindreds said to march to the chief’s banner are not Gaelic Hebridean clans but magnates of the eastern *Gàidhealtachd*, adjoining the Lowland northeast:

*Iarla Abhuill is Iarla Drumonn
diúc fhuil Mhoráigh, mór an dáimh;
's gach glún da n-gargshlógh 'na n-deaghaidh
gu múr ardmhór Bhealaich bháin.*

The Earl of Atholl and the Earls Drummond,
the ducal blood of Moray, great the train;
and each scion of their fierce hosts behind
them, to the great high rampart of white
Bealach.⁶⁴

Donnchadh Ó Muirgheasáin’s elegy for Sir Tormod Mac Leòid of Berneray (†1705), applies the convention to the context of grieving allies, invoking ‘*crú Domhnuill*’ ‘*fa orchra*’ (‘the race of Domhnall in woe’) and ‘*Clann Ghioll-Eoin an éideadh bróin*’ (‘Clann Gill-Eathain in mourning clothes’).⁶⁵

The motif of the allies is not as striking in vernacular Irish poetry of the seventeenth century, but when it does appear, as in the work of Dáibhidh Ó Bruadair, the kindreds invoked tend to be exclusively Irish, and there is no sense of pan-Gaelic

*gallóglai*gh from the Bann’) in his ‘Mo chion na chunnaic mi ’m chadal’ (‘Dear to me is what I saw in my sleep’) (‘Óran do Ragnall Óg [Mac] Mhic Ailein’/‘A Song to Ragnall Óg Mac Mhic Ailein’) (1746-47) (published in MacDonald and MacDonald, *The MacDonald Bards*, pp. 192-99 (§§ 24-28). The inclusion of the Mac Domhnaills of Antrim is retained quite late as a stereotyped feature, as in Calum Dubh Mac an t-Saoir’s elegy for ‘Caiptein Mac-Mhuirich’ (1800), beginning ‘S beag ìoghnadh mi ’bhi dubhach’ (‘Little surprise is it that I am gloomy’) (published in MacMhuirich, *An Duanaire*, pp. 13-17) (§8f).

⁶⁴ ‘Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne’, § 10.

⁶⁵ ‘Do thuim aoihbneas Innsi Gall’, §§ 28a-b, 29a.

solidarity across Sruth na Maoile.⁶⁶ Only the (decreasingly Scottish) Mac Domhnaills of Antrim are common in Irish enumerations,⁶⁷ but Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta's famous 'Tuireamh Shomhairle Mhic Dhomhnaill' ('Lament for Somhairle Mac Domhnaill'), composed for a member of the Antrim branch of the family killed at the Battle of Aughrim in 1691, demonstrates an evident familiarity with Scottish tradition, asserting the Mac Domhnaills' sway from 'Dún Breatan go bóchna' ('Dumbarton to the sea') and claim to 'a house and half of Scotland': '*Leith Alban bu ceart dóibh is Baile tré chrógacht*' ('half of Scotland was theirs by right and house through heroism').⁶⁸ The geographic bounds of Irish poetry also tend to be confined within national limits, although, exceptionally, 'Tuireamh Shomhairle Mhic Dhomhnaill' extends its scope to Islay, in recognition of Clann Domhnaill's traditional centre (l. 85).

*

Assessing the separation of Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland over the course of the seventeenth century — which arguably stretched on until 1746 — is largely a matter of interpolation and inference, considering the evidence of things not said. The sundering of the main lines of connection is very clear, if their myriad and subtle consequences are less obvious. The subjugation of Gaelic Ireland in the first decade of

⁶⁶E.g., 'Is bocht mo bheatha i gcreathaibh éaga' ('Poor is my life, in death-throes') (c. 1652-57), §§ 14-16, and 'Dursan éag Éamoinn Mhic Ghearailt' ('Woeful is the death of Éamonn Mac Gearailt') (c. 1667), §§ 34-41 (published in *Duanaire Dháibhidh Uí Bhruadair/The Poems of David Ó Bruadair*, ed. by John C. Mac Earlean, 3 vols, Irish Texts, 11, 13, 18 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1910, 1913, 1917), I, poems 6 and 14.

⁶⁷E.g. 'Is bocht mo bheatha i gcreathaibh éaga', § 15b; 'A theampaill, b'fhuras duit cuidiú le Gaelaibh' ('Church, it would be easy for you to succour the Gaels') ('Tuireamh Mhurcha Crúis'/Lament for Murcha Crúis') (Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta, 1702), l. 145; 'A Thulaigh Ó Meith goidé an ghruaimse ort?' ('O Hill of Omeath, what gloom is upon you?') ('Tuireamh Néill Óig Mhic Murchaidh'/Lament for Niall Óg Mac Murchaidh') (Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta, 1714), l. 133 (published in *Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta: Dánta*, ed. by Seán Ó Gallchóir (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1971), poems 6 and 7 respectively); 'Mór an chreidhill seo gheibhim do chéas me' ('Greatly has the death-tidings I have received tormented me') (Liam Ruadh Mac Coitir, 1720), § 68c (published in *Cois na Cora, .i. Liam Ruadh Mac Coitir agus a Shaothar Fileata*, ed. by Risteárd Ó Foghludha (Dublin: Oifig Díolta Foillseacháin Rialtais, 1937), poem 7). 'Mór an chreidhill seo gheibhim do chéas me' also includes 'Mac Ailín' in the enumeration (§ 67d), which the editor glosses (p. 85) as '*na fir troda thug Clann Domhnaill leó ó Albain*' ('the warriors whom Clann Domhnaill brought over from Scotland'), but which might be taken as referring to the principal Mac Caillein in Scotland. Ó Rathaille's 'Créad an siobhra nimhe seo ar Fhóidla?' (1696(?)) not only includes in its enumeration '*Mac Aillín na bhfadscríob*' ('Mac Caillein of the far-extending raids') and '*Mac Domhnaill*', but follows this by invoking '*Mac Néill, Mac Léin, is Mac Leomhain*' (§ 11c-d). Since there are no obvious Irish counterparts for these names, these last three may refer to the Mac Néills of Barra, the Mac Gill-Eathains of Duart, and the Mac Leòids of Harris.

⁶⁸The poem begins with the line 'Is in Eachroim an áir atáid ina gcónaí' ('It's in Aughrim of the slaughter they are lying') and is published in Ó Gallchóir, poem 15 (ll. 144-45). This traditional Mac Domhnaill claim is discussed in John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry and Historical Tradition', p. 154, and in William Matheson,

the seventeenth century meant that Scottish Gaelic military power, which for the better part of four centuries had assured a constant flow of Scottish Gaels back and forth between Scotland and Ireland, disappeared from the Irish scene almost completely. The changed political dynamic also removed the rationale for the binding institutions of marriage and fosterage that had connected the great Gaelic families across Sruth na Maoile. As the Gaelic chiefs in both countries were weakened, and slowly absorbed into a new political and cultural system centred on London, patronage for the traditional Gaelic arts and professions dissipated. The collapse of the traditional learned schools, which had for centuries produced the international Gaelic intelligentsia, was perhaps the single most important factor in the separation of the Gaelic world, for this change worked a profound transformation at the imaginative level. Without constant reinforcement and retelling from the learned poets, old paradigms and understandings fell into desuetude, leaving half-remembered rubble or a vacuum to be filled with new ideas and interpretations.

Conclusion

This study has endeavoured to marshal the available evidence in an attempt to assess the nature of the relationship between Gaelic Scotland and Gaelic Ireland during the late medieval period, and the ways in which that relationship was perceived and understood by Scottish and Irish Gaeldom. The limitations of the sources mean that only a cloudy picture emerges, and at times the evidence is contradictory if not paradoxical.

The traditional framework of the Gaelic ‘culture-province’ — a unified Gaeldom from Cape Clear to Cape Wrath — seems distinctly unsatisfying in many respects. Identities and relationships seem to have functioned simultaneously at a number of different levels — dynastic, local, ‘national’, ‘international’¹ — but there was clearly an important place for the ‘national’: a sense throughout the period that a divide between Scottish Gaeldom and Irish Gaeldom existed and was recognized, and that, although other divisions were certainly also present, this was the most important and fundamental division within the Gaelic world. In particular, the sense of Irish identity, defined by and confined to the national island-territory, functions as a constant throughout the period, generally in coexistence with other identities, but more and more exclusively from the end of the sixteenth century onwards. From this Irish perspective Gaelic Scotland seems to have stood on a hazy periphery much of the time, nearly out of sight and out of mind; but then there are sudden dislocations, and the Scottish connection becomes central and immediate, as manifested, in very different ways, by the literary career of Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin and the back-to-back arranged marriages in 1569 between Lady Agnes Caimbeul and her daughter ‘*An Inghean Dubh*’ to Ó Néill and Ó Domhnaill.

Attempting to reconstruct how other people thought many centuries ago is a hazardous endeavour, but the suggestion that ‘late medieval Gaeldom’ — a unified Irish-Scottish *Gàidhealtachd* — ‘thought more in terms of a Gaelic world [. . .] surrounded by *Goill*’² than as Irish or Scottish Gaels cannot be accepted as a viable conclusion. The separation *within* Gaeldom seems to have been important throughout

¹See Joep Leersen, *The Contention of the Bards (Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh) and its Place in Irish Political and Literary History*, Irish Texts, Subsidiary Series, 2 (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1994), p. 12.

this period, with Scottish Gaeldom often functioning separately from Irish Gaeldom, and vice-versa.

Of course, the cultural and political connections between the two parts of the Gaelic world were extremely significant, and worked to tie the two closely together. Here too, though, the idea of 'Gaeldom' as some seamless web does not survive analysis, for the evidence across the range of cultural activity suggests a systematically dominant role for Ireland. This must not be understood in terms of perceived superiority or inferiority, however, let alone of 'complexes'; this order seems to have been considered natural and normal, and thus accepted, indeed almost venerated, in this highly conservative society.

This discussion has focused fairly closely on a particular era, albeit one whose precise limits are somewhat vague at both ends, and within that period it has looked primarily at the formal poetry, which provides the source material most firmly rooted in political and social reality. It has also focused upon the 'Gaelic world' of the late medieval era — that is, those areas that remained linguistically and culturally Gaelic throughout the period — and upon the sources written in Gaelic. As those sources pay little attention to the part of Scotland that turned away from Gaelic language and culture during this period, the Gaelic dimension of 'Lowland' Scotland is rarely brought into consideration. A broader investigation pushing the inquiry into other domains would make for a useful line of further investigation in the future.

One obvious line of study would involve a chronological expansion, considering the actual and imagined relationship between Scotland and Ireland in the period leading up to the classical era, beginning in the early centuries of Gaelic presence in Scotland but especially in the centuries immediately preceding the classical age — especially the ninth through twelfth, when Gaelic culture was dominant in the Scottish monarchy. In many important respects, this Gaelic culture in Scotland, focused on the east and south of the country, seems to have been distinctly different from the later culture that emerged in the Hebrides and West Highlands in the later medieval period, so that late medieval Scottish Gaelic culture should not necessarily be seen as a vestigial remnant, or indeed a natural outgrowth, of the earlier 'eastern Gaelic' culture. A deeper understanding of the connection between Ireland and

²Ellis, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, p. 251.

Scotland in earlier centuries would not only shed more light on that period but might also improve understanding of the background to the relationships of the late medieval period and the assumptions and outlooks that underpinned them.³

Although the traditional emphasis amongst Scottish historians studying the late medieval period has been to focus on the formation of a feudal kingdom, more or less in the Western European mainstream, in recent years a number of scholars working in a range of fields — history, literature, onomastics — have been actively investigating the residual Gaelic element in Lowland Scotland in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Dauvit Broun has demonstrated, for example, how an Irish identity and ancient Irish pedigree were consciously maintained and developed in southern and eastern Scotland during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁴ The relationship between that ‘Lowland Gaelic’ culture and identity and the ‘Highland Gaelic’ culture and identity that developed in the late medieval period and culminated in the Lordship of the Isles remains much less than fully understood. So too the imagined and actual connections between ‘Lowland Gaelic’ culture and Gaelic Ireland certainly have a significance with respect to the later relationship between Gaelic Ireland and Highland Scotland. Indeed, the traditionally overwhelming focus on ‘the making of the kingdom’ among late medieval Scottish historians means that the broad process of language and culture shift from the late eleventh century onwards — the development of the Highland/Lowland divide — remains remarkably understudied and incompletely understood.

Study of the earlier period in Scotland would also benefit from a deeper investigation of the role of Scotland in earlier Gaelic literature, especially prose tales and pseudo-history.⁵ Although the understanding of Scotland as a practical, political entity is certainly important, perhaps more significant are the ways in which Scotland functioned at an imaginative level — how it was perceived, interpreted, and classified. Such earlier understandings are clearly relevant to the worldview of the late medieval bards, whose training was steeped in older tradition and worked within long-

³Máire Herbert’s recent article ‘Sea-divided Gaels?’, which focuses largely on the interpretation of genealogies, is a significant step in this direction.

⁴Broun, *The Irish Identity of the Kingdom of the Scots*; Dauvit Broun, ‘Anglo-French acculturation and the Irish element in Scottish identity’, in *Britain and Ireland 900-1300: Insular Responses to Medieval European Change*, ed. by Brendan Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 135-53.

⁵Some preliminary work has been done in this area, e.g. Eugene Growney, ‘Scotland in Early Irish Literature’, *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Glasgow*, 2 (1891-94), 239-75; Ó Baoill, ‘Scotland in Early Gaelic Literature’; W.J. Watson, ‘The History of Gaelic in Scotland’.

established paradigms. Perhaps most obvious here is the deeply rooted concept of Scotland as exile which remains so vital throughout the classical era.

An extension of this line of work, deepening rather than broadening the study undertaken in this thesis, would involve assessing different kinds of Gaelic literature produced during the late medieval period, above and beyond the formal bardic poetry. Heroic poetry, most notably *Fianaíocht* (Ossianic material), is certainly relevant here: the relationship between literary imagination and specific geographic locations (both Irish and Scottish) is a complex dynamic in this material.⁶ Equally, the prose romances of the period, produced as written literary compositions in the first instance and then further developed in the oral tradition during subsequent centuries in both Ireland and Scotland, are also pertinent. The imagined landscape of these stories, for example, is fascinating. As Alan Bruford explains, 'though the romances circulated and some may even have been composed in Gaelic Scotland, the principal heroes never seem to be Scottish. In fact Scotland is traditionally treated as a home of magic and adventure, like other foreign countries'.⁷ In addition, the ways in which these stories and other prose tales like *Cath Fionntrágha* and *Oidheadh Chuinn Chéadchathaigh* were revised and adapted by scribes in the service of particular patrons may have broader cultural significance.⁸

A broadened inquiry would clarify and refine the conclusions of this study but would not, in all probability, alter them dramatically. Sketched lines might become firmer and more confident; conflicts and paradoxes might be more successfully resolved. At the end of the day, though, the relationship between Scotland and Ireland must be considered one of ambiguous connection: divided Gaels, but Gaels both, despite that division, yet defined by that division.

⁶See Donald Meek, 'Place-names and Literature: Evidence from the Gaelic Ballads', in *The Uses of Place Names*, ed. by Simon Taylor (Edinburgh: Scottish Cultural Press, 1998), pp. 147-68.

⁷Bruford, *Gaelic Folk-Tales and Medieval Romances*, p. 17 fn. 1.

⁸See Caoimhín Breatnach, 'The Historical Context of *Cath Fionntrágha*', *Éigse*, 28 (1994-95), 138-55; Caoimhín Breatnach, 'The Murder of Shane O'Neill: *Oidheadh Chuinn Chéadchathaigh*', *Ériu*, 43 (1992), 159-75.

TABLE OF POEMS CITED

This table is in two parts, a list of poems cited arranged by first lines, in alphabetical order, followed by a list arranged according to the poems' authors. Alphabetical order is strict: for example, poems beginning with 'S, an abbreviation for *is*, will be found under *s*.

‘A Bhanbha, is truagh do chor’ (Eoghan Ó Dubhthuigh, c. 1610(?))	129
‘A bhean fuair fail ar an bhfeart’ (Eóghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird, c. 1610)	162
‘A bhean, leasaich an stóp dhuinn’ (Iain Lom Mac Domhnaill, c. 1663)	123n, 126n
‘A’ cheud Di-luain de’n ràithe’ (Ruaidhri Mac Mhuirich (‘An Clàrsair Dall’), c. 1688-93)	142n
‘A chinn Diarmaid Uí Chairbre’ (Dean of Knoydart (Eoin Mac Mhuirich), c. 1490)	70n
‘A Chlanna Chuinn, cuimhnichibh’ (Lachlann Mac Mhuirich, 1411)	69, 110n, 123n
‘A Choinnich, cuiream le chéile’ (Ruaidhri Mac Mhuirich (‘An Clàrsair Dall’), c. 1700)	142n
‘A Chormuic, cuimhnigh an chóir’ (Diarmuid mac Laoisigh Mac an Bhaird, c. 1689)	93n
‘Adhbhur tuirsi ag fuil Fhionghuin’ (anonymous, c. 1630)	73n, 114n, 132n, 143n
‘A Dhòmhnail an Dùin’ (Iain Lom Mac Domhnaill, before 1643)	166, 204n
‘A Dhomhnail, deadhlam fá shíodh’ (Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, c. 1220)	169n
‘A éolcha Alban uile’ (anonymous, c. 1093)	123
‘A fhir ghlacas a ghalldacht’ (Laoiseach Mac an Bhaird, c. 1580)	16n
‘A fhir thagras an chaint bhaoth’ (Art Óg Ó Caoimh, c. 1616)	132n
‘A ghilli gabhus an stiúir’ (Giolla Brighde Albanach, c. 1220)	88n
‘Ainmigh ria ccách ceann a ccion’ (Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh (?); after 1644)	84
‘Air Allt Ghartan ghlacas bradan’ (Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair Mac Domhnaill, c. 1727)	19n
‘Air teachd on Spáin, do shliochd an Gháoidhil ghlais’ (Maighstir Seathan Mac Gill-Eathain, 1707)	15, 120n, 126n
‘Aisling ad-chonnarc ó chianaibh’ (Giolla Brighde Albanach, c. 1200)	85, 88n, 106n

‘Aithris fhréimhe ruanaidh Eoin’ (Donnchadh mac Dubhghaill Mhaoil Mac Griogóir, before 1519)	116n, 122n
‘A láimh oinidh óir is oighre’ (anonymous, before 1748)	96
‘Alba gan díon an déidh Ailín’ (anonymous Mac Mhuirich poet, c. 1514)	70n, 114n, 130, 136n, 137
‘A leabhráin ainmnighther d’ Aodh’ (Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird, 1625)	126n
‘A mhic an fhir ruaidh’ (anonymous, c. 1600)	22n
‘A Mhic Phàrlain an Arthair’ (‘Am Bàrd Liomanach’, c. 1550-80)	110
‘A Mhuireadhaigh, meil do sgín’ (Giolla-Brighde Albanach (?), c. 1218(?))	88n
‘An cuala sibhse an tionndadh duineil’ (Iain Lom Mac Domhnaill, 1645)	128n
‘An naidheachd so an dé’ (Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh Nic Leòid, c. 1699)	119n
‘Anocht is uaigneach Éire’ (Ainnrias Mac Marcuis, c. 1607)	72n
‘An síth do rogha, a rígh Fionnghall?’ (anonymous, c. 1590)	81, 107n, 118n, 148, 149n, 151n
‘An taobh tuath ud cha téid mi’ (anonymous, c. 1684-85)	96, 154n, 201n
‘Aonar dhamhsa eidir dhaoinibh’ (anonymous, c. 1620(?))	91n
‘A phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar’ (Aithbhreac inghean Coirceadail, c. 1455-70)	152, 154n
‘Ar ghuth éinfhir anaid Bréifnigh’ (Mathghamhain Ó hUiginn, before 1362)	145n
‘Ar sliocht Gaodhal ó Ghort Gréag’ (anonymous, 1513)	22, 74n, 131n
‘Ar ttriall bhus ésguigh go Uilliam’ (anonymous, 1705)	68n, 119n, 142n
‘A Shaerbhreachaigh éachtaigh mo bhrón tu’ (Diarmaid mac Seáin Bhuidhe Mac Cárthaigh, c. 1694)	92n
‘A sheanchrioch Fáil, is gnách gach léan ort’ (Fearghas Mac Bheatha, 1733)	19n
‘A Sheónoid, méadaigh meanma’ (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1635-40)	71n
‘A Shionann Bhriain Bhóroimhe’ (Diarmaid Ó Briain, c. 1440(?))	122n, 134n, 140n
‘A Shionann Chuinn Chéadchathaigh’ (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, c. 1440(?))	122n, 140n
‘Atám i gcás idir dhá chomhairle’ (Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa, c. 1590)	167
‘A theachtaire théid i gcéin go talamh Mhic Leóid’ (Toirdhealbhadh Óg Ó Mitháin, c. 1650(?))	82n, 98n

'A theampaill, b'fhuras duit cuidiú le Gaelaibh' (Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta, 1702)	205n
'A Thulaigh Ó Meith goidé an ghruaimse ort?' (Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta, 1714)	205n
'Bean do lámhaigeadh Leith Cuinn' (anonymous, 1632)	133n
'Beannachd dhut o'n ghabh thu 'n t-àm' Iain Mac Àidh ('Am Piobaire Dall'), c. 1750(?)	142n
'Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaire, c. 1600)	140, 143n, 170n
'Beid mar do bhádar roimhe' (anonymous, c. 1644)	84
'Bérad breath na himriosna' (Tadhg an Ghadhraigh Mac Aodhagáin, c. 1440(?))	140n
'Bí ad mhosgaladh, a mheic Aonghais' (anonymous, c. 1600)	82, 107n, 114n, 143n, 147n, 151n, 152n, 162n, 172-74
'Bile cosanta Críche Fáil' (Dónall Mac Lochlainn (?), c. 1705 (?))	84n
'Bráthair don iocht an t-oineach' (anonymous, c. 1410(?))	149n, 164-65
'Brian Ó Ruairc mo rogha leannán' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaire, 1566)	154n
'Bríathra cogaidh con chath Laighnech' (Seithfín Mór, c. 1450)	16n
'Buaidh thighearna ar thóiseachaibh' (Mac Giolla Fhionntóg an Fear Dána, c. 1415)	114n, 151n
'Cá h-ainm a-tá ar Fearghal Óg?' (anonymous, c. 1581(?))	96n
'Cáit ar ghabhadar Gaoidhil?' (Lochlainn Ó Dálaigh, c. 1610)	128n
'Ceanglam re chéile, a Chormuic' (Irial Ó hUiginn, 1581x1612)	97n
'Ceannaigh duain t'athar, a Aonghas' (anonymous, c. 1250)	20n, 38m, 82, 106n, 115n, 117n, 118n, 119n, 126n, 147n, 148n, 150n, 151n, 159-60
'Ceannas Gaoidheal do chloinn Cholla' (Ó hÉanna, before 1503)	57n, 80, 106n, 118n, 147n
'Ceannphort Éireann Ard Macha' (Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe, c. 1270)	137n
'Chaidh an diugh, chaidh an diugh, chaidh an diugh oirmne' (anonymous, 1429(?))	110n
'Cha sùrd cadail An rùn-s' air m'aigne' (Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh Nic Leòid, 1705)	62n, 154n, 201n
'Cia as urra d'ainm an iarthair' (Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, 1640)	68n, 86
'Cia do-ghéabhainn go Gráinne' (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, c. 1420)	137
'Cia feasda as urra don eól' (Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, 1642)	68n, 79n, 86, 122n

'Cian ó d'ibheas digh ndearmaid' (Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, c. 1228)	140, 169n
'Cia ré gcuirfinn séd suirghe' (Tadhg Mór Ó Cobhthaigh, c. 1540-44)	144n
'Cionnas mhaireas mé am aonar' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1650)	116n, 127n
'Cionnus do mholfuinn mac ríogh' (Mac Con Ó Cléirigh, before 1596)	132n
'Clann Ghille Eoin na mbratach badhbha' (anonymous Mac Mhuirich poet, date unknown)	70n
'Cóir feitheamh ar uaislibh Alban' (anonymous, c. 1475(?))	114n, 116n, 130n, 132n
'Coitchenn cumha chloinne Néill' (anonymous, 1632)	132n
'Crann do chuir amach Naoi nár' (Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe, c. 1250)	115n
'Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois' (Eóin Óg Ó Muirgheasáin, 1626)	52, 68n, 119n, 142n, 143n, 148, 153n
'Créad an síobhra nimhe seo ar Fhódla?' (Aodhagán Ó Rathaille, 1696(?))	118n, 206n
'Cúich do leandán, a Lámh Óir?' (anonymous, c. 1450)	149n
'Cuid de adhbhar mo ghearain' (Iain Lom Mac Domhnaill, 1647)	129n
'Cuimhnigh sochar síol gColla' (anonymous, c. 1620(?))	84n
'Cumha ceathrair do mheasg mé' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1636)	114n, 147n
'Dá bhrághaid uaim i nInis' (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, c. 1444)	118n
'Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne' (Artúr Dall Mac Gurcaigh, c. 1310)	21, 27, 40n, 51, 83, 106n, 114n, 136n, 149-50
'Dá mada liom Alba uile' (anonymous, c. 1150)	168-69, 170n
'Damh féin choiglim an Chathuir' (Giolla Íosa Ó Dálaigh, c. 1575)	158n
'Dá roinn chomhthroma an crích Néill' (Eoghan Mág Craith(?), c. 1400(?))	144n
'Dá urradh i n-iath Éireann' (Giolla Críost Brúilingeach, c. 1430-58)	86, 95n
'Decair comhall don chumaidh' (anonymous, c. 1464-99)	43n
'Deimhin do shíol Ádhaimh éag' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1635-40)	71n
'Deireadh d'aoibhneas Insi Gall' (Niall Mac Mhuirich, 1686)	151n
'D'fhior chogaidh comhailtear síothcháin' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1580-88)	43, 204n

'Díol toile caoinmheas Cormaic' (Peadair Ó Maolchonaire, c. 1660-80)	158n
'Diombáigh triall ó thulchaibh Fáil' (Uilleam Nuinseann, c. 1571)	140
'Díomdhach mé don ghaoith a ndeas' (Mac Eachaig, c. 1420)	68n, 142n
'Díon tíre da thighearna' (anonymous, c. 1630(?))	84
'Díoth cruith coire Tomás' (Niall Ó hUiginn, c. 1340)	43
'Do athruigh séan ar síol gCuinn' (Eóghan mac Eoin mheic Eichthighearna, c. 1475(?))	51n, 115n, 118n
'Do chaill Éire a céile fíre' (Cathal Mac Ruaidhrigh, c. 1650)	128n
'Dodhéan craobhscaoileadh na cColla' (anonymous, 1618(?))	84n
'Do-fhidir Dia Cinéal Conaill' (Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe, c. 1258)	37
'Do ísligh onóir Gaoidheal' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1649)	62n, 71n, 115n, 119n, 125n, 131n, 136n, 142n, 151n
'Do loisceadh meisi sa Mhuaidh' (Brian (?) Ó Gnímh, c. 1586)	83, 107n, 143n
'Domhnall mac Raghnaill, rosg mall' (anonymous, before 1247)	20n, 37n, 51n, 80
'Do shlán uaim, a Áth Seanaigh' (Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe, 1247)	21n, 37n, 134n
'Do thuirinn seasamh Síol gCuinn' (Niall Mac Mhuirich, 1715)	138n, 143n, 152n, 201n
'Do thuirn aoibhneas Innsi Gall' (Donnchadh Ó Muirgheasáin (?), 1705)	26n, 62n, 68n, 119n, 127n, 130n, 205n
'Dual freasdal ar feirg flatha' (anonymous, c. 1693)	119n, 136n, 151n
'Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg' (anonymous [<i>ollamh</i> to An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill], c. 1555)	48n, 74n, 81, 99, 107n, 114n, 115n, 120n, 121, 134n, 136n, 180-82, 202n
'Duanaire na sracaire' (Fionnlagh Mac an Aba, before 1526)	74n
'Dursan éag Éamoinn Mhic Ghearailt' (Dáibhidh Ó Bruadair, c. 1667)	205n
'Dursan mh'eachtra go hAlbuin' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, c. 1582)	82n, 96n, 107n, 141, 169n, 187-88
'Eascar Gaoidheal éag aoinfhir' (Tadhg mac Dáire Mac Bruaideadha (?), 1624)	146
'Égcóir do fógradh Féilim' (Fearghal mac Lughaidh Mac Eochadha, c. 1598)	170n
'Éireannaigh féin Fionn-Lochlannaigh' (Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh, c. 1620)	83, 117, 127n, 168, 174-76

'Éireóchthar fós le cloinn gColla' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1640)	71n, 90n, 97n, 115n, 128n, 136n, 147n, 148n
'Eisd re senchas síol gColla' (anonymous, 1588)	84n
'Eólach mé ar mheirge an iarla' (Flann mac Eóghain Mac Craith, c. 1614)	149n
'Fada an ráitheise romham' (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, c. 1440)	150n
'Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1570)	83, 107n, 114n, 124n, 125n, 136n, 143, 168n, 171-72
'Fada dhamh druim re hÉirinn' (Giolla Brighde Albanach (?), before 1224)	85, 88n, 89n, 106n, 140, 170n
'Fada dhomh an laighe-se' (An Barún Eóghan mac Combaigh, before 1542)	114n, 116n
'Fada i n-éagmais inse Fáil' (Uilliam Nuinseann, c. 1571)	140
'Fada re a choimhéd clú Roisdeard' (Torna mac Maoilín, before 1571)	145n
'Fada re huaisle cland Chéin' (Diarmoid Dall Mac an Fhir Léighinn, 1581x1612)	118n
'Fada téid teist Roghallach' (anonymous, before 1583(?))	132n
'Fàilt' a Mharcuis a dh'Alba' (anonymous, 1646)	84n
'Fáilte d'ar n-Ailín, rígh na Raghmallach' (Niall MacMhuirich, c. 1696)	114n, 165
'Fa ngníomhraidh measdar meic ríogh' (Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh, c. 1360(?))	120n
'Fearann cloidhimh críoch Bhanbha' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1571-80)	180n
'Fhuair mi sgeula moch Di-Ciadaín' (An t-Aos-Dàna Mac Mhathain, c. 1680)	127n
'Fhuaras mac mar an t-athair' (anonymous, c. 1500)	68n, 114n
'Fhuaras mo rogha theach mhór' (Fionnlagh 'An Bárd Ruadh', c. 1475(?))	95, 123n, 137n, 153n
'Fhuaras rogha na n-óg mbríoghmhór' (Giolla Pádraig Mac Lachlainn, before 1542)	74n, 114n, 120n, 131n, 154n
'Filidh Éireann go haointeach' (Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh, 1351)	155, 161
'Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill' (anonymous, before 1386)	57n, 80, 106n, 114n, 146, 147n, 149n
'Fir Alban 's ní hiad amháin' (Eoin Mac Mhuirich, c. 1520(?))	70n

'Flaitheas saor le saoghal sean Do Sheanadh Earra-ghaoidheal' (Domhnall Mac Mharcuis, 1701)	72
'Fóiridh mo leisce, a Leath Chuinn' (Tadhg mac Dáire Mac Bruideadha, c. 1599)	134n
'Foraire Uladh ar Aodh' (Maoilsheachluinn na n-Uirsgéal Ó hUiginn, c. 1490)	166
'Foraois airdríogh iath Connacht' (anonymous, 1566x76)	144n
'Foraois éigeas Innse Gall' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, before 1618)	91n, 118n, 144n, 149n, 165n
'Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh' (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, before 1448)	16n, 57n, 82, 99, 116n, 125n, 156n, 160, 170-71, 176
'Fuaras cara ar sgáth na sgoile' (Niall Mac Mhuirich, after 1661)	201n
'Fúar liom an adhaighsi dh' Aodh' (Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa, 1600)	166
'Fúarus iongnadh, a fhir chumainn' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, c. 1615)	120n, 141n
'Fuath liom bheith anmoch ag triall' (anonymous, c. 1465(?))	122n
'Fuilngidh bhur léan, a Leath Coinn!' (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, before 1424)	134n
'Gabh rém chomraigh, a Mheic Ghriogóir' (Fionnlagh 'An Bárd Ruadh', before 1519)	114n
'Gealladh gach saoi don each odhar' (Fionnlagh 'An Bárd Ruadh', before 1519)	154n
'Gnáith féile ag fagháil innmhe' (Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, before 1650)	68n, 86, 152
'Gun d' fhuair mi sgeul 's cha'n aichead e' (Mairearad nighean Lachainn Nic Gill-Eathain, after 1702)	19
'Gura h-oil leam an sgeul seo' (Eachann Bacach Mac Gill-Eathain, 1651)	18, 22n
'Gur e an naidheachd so fhuair mi' (Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh Nic Leòid, 1699)	119n
'Gur h-ì as crìoch àraid' (Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair Mac Domhnaill, c. 1738)	15, 122n
'Iad féin chinneas ar chloinn Néill' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1570)	145n
'Iad féin mhóras Clann Cholla' (Fearghal Óg mac Briain Dorcha Ó hUiginn, c. 1620(?))	84n
'I mbrat an bhrollaigh ghil-se' (Fearchair Ó Maol Chiaráin, before 1500)	86n
'Imir do chluiche, a Chormaic' (Diarmuid mac an Bhaird, c. 1680(?))	125n
'Iomchair mo bheannachd Gu baintighearna Hamara' (Iain mac Ailein Mac Gill-Eathain, 1716)	120n

'Iomdha sochar ag síol Néill' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1570)	115n, 181n
'Ionmhain liom aibhne Éireann' (Gearóid Iarla, c. 1370(?))	140, 201n
'Ionmhain th'aiseag, a Eóghain' (Piaras Feiritéar, c. 1640(?))	92n
'Ionmholta an t-óglach nach dìongnadh' (anonymous, c. 1620)	82, 136n, 151n
'Is bocht mo bheatha i gcreathaibh éaga' (Dáibhidh Ó Bruadair, c. 1652-57)	205n
'Is e mo chion an t-òg meanmnach' (Iain Lom Mac Domhnaill, c. 1665)	126-27n
'Is goirt leam gaoir nam ban Muileach' (Mairearead nighean Lachlainn Nic Gill-Eathain, 1716)	123-24n
'Is in Eachroim an áir atáid ina gcónaí' (Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta, 1691)	206
'Is i so an aimsir an dearbhar an tairgeanachd dhùinn' (Iain Dubh mac Iain mhic Ailein Mac Domhnaill, c. 1716)	123n, 126n
'Is i so iorram na truaighe' (Pòl Crùbach Mac Leòid, 1649)	62n
'Is mairg do-ní uaille as óige' (Athairne Mac Eoghain (?), before 1631)	66n
'Is maith mo leaba, is olc mo shuain' (anonymous, 1661)	114n, 120n, 203n
'Is truagh m'imtheachd ó chuir Mhic Cailin' (anonymous, 1685(?))	114n, 120n, 191n, 203n
'Is tuirseach mo sgeul ri luaidh' (Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair Mac Domhnaill, 1751)	115n
'Labhradh trían Chonghuil go ciúin' (Niall Mac Mhuirich, c. 1690)	93n, 94n, 98n, 119n, 162
'Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn' (Giolla Críost Brúilingeach, before 1458)	85, 95n, 96, 146n, 152, 161
'Leaghadh don Ghalltacht gnaoi Néill' (Tadhg Ó Domhnalláin, before 1362)	17n
'Leasg linn gabháil go Gearrloch' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1635-40)	71n, 73n, 143, 152n
'Leath ré Fodla fuil Uidhir' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, c. 1580)	149n
'Leis féin moltar Mág Uidhir' (Maoilín Ó an Chainte, c. 1580(?))	144n
'Lubhghort fineamhna fuil Ír' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, before 1596)	145n
'Mairg dar compánach an cholann' (Athairne Mac Eoghain (?), before 1631)	66n
'Mairg fhéagas ar Inis Ceithleann' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1585(?))	118n
'Mairg ó ndeachaidh a léim lúidh' (Sir Donnchadh Caimbeul of Glenorchy, before 1513)	115n

- 'Maing thréigios inn, a Amhlaóibh' (Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, c. 1217(?))
69n, 73n, 80, 87, 106n
- 'Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal' (anonymous, c. 1580(?))
20n, 65n, 74n, 107n, 114n, 115n, 116n, 120n, 124n, 130n, 136n, 143n, 151n
- 'Maith an sgéal do sgaoil 'nar measg' (Niall Mac Mhuirich, c. 1696) 96n, 134n, 153n, 163
- 'Maith do chuid, a charbaid mhaoil' (Eoin Mac Mhuirich, c. 1520(?)) 70n
- 'Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (?), before 1582)
83n, 107n, 124n, 136n, 141n, 144n, 152n, 178-80
- 'Meisde nach éadmhor Éire' (Domhnall mac Bhriain Ó hUiginn, before 1501)
57n, 81, 116n, 118n, 134n, 176-78
- 'Mhic Mhoire na gréine' (Eachann Bacach Mac Gill-Eathain, c. 1635(?)) 204n
- 'Mionn súl Éireann i nÁth Cliath' (Brian Ó Gnímh, c. 1586) 83, 107n, 115n, 151n
- 'Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, before 1643)
71n, 114n, 118n, 134-35, 147n, 151n
- 'Mo chion na chunnaic mi 'm chadal' (Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair Mac Domhnaill,
c. 1746-47) 204n
- 'Mo chràdhghal bochd' (Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh Nic Leòid, 1705) 62n
- 'Mó iná ainm Iarrrla Gaoidheal' (anonymous, c. 1650(?)) 115n, 120n, 151n, 152n
- 'Mór a n-ainm a n-iath eile' (anonymous, c. 1699) 119n
- 'Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne' (anonymous, 1631) 65, 120n, 138, 147n, 203n, 205n
- 'Mór an chreidhill seo gheibhim do chéas me' (Liam Ruadh Mac Coitir, 1720) 205-06n
- 'Mór an feidhm freagairt na bhfaighdheach thig fá seach' (Giolla Coluim, before 1542)
70n, 118n
- 'Mór an léan-sa ar aicme Íle' (Niall Mac Mhuirich, c. 1670) 115n, 119n
- 'Mór an lucht ártbraigh Éire' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, c. 1607) 181n
- 'Mór ar bhfearg riot, a rí Saxan' (Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh, c. 1356-58) 124n
- 'Mór do mhill aoibhneas Éireann' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, c. 1608-16) 141n
- 'Mór mo mholadh ar mhac Colla' (anonymous, 1645) 115n, 128, 184-85
- 'Mór re cuma caithréim dheise' (anonymous, c. 1540) 149n

'Muintir Fhiodhnacha na mionn' (Aonghus Ó Dálaigh ('Aonghus na n-Aor'), c. 1600(?))	146n
'Nach goirid o'n a ghabh sinn air Eoin Cop am <i>Prestonpans?</i> ' (Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair Mac Domhnaill, 1746)	19n
'Náir an sgéalsa tiacht do tigh' (Eóghan Ó Donnghaile, 1689)	93n
'Ná leig mo mhealladh, a Mhuire' (Maol Domhnaigh mac Mhaghnuis Mhuilich, before 1512)	67
'Námha dhamh an dán' (Eoin Mac Mhuirich, c. 1520(?))	70n
'Nár lem choisneas tú clú Chuinn' (Niall Mac Mhuirich, c. 1690)	93n, 94n
'Nearth gach tíre ar Thír Chonaill' (Somhairle Mac an Bhaird, 1649)	133
'Ní beag an léansa ar Leath Cuinn' (Maol Pádraig Mac Naimhin, c. 1339)	163-64
'Ní beag easbhaidh Inse Fáil' (Maol Sheachluinn Ó hEoghusa, 1343)	144n, 155n
'Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad' (Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin, c. 1643(?))	68n, 86, 138, 146n, 152n, 162n
'Ní h-éibhneas gan Chlainn Domhnaill' (Giolla Coluim mac an Ollaimh, c. 1500)	70n, 130n
'Níor ghlac cliath, colg no gunna' (anonymous, 1680)	129n, 143n, 151n, 201n
'Nodlaig do-chuamair don Chraoibh' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1577)	144n, 155
'N ulaidh phriseil bha uainne' (anonymous ('té mhuintir Lochabar'), c. 1745)	19n
'Og-oighre 'n tigh' chliùitich' (anonymous ('Abrach'), c. 1825)	127n
'Oide a ndrèachtaoibh an dreasfháil' (Piaras Feiritéar, c. 1640)	92
'Ón aird thuaidh thig an chobhair' (Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, c. 1397-1403)	145n
'Oraoid sunn go síol gColla' (Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, c. 1590(?))	83n
'O 's uaigneach a nochd Clár Ghiorra' (anonymous, c. 1642)	114n, 147n
'Racha mé shúr mo shealbha' (Séamus Ó hUid, c. 1660-80)	145
'Ri fuaim an taibh' (Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh Nic Leòid, after 1666)	119n
'Ríoghacht ghaisgidh oighrecht Eoin' (Dubhghall mac an Ghiolla Ghlais, before 1519)	114n, 152n
'Robad mellach, a meic mo Dé' (anonymous ('Colm Cille'), c. 1050(?))	169n
'Ro bátar láeich do Laignib' (anonymous, c. 1050)	122n

'Rob soruidh t'eachtra, a Aodh Ruaidh' (Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaire, 1602)	163
'Rug an fheibhe a terme as teach' (anonymous, 1705)	62n
'Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban' (anonymous, c. 1640)	65n, 66, 114n, 115n, 137n, 151n, 203n
'S ach fhir a theid thairis' (Gilleasbuig Grannda, before 1863)	127n
'San Sbíinn do toirneadh Teamhair' (Domhnall mac Eoghuin Í Dhálaigh, 1618)	162n
'Saor do leannán, a Leamhain' (Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, c. 1200(?))	20n, 69n, 73n, 80, 87, 106n, 134n
'Saoth leam do chor, a Cholla' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1623-24)	71n, 117, 118n, 127n
'S beag òghnadh mi 'bhi dubhach' (Calum Dubh Mac an t-Saoir, 1800)	204n
'S cianail, gruamach, coimheach guarach' ('Am Bard Muileach', c. 1530)	110, 162n, 204n
'S coimeas mise do dh'Oisean' (Calum Dubh Mac an t-Saoir, c. 1800)	127n
'Sealbh Éireann ag aicme Néill' (Mac-con Ó Cléirigh, c. 1590(?))	204n
'Sé hoidhche dhamhsa san Dún' (Niall Mór Mac Mhuirich, c. 1613)	71n, 119n
'S fada do chodla, 'Néill Òig' (anonymous, before 1748)	154n
'S fhad tha mi ag èisdeachd ri ur dìochuimhn' (anonymous, c. 1680-85)	204n
'Sgían mo charad ar mo chliú' (Giolla Brighde Albanach, before 1242)	85, 88n
'Shìl Olaghair gun ainne' (Iain mac Ailein Mac Gill-Eathain (an t-Aos Dàna), c. 1720)	119n
'Slán agaibh, a fhiora Mumhan' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaire, c. 1600(?))	167n
'S mi an diugh a' fàgail na tìre' (Iain Mac Àidh ('Am Pìobaire Dall'), c. 1696)	154n, 201n
'S na 'm b' aithne dhomh oran a chur ann an ordugh' (Gilleasbuig Grannda, before 1863)	127n
'Sona do cheird, a Chalbhaigh' (Cathal Mac Mhuirich, c. 1640(?))	96
'Soraidh no dhà le dùrachd bhuam' (anonymous, before 1626)	154n, 201n
'S tìm, tuirseach mo dhusgadh' (Uilliam Mac Mhurchaidh, c. 1761)	116n
'Tabhraidh chugam cruit mo ríogh' (Giolla Brighde Albanach, c. 1220)	85, 88
'Tairnig éigse fhuinn Ghaidheal' (Fear Flatha Ó Gnìmh, c. 1610(?))	91n
'Taisdil mhionca ór siabhradh sionn' (anonymous, c. 1639-42)	84

'Tapadh leat, a Dhòmhnail mhic Fhionnlaigh' (Iain MacCodrum, c. 1766)	124n
'Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin' (Sir Donnchadh Caimbeul of Glenorchy, before 1513)	98n, 115n, 180n
'Teallach einigh iath Laighean' (Eochaidh Ó hEoghusa, c. 1600)	132n, 167
'Tháinig an Craobhdhearg go Cruachan' (Giolla Brighde Albanach, c. 1220)	85, 88n, 106n
'Tha m'aighe fo ghruaim' (Murchadh Mór mac Mhic Mhurchaidh Mac Coinnich, c. 1650)	166
'Tha mi am chadal 's gur tìmh dhomh dusgadh' (Iain mac Ailein Mac Gill-Eathain (an t-Aos Dàna), c. 1692)	120n, 126n
'Thánaig adhbhar mo thuirse' (Giolla Coluim Mac an Ollaimh, c. 1490)	70n, 114n, 143n
'Tha ulaidh orm an uamharrachd' (Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh Nic Leòid, after 1695)	204n
'Théid mi le m' dheoin' (Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh Nic Leòid, c. 1695)	119n
'Thoir fios bhuam gu Anndra' (Iain mac Ailein Mac Gill-Eathain (an t-Aos Dàna), c. 1706)	119n, 154n, 201n
'Thriall bhur bunadh go Phàro' (Eachann Bacach Mac Gill-Eathain, 1649)	123n, 191n, 201n
'Tobar fìreìnigh Fir Mhanach' (Írial Ó hUiginn, c. 1580)	149n
'To-fed andes i ndáil fíadat findáil caingel' (Beccán mac Luigdech, before 677)	138n
'Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh' (Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, c. 1220)	89n, 141n
'Treisi an eagla ioná an andacht' (Brian (?) Ó Gnímh, c. 1580)	83, 107n, 118n, 147n, 149n, 151n
'Triall gach éin fhir go cúirt tTeabóid' (anonymous, c. 1566-76)	145n
'Triallaidh mi le m' dhuanais ullaimh' (anonymous, c. 1558)	64n, 110, 204n
'Triath na nGaoidheal Giolla-easbuig' (anonymous, c. 1640)	20n, 65n, 120n
'Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais' (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, c. 1590)	82n, 96n, 107n, 142
'Truagh an t-amharc-sa, ó Éire' (Giolla Brighde Ó hEoghusa, c. 1605)	140
'Tuar doimheanma dul Raghnaill' (anonymous, 1705)	114n, 151n
'Tugadh oirne easbhaidh mhór' (Maol Chiaráin, before 1500)	86n, 161
'Tuirseach an diugh críocha Gaoidhiol' (anonymous, 1743)	67n, 121

‘Am Bard Muileach’ (*fl.* c. 1530)

‘‘S cianail, gruamach, coimheach guarach’

‘Am Bàrd Liomanach’ (*fl.* c. 1550):

‘A Mhic Phàrlain an Arthair’

Beccán mac Luigdech (†677):

‘To-fed andes i ndáil fíadat findáil caingel’

Caimbeul, Sir Donnchadh of Glenorchy (1443-1513):

‘Mairg ó ndeachaidh a léim lúidh’

‘Teachtaire chuireas i gcéin’

Feiritéar, Piaras (*fl.* 1633-53):

‘Oide a ndréoachtaoibh an dreasfháil’

‘Ionmhain th’aiseag, a Eóghain’

Fionnlagh ‘An Bárd Ruadh’ (*fl.* 1490):

‘Fhuaras mo rogha theach mhór’

‘Gealladh gach saoi don each odhar’

‘Gabh rém chomraigh, a Mheic Ghriogóir’

Giolla-Brighde Albanach (*fl.* c. 1200-30):

‘A ghilli gabhus an stiúir’

‘A Mhuireadhaigh, meil do sgín’

‘Aisling ad-chonnarc ó chianaibh’

‘Fada dhamh druim re hÉirinn’

‘Sgían mo charad ar mo chliú’

‘Tabhraidh chugam cruit mo ríogh’

‘Tháinig an Craobhdhearg go Cruachan’

Giolla Críost Brúilingeach (*fl.* c. 1440):

‘Dá urradh i n-iath Éireann’

‘Lámh aoinfhir fhóirfeas i nÉirinn’

Grannda, Gilleasbuig (1785-after 1863):

‘‘S ach fhir a theid thairis’

‘‘S na ’m b’aithne dhomh oran | a chur ann an ordugh’

Mac Àidh, Iain ('Am Pìobaire Dall') (1656-1754):

'Beannachd dhut o'n ghabh thu 'n t-àm'
'S mi an diugh a' fàgail na tìre'

Mac an Aba, Fionnlagh (†1525)

'Duanaire na sracaire'

Mac an Bhaird, Diarmuid mac Laoisigh (*fl.* c. 1680-91):

'A Chormuic, cuimhnigh an chóir'
'Imir do chluiche, a Chormaic'

Mac an Bhaird, Eóghan Ruadh (†1609):

'A bhean fuair failt ar an bhfeart'
'A leabhráin ainmnightheart d' Aodh'
'Rob soruidh t'eachtra, a Aodh Ruaidh'

Mac an Bhaird, Fearghal Óg (*fl.* 1577-1618):

'Beannacht siar uaim go hÉirinn'
'Brian Ó Ruairc mo rogha leannán'
'Dursan mh'eachtra go hAlbuin'
'Fúarus iongnadh, a fhir chumainn'
'Leath ré Fodla fuil Uidhir'
'Lubhghort fineamhna fuil Ír'
'Mór an lucht ártbraigh Éire'
'Mór do mhill aoibhneas Éireann'
'Slán agaibh, a fhiora Mumhan'
'Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais'

Mac an Bhaird, Laoiseach (*fl.* c. 1580):

'A fhir ghlacas a ghalldacht'

Mac an Bhaird, Somhairle (*fl.* 1649):

'Nearth gach tíre ar Thír Chonaill'

Mac an Fhir Léighinn, Diarmoid Dall (*fl.* c. 1581-1612):

'Fada re huaisle cland Chéin'

Mac an Ghiolla Ghlais, Dubhghall (*fl.* before 1519)

'Ríoghacht ghaisgidh oighrecht Eoin'

Mac an Ollaimh, Giolla Coluim (*fl.* c. 1490):

‘Mór an feidhm freagairt na bhfaighdheach thig fá seach’
‘Ní h-éibhneas gan Chlainn Domhnaill’
‘Thánaig adhbhar mo thuirse’

Mac an t-Saoir, Calum Dubh (*fl.* 1800):

‘S beag òghnadh mi ’bhi dubhach’
‘S coimeas mise do dh’Oisean’

Mac Aodhagáin, Tadhg an Ghadhraigh (*fl.* c. 1440(?)):

‘Bérad breath na himriosna’

Mac Bheatha, Fearghas (*fl.* 1733):

‘A sheanchrioch Fáil, is gnách gach léan ort’

Mac Bruaidealha, Tadhg mac Dáire (*fl.* 1599):

‘Eascar Gaoidheal éag aoinfhir’ (?)
‘Fóiridh mo leisce, a Leath Chuinn’

Mac Cárthaigh, Diarmaid mac Seáin Bhuidhe (*fl.* 1665-1704/5):

‘A Shaerbhreachaigh éachtaigh mo bhrón tu’

Mac Codrum, Iain (c. 1693-1779):

‘Tapadh leat, a Dhòmhnail mhic Fhionnlaigh’

Mac Coinnich, Murchadh Mór mac Mhic Mhurchaidh (*fl.* c. 1650):

‘Tha m’aigne fo ghruaim’

Mac Coitir, Liam Ruadh (1690(?)-1738):

‘Mór an chreidhill seo gheibhim do chéas me’

Mac Combaigh, An Barún Eóghan (*fl.* before 1542):

‘Fada dhomh an laighe-se’

Mac Con Midhe, Giolla Brighde (c. 1210-c. 1272):

‘Ceannphort Éireann Ard Macha’
‘Crann do chuir amach Naoi nár’
‘Do-fhidir Dia Cinéal Conaill’
‘Do shlán uaim, a Áth Seanaigh’

Mág Craith, Eoghan (*fl.* c. 1400)(?):

‘Dá roinn chomhthroma an crích Néill’

Mac Craith, Flann mac Eóghain (*fl.* c. 1614):

‘Eólach mé ar mheirge an iarla’

Mac Cuarta, Séamas Dall (c. 1650-1733):

‘A theampaill, b’fhuras duit cuidiú le Gaelaibh’
‘A Thulaigh Ó Meith goidé an ghruaimse ort?’
‘Is in Eachroim an áir atáid ina gcónaí’

Mac Domhnaill, Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair (c. 1698-c. 1770):

‘Air Allt Ghartan ghlacas bradan’
‘Gur h-ì as crìoch àraid’
‘Is tuirseach mo sgeul ri luaidh’
‘Mo chion na chunnaic mi ’m chadal’
‘Nach goirid o’n a ghabh sinn air | Eoin Cop am *Prestonpans?*’

Mac Domhnaill, Iain Lom (c. 1620-c. 1710):

‘A bhean, leasaich an stóp dhuinn’
‘A Dhòmhnail an Dùin’
‘An cuala sibhse an tionndadh duineil’
‘Cuid de adhbhar mo ghearain’
‘Is e mo chion an t-òg meanmnach’

Mac Domhnaill, Iain Dubh mac Iain mhic Ailein (c. 1665-c. 1725):

‘Is i so an aimsir an dearbhar an tairgeanachd dhùinn’

Mac Eachaig (*fl.* c. 1420):

‘Díomdhach mé don ghaoith a ndeas’

Mac Eichthighearna, Eóghan mac Eoin (*fl.* c. 1475?):

‘Do athruigh séan ar síol gCuinn’

Mac Eochadha, Fearghal mac Lughaidh (*fl.* c. 1598):

‘Égcóir do fógradh Féilim’

Mac Eoghain, Athairne (*fl.* c. 1600?):

‘Is mairg do-ní uaille as óige’ (?)
‘Mairg dar compánach an cholann’ (?)

[Mac Gearailt], Gearóid Iarla (1338-98):

‘Ionmhain liom aibhne Éireann’

Mac Gill-Eathain, Eachann Bacach (*fl.* c. 1600-after 1651):

‘Gura h-oil leam an sgeul seo’
‘Mhic Mhoire na gréine’
‘Thriall bhur bunadh go Phàro’

Mac Gill-Eathain, Iain mac Ailein (an t-Aos Dàna) (c. 1665-1741):

‘Iomchair mo bheannachd | Gu baintighearna Hamara’
‘ Shìl Olaghair gun ainnis’
‘Tha mi am chadal ’s gur tìmh dhomh dusgadh’
‘Thoir fios bhuan gu Anndra’

Mac Gill-Eathain, Maighstir Seathan (c. 1680-1756):

‘Air teachd on Spáin, do shliochd an Gháoidhil ghlais’

Mac Giolla Fhionntóg an Fear Dána (*fl.* c. 1415):

‘Buaidh thighearna ar thóiseachaibh’

Mac Griogóir, Donnchadh mac Dubhghaill Mhaoil (*fl.* c. 1500-c. 1550):

‘Aithris fhréimhe ruanaidh Eoin’

Mac Gurcaigh, Artúr Dall (*fl.* c. 1310):

‘Dál chabhlaigh ar Chaistéal Suibhne’

Mac Lachlainn, Giolla Pádraig (*fl.* before 1542):

‘Fhuaras rogha na n-óg mbríoghmhóir’

Mac Leòid, Pòl Crùbach (*fl.* 1649):

‘Is i so iorram na truaighe’

Mac Lochlainn, Domhnall (*fl.* c. 1705(?)):

‘Bile cosanta Críche Fáil’ (?)

Mac Maoilín, Torna (*fl.* before 1571):

‘Fada re a choimhéd clú Roisdeard’

Mac Marcuis, Ainnrias (*fl.* 1607):

‘Anocht is uaigneach Éire’

Mac Marcuis, Domhnall (*fl.* 1701):

‘Flaitheas saor le saoghal sean | Do Sheanadh Earra-ghaoidheal’

Mac Mhathain, an t-Aos-Dàna (*fl.* c. 1680):

‘Fhuair mi sgeula moch Di-Ciadain’

Mac Mhuirich, Cathal (*fl.* c. 1618-c. 1661):

‘A Sheónoid, méadaigh meanma’
‘Cionnas mhaireas mé am aonar’
‘Cumha ceathrair do mheasg mé’
‘Deimhin do shíol Ádhaimh éag’
‘Do ísligh onóir Gaoidheal’
‘Eireóchthar fós le cloinn gColla’
‘Foraois éigeas Innse Gall’
‘Leasg linn gabháil go Gearrloch’
‘Mo-chean do-chonnarc a réir’
‘Saoth leam do chor, a Cholla’
‘Sona do cheird, a Chalbhaigh’

Mac Mhuirich, Eoin (Dean of Knoydart) (*fl.* 1490):

‘A chinn Diarmaid Uí Chairbre’

Mac Mhuirich, Eoin (*fl.* c. 1520(?))

‘Fir Alban ’s ní hiad amháin’
‘Maith do chuid, a charbaid mhaoil’
‘Námha dhamh an dán’

Mac Mhuirich, Lachlann (*fl.* 1411):

‘A Chlanna Chuinn, cuimhnichibh’

Mac Mhuirich, Niall (c. 1637-1726):

‘Deireadh d’aoibhneas Innsi Gall’
‘Do thuirlinn seasamh Síol gCuinn’
‘Fáilte d’ar n-Ailín, rígh na Raghmallach’
‘Fuaras cara ar sgáth na sgoile’
‘Labhradh trían Chonghuil go ciúin’
‘Maith an sgéal do sgaoil ’nar measg’
‘Mór an léan-sa ar aicme Íle’
‘Nár lem choisneas tú clú Chuinn’

Mac Mhuirich, Niall Mór (*fl.* c. 1550-c. 1613):

‘Sé hoidhche dhamhsa san Dún’

Mac Mhuirich, Ruaidhri (‘An Clàrsair Dall’) (c. 1656-c. 1720):

‘A’ cheud Di-luain de’n ràithe’
‘A Choinnich, cuiream le chéile’

Mac Mhurchaidh, Uilliam (c. 1724-c. 1800):

‘S tìm, tuirseach mo dhusgadh’

Mac Naimhin, Maol Pádraig (*fl.* c. 1338)

‘Ní beag an léansa ar Leath Cuinn’

Mac Ruaidhrigh, Cathal (*fl.* c. 1650):

‘Do chaill Éire a céile fíre’

Maol Chiaráin (*fl.* before 1500):

‘Tugadh oirne easbhaidh mhór’

Nic Coirceadail (inghean Coirceadail), Aithbhreac (*fl.* c. 1455-70):

‘A phaidrín do dhúisg mo dhéar’

Nic Gill-Eathain, Mairearead nighean Lachlainn (c. 1660-c. 1751):

‘Gun d’fhuair mi sgeul ’s cha’n aicheam e’
‘Is goirt leam gaoir nam ban Muileach’

Nic Leòid, Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh (c. 1615-c. 1720)

‘An naidheachd so an dé’
‘Cha sùrd cadail | An rùn-s’ air m’aighe’
‘Gur e an naidheachd so fhuair mi’
‘Mo chràdhghal bochd’
‘Ri fuaim an taibh’
‘Tha ulaidh orm an uamharrachd’
‘Théid mi le m’ dheoin’

Nuinseann, Uilliam (*fl.* 1571):

‘Diombáidh triall ó thulchaibh Fáil’
‘Fada i n-éagmais inse Fáil’

Ó an Chainte, Maoilín (*fl.* c. 1580):

‘Leis féin moltar Mág Uidhir’

Ó Briain, Diarmaid (*fl.* c. 1440?):

‘A Shionann Bhriain Bhóroimhe’

Ó Bruadair, Dáibhidh (c. 1625-98):

‘Dursan éag Éamoinn Mhic Ghearailt’
‘Is bocht mo bheatha i gcreathaibh éaga’

Ó Caoimh, Art Óg (*fl.* c. 1616):

‘A fhir thagras an chaint bhaoth’

Ó Cléirigh, Mac-con (†1595):

‘Cionnus do mholfuinn mac ríogh’
‘Sealbh Éireann ag aicme Néill’

Ó Cobhthaigh, Tadhg Mór (*fl.* c. 1540):

‘Cia ré gcuirfinn séd suirghe’

Ó Dálaigh, Aonghus (‘Aonghus na n-Aor’) (*fl.* c. 1600):

‘Muintir Fhiodhnacha na mionn’

Ó Dálaigh, Domhnall mac Eoghuin (*fl.* 1618):

‘San Sbáinn do toirneadh Teamhair’

Ó Dalaigh, Giolla Íosa (*fl.* c. 1575):

‘Damh féin choiglim an Chathuir’

Ó Dálaigh, Gofraidh Fionn (†1387):

‘Fa ngníomhraidh measdar meic ríogh’
‘Filidh Éireann go haointeach’
‘Mór ar bhfearg riot, a rí Saxan’

Ó Dálaigh, Lochlainn (*fl.* c. 1610):

‘Cáit ar ghabhadar Gaoidhil?’ (?)

Ó Dálaigh, Muireadhach Albanach (*fl.* c. 1180-c. 1228):

‘A Dhomhnaill, deadhlam fá shíodh’
‘Cian ó d’ibheas digh ndearmaid’
‘Mairg thréigios inn, a Amhlaóibh’
‘Saor do leannán, a Leamhain’
‘Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh’

Ó Domhnalláin, Tadhg (*fl.* c. 1362)

‘Leaghadh don Ghalltacht gnaoi Néill’

Ó Donnghaile, Eóghan (*fl.* 1689)

‘Náir an sgéalsa tiacht do tigh’

Ó Dubhthuigh, Eoghan (*fl.* c. 1610):

‘A Bhanbha, is truagh do chor’

Ó Gnímh, Brian (*fl.* 1586):

‘Do loisceadh meisi sa Mhuaidh’ (?)
‘Mionn súl Éireann i nÁth Cliath’
‘Treisi an eagla ioná an andacht’

Ó Gnímh, Fear Flatha (*fl.* 1602-c. 1640):

‘Ainmnigh ria ccách ceann a ccion’
‘Éireannaigh féin Fionn-Lochlannaigh’
‘Tairnig éigse fhuinn Ghaidheal’

Ó hÉanna (*fl.* c. 1386)

‘Ceannas Gaoidheal do chloinn Cholla’

Ó hEoghusa, Eochaidh (c. 1568-1612):

‘Atám i gcás idir dhá chomhairle’
‘Teallach einigh iath Laighean’
‘Fúar liom an adhaighsi dh’Aodh’

Ó hEoghusa, Giolla Brighde (c. 1605):

‘Truagh an t-amharc-sa, ó Éire’

Ó hEoghusa, Maol Sheachluinn (*fl.* 1343):

‘Ní beag easbhaidh Inse Fáil’

Ó hUid, Séamus (*fl.* c. 1660-80):

‘Racha mé shúr mo shealbha’

Ó hUiginn, Domhnall mac Bhriain (†1501):

‘Meisde nach éadmhor Éire’

Ó hUiginn, Fearghal Óg mac Briain Dorcha (*fl.* c. 1620(?)):

‘Iad féin mhóras Clann Cholla’

Ó hUiginn, Irial mac Aonghusa (*fl.* c. 1580):

‘Ceanglam re chéile, a Chormuic’

‘Tobar ffreinigh Fir Mhanach’

Ó hUiginn, Maoilsheachluinn na n-Uirsgéal (*fl.* c. 1420):

‘Foire Uladh ar Aodh’

Ó hUiginn, Mathghamhain (*fl.* c. 1362):

‘Ar ghuth éinfhir anaid Bréifnigh’

Ó hUiginn, Niall (*fl.* c. 1340):

‘Díoth cruith coire Tomás’

Ó hUiginn, Tadhg Dall (1550-91):

‘D’fhior chogaidh comhailtear síothcháin’

‘Fada cóir Fhódla ar Albain’

‘Fearann cloidhimh críoch Bhanbha’

‘Iad féin chinneas ar chloinn Néill’

‘Iomdha sochar ag síol Néill’

‘Mairg fhéagas ar Inis Ceithleann’

‘Mealladh iomlaoide ar Éirinn’ (?)

‘Oraoid sunn go síol gColla’

‘Nodlaig do-chuamair don Chraoibh’

Ó hUiginn, Tadhg Óg (*fl.* 1397-1448; †1448):

‘A Shionann Chuinn Chéadchathaigh’

‘Cia do-ghéabhainn go Gráinne’

‘Dá bhrághaid uaim i nInis’

‘Fada an ráitheise romham’

‘Fuaras aisgidh gan iarraidh’

‘Fuilngidh bhur léan, a Leath Coinn!’

‘Ón aird thuaidh thig an chobhair’

Ó Maol Chiaráin, Fearchair (*fl.* before 1500)

‘I mbrat an bhrollaigh ghil-se’

Ó Maolchonaire, Peadair (*fl.* c. 1660-80):

‘Díol toile caoinmheas Cormaic’

Ó Mitháin, Toirdhealbhadh Óg (*fl.* c. 1650(?)):

‘A theachtairé théid i gcéin go talamh Mhic Leóid’

Ó Muirgheasáin, Donnchadh (*fl.* 1705?)

‘Do thuirn aoibhneas Innsi Gall’ (?)

Ó Muirgheasáin, Eóin Óg (*fl.* 1626):

‘Creach Gaoidheal i reilig Rois’

Ó Muirgheasáin, Maol Domhnaigh (*fl.* 1642-c. 1662):

‘Cia as urra d’ainm an iarthair’

‘Cia feasda as urra don eól’

‘Gnáith féile ag fagháil innmhe’

‘Ní doirbh go deaghuil na ccarad’

[Ó Muirgheasáin], Maol Domhnaigh mac Mhaghnuis Mhuiligh (*fl.* c. 1512):

‘Ná leig mo mhealladh, a Mhuire’

Ó Rathaille, Aodhagán (c. 1675-1729):

‘Créad an síobhra nimhe seo ar Fhódla?’

Seithfín Mór (*fl.* c. 1450):

‘Bríathra cogaidh con chath Laighnech’

Anonymous poems:

‘A éolcha Alban uile’ (c. 1093)

‘A láimh oinidh óir is oighre’ (before 1748)

‘A mhic an fhir ruaidh’ (c. 1600)

‘Adhbhur tuirsi ag fuil Fhionghuin’ (c. 1630)

‘Alba gan díon an déidh Ailín’ (anonymous Mac Mhuirich poet, c. 1514)

‘An síth do rogha, a rígh Fionnghall?’ (c. 1590)

‘An taobh tuath ud cha téid mi’ (c. 1684-85)

‘Aonar dhamhsa eidir dhaoibh’ (c. 1620?)

‘Ar slíocht Gaodhal ó Ghort Gréag’ (c. 1513)

‘Ar triall bhus ésguigh go Uilliam’ (1705)

- ‘Bean do lámhaigeadh Leith Cuinn’ (1632)
 ‘Beid mar do bhádar roimhe’ (c. 1644)
 ‘Bí ad mhosaladh, a mheic Aonghais’ (c. 1600)
 ‘Bráthair don iocht an t-oineach’ (c. 1410(?))
 ‘Cá h-ainm a-tá ar Fearghal Óg?’ (c. 1581(?))
 ‘Ceannaigh duain t’athar, a Aonghas’ (c. 1250)
 ‘Chaidh an diugh, chaidh an diugh, chaidh an diugh oirne’ (1429(?))
 ‘Clann Ghille Eoin na mbratach badhbha’ (anonymous Mac Mhuirich poet,
 date unknown)
 ‘Cóir feitheamh ar uaislibh Alban’ (c. 1475(?))
 ‘Coitcheann cumha chloinne Néill’ (1632)
 ‘Cúich do leandán, a Lámh Óir?’ (c. 1450)
 ‘Cuimhnigh sochar síol gColla’ (c. 1620(?))
 ‘Dá mada liom Alba uile’ (‘Colm Cille’, c. 1100)
 ‘Decair comhall don chumaidh’ (c. 1464-99)
 ‘Díon tíre da thighearna’ (c. 1630(?))
 ‘Dodhéan craobhsgeoileadh na cColla’ (1619(?))
 ‘Domhnall mac Ruairí rosc mall’ (before 1247)
 ‘Dual freasdal ar feirg flatha’ (c. 1693)
 ‘Dual ollamh do thriall le toisg’ (*ollamh* to An Calbhach Ó Domhnaill, c. 1555)
 ‘Eisd re senchas síol gColla’ (1588)
 ‘Fada téid teist Roghallach’ (before 1583(?))
 ‘Fàilt’ a Mharcuis a dh’Alba’ (1646)
 ‘Fhuaras mac mar an t-athair’ (c. 1500)
 ‘Fíor mo mholadh ar Mhac Domhnaill’ (before 1386)
 ‘Foraois airdríogh iath Connacht’ (1566x76)
 ‘Fuath liom bheith anmoch ag triall’ (c. 1465(?))
 ‘Ionmholta an t-óglach nach dìongnadh’ (c. 1620)
 ‘Is maith mo leaba, is olc mo shuain’ (1661)
 ‘Is truagh m’imtheachd ó chuir Mhic Cailin’ (1685(?))
 ‘Maith an chairt ceannas na nGaoidheal’ (c. 1580)
 ‘Mó iná ainm Iarrra Gaoidheal’ (c. 1650(?))
 ‘Mór a n-ainm a n-iath eile’ (c. 1699)
 ‘Mór an bróinsgél bás í Dhuibhne’ (1631)
 ‘Mór mo mholadh ar mhac Colla’ (c. 1645)
 ‘Mór re cuma caithréim dheise’ (c. 1540)
 ‘N ulaidh phriseil bha uainne’ (‘*té mhuinntir Lochabar*’, c. 1745)
 ‘Níor ghlac cliath, colg no gunna’ (1680)
 ‘Og-oighre ’n tigh’ chliùitich’ (‘*Abrach*’), c. 1825)
 ‘O ’s uaigheach a nochd Clár Ghiorra’ (c. 1642)
 ‘Robad mellach, a meic mo Dé’ (‘Colm Cille’, c. 1050(?))
 ‘Ro bátar láeich do Laignib’ (c. 1050)
 ‘Rug an fheibhe a terme as teach’ (anonymous, 1705)
 ‘Rug eadrain ar iath nAlban’ (c. 1640)
 ‘S fada do chodla, ’Néill Òig’ (before 1748)
 ‘S fhad tha mi ag èisdeachd ri ur dìochuimhn’ (c. 1680-85)
 ‘Soraidh no dhà le dùrachd bhuan’ (before 1626)
 ‘Taisdil mhionca ór siabhgradh sionn’ (c. 1639-42)
 ‘Triall gach éinfhir go cúirt tTeabóid’ (c. 1566-76)
 ‘Triallaidh mi le m’ dhuanaig ullaimh’ (c. 1558)
 ‘Triath na nGaoidheal Giolla-easbuig’ (c. 1640)

'Tuar doimheanma dul Raghnaill' (1705)
'Tuirseach an diugh críocha Gaoidhiol' (1743)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Strict alphabetical order is observed, arranged according to the surname of the author or editor, except that all *Mac*, *Mc*, *Mag*, and *Mhág* surnames are treated as *Mac*. The conventional separation between primary and secondary works is not used, because so many sources are scholarly editions of poems or other literary works that contain both 'primary' and 'secondary' material.

Books and Articles

Andersen, Per Sveass, 'Norse Settlement in the Hebrides: what happened to the natives and what happened to the Norse immigrants?', in *People and Places in Northern Europe 500-1600: Essays in Honour of Peter Hayes Sawyer*, ed. by Ian Wood and Niels Lund (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1991), pp. 131-48

Anderson, Joseph, ed., *The Orkneyinga Saga*, trans. by Jon A. Hjaltalin and Gilbert Goudie (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1873)

Atkinson, Ernest George, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1596, July-1597, December* (London: HMSO, 1893)

Bannerman, John, *Studies in the History of Dalriada* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1974)

Bannerman, John, 'The Lordship of the Isles', in *Scottish Society in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by Jennifer M. Brown (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), pp. 209-40

Bannerman, John, 'Gaelic Endorsements of Early Seventeenth-Century Legal Documents', *Studia Celtica*, 14-15 (1979-80), 18-33

Bannerman, John, 'Literacy in the Highlands', in *The Renaissance and Reformation in Scotland*, ed. by Ian B. Cowan and Duncan Shaw (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1983), pp. 214-35

Bannerman, John, *The Beatons: a medical kindred in the classical Gaelic tradition* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1986)

Bannerman, John, 'The King's Poet and the Inauguration of Alexander III', *SHR*, 68 (1989), 120-49

Bannerman, John, 'The Residence of the King's Poet', *SGS*, 17 (1996), 24-35

Barrow, G.W.S., *The Kingdom of the Scots: Government, Church and Society from the eleventh to the fourteenth century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973)

Barrow, G.W.S., *Kingship and Unity: Scotland 1100-1306* (London: Edward Arnold, 1981)

Barrow, G.W.S., 'The lost Gàidhealtachd of medieval Scotland', in *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig*, ed. by William Gillies (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), pp. 67-88

Bergin, Osborn, 'Courtier and Rebel', *Irish Review*, 2 (1912-13), 471-73

Bergin, Osborn, 'The Empty School', *Irish Review*, 2 (1912-13), 594-96

Bergin, Osborn, 'A Poem by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh', in *Essays and Studies Presented to William Ridgeway*, ed. by E.C. Quiggin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913)

Bergin, Osborn, 'Two Poems on the Shannon', *Irish Review*, 3 (1913-14), 13-17

Bergin, Osborn, 'Irish Grammatical Tracts', supplement to *Ériu*, 8 (1916), 9 (1921-23), and 10

(1926-28)

Bergin, Osborn, 'On a Gaelic Miscellany', *Studies*, 8 (1919), 438-41

Bergin, Osborn, 'On a Warlike Prince', *Studies*, 9 (1920), 416-20

Bergin, Osborn, 'Love of Ireland', *Studies*, 9 (1920), 565-70

Bergin, Osborn, 'Looking Towards Spain', *Studies*, 10 (1921), 73-78

Bergin, Osborn, 'A Winter Campaign', *Studies*, 10 (1921), 417-21

Bergin, Osborn, 'A Palmer's Greeting', *Studies*, 13 (1924), 569-74

Bergin, Osborn, 'Farewell to Munster', *An Reult*, 1, no. 4 (1925), 24-25

Bergin, Osborn, 'On a Dagger', *Studies*, 15 (1926), 605-06

Bergin, Osborn, 'An Address to Aonghus of Islay', *SGS*, 4 (1934-35), 57-69

Bergin, Osborn, 'Address to Sémas Mac Aonghuis', *SGS*, 4 (1934-35), 136-149

Bergin, Osborn, *Irish Bardic Poetry*, ed. by David Greene and Fergus Kelly (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1970)

Black, George F., *The Surnames of Scotland: Their Origin, Meaning, and History* (New York: New York Public Library, 1946)

Black, Ronald, 'A Manuscript of Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh', *Celtica*, 10 (1973), 193-209

Black, Ronald, 'Poems by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin (I)', *SGS*, 12 (1976), 194-208

Black, Ronald, 'The Genius of Cathal MacMhuirich', *TGSI*, 50 (1976-78), 327-65

Black, Ronald, 'Poems by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin (II)', *SGS*, 13 (1978), 46-55

Black, Ronald, 'Poems by Maol Domhnaigh Ó Muirgheasáin (III)', *SGS*, 13 (1978), 289-301

Black, Ronald, 'The Gaelic manuscripts of Scotland', in *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig*, ed. by William Gillies (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), pp. 146-74

Black, Ronald, 'A Scottish Grammatical Tract, c. 1640', *Celtica*, 21 (1990), 3-16

Black, Ronald, 'Mac Mhaighstir Alastair in Rannoch', *TGSI*, 59 (1994-96), 341-419

[see also under Macilledhuibh, Ragnall]

Bradshaw, Brendan, 'Native reaction to the Westward Enterprise: a case-study in Gaelic ideology', in *The Westward Enterprise: English activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America 1480-1650*, ed. by K.R. Andrews, N.P. Canny, and P.E.H. Hair (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1978), pp. 65-80

Brady, Ciaran, *Shane O'Neill* (Dublin: Historical Association of Ireland, 1996)

Breathnach, Pól, 'Interpretanda', *Irisleabhar Muighe Nuadhad*, 30 (1931), 37-46

(see also under Walsh, Paul)

Breatnach, Caoimhín, 'The Historical Context of Cath Fiontrágha', *Éigse*, 28 (1994-95), 138-55

Breatnach, Caoimhín, 'The Murder of Shane O'Neill: Oidheadh Chuinn Chéadchathaigh', *Ériu*, 43 (1992), 159-75

Breatnach, Pádraig A., 'The Chief's Poet', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 83, C (1983), 37-79

Breatnach, Pádraig A., 'In Praise of Maghnas Ó Domhnaill', *Celtica*, 16 (1984), 63-72

Breatnach, Pádraig A., 'Tradisiún na hAithrise Liteartha i bhFilíocht Chlasaiceach na Gaeilge' and 'Moladh na Féile: Téama i bhFilíocht na Scol agus a Chúlra', in *Téamaí Taighde Nua-Ghaeilge* (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1997), pp. 1-63, 97-129.

- Breatnach, R.A., 'Marbhna Fhearchoir Í Mháoil Chíaráin', *Éigse*, 3 (1943), 165-85
- Breatnach, R.A., 'Elegy on Donal O'Sullivan Beare (†1618)', *Éigse*, 7 (1953), 162-81
- Broun, Dauvit, 'The Birth of Scottish History', *SHR*, 76 (1997), 4-22
- Broun, Dauvit, 'Gaelic literacy in eastern Scotland, 1124-1249', in *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, ed. by Huw Pryce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 183-201
- Broun, Dauvit, 'Defining Scotland and the Scots Before the Wars of Independence', in *Image and Identity: The Making and Remaking of Scotland Through the Ages*, ed. by Dauvit Broun, R.J. Finlay, and Michael Lynch (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998), pp. 4-17
- Broun, Dauvit, *The Irish Identity of the Kingdom of the Scots* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1999)
- Broun, Dauvit, 'Anglo-French acculturation and the Irish element in Scottish identity', in *Britain and Ireland 900-1300: Insular Responses to Medieval European Change*, ed. by Brendan Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 135-53
- Bruford, Alan, *Gaelic Folktales and Mediaeval Romances: A study of the Early Modern Irish 'Romantic Tales' and their oral derivatives* (Dublin: Folklore of Ireland Society, 1969)
- Bruford, Alan, 'The Sea-Divided Gaels: Some Relationships Between Scottish Gaelic, Irish and English Traditional Songs', *Éigse Cheol Tíre*, 1 (1972-73), 4-27
- Bruford, Alan, 'Oral and Literary Fenian Tales', in *The Heroic Process: Form, Function and Fantasy in Folk Epic*, ed. by Bo Almqvist, Séamas Ó Catháin, and Pádraig Ó Héalaí (Dún Laoghaire: Glendale Press, 1987), pp. 25-56
- Caball, Marc, 'The Gaelic Mind and the Collapse of the Gaelic World: An Appraisal', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 25 (1993), 87-96
- Caball, Marc, *Poets and Politics: Reaction and Continuity in Irish Bardic Poetry, 1558-1625*, Field Day Monographs, 8 (Cork: Cork University Press/Field Day, 1998)
- Caball, Marc, 'Faith, culture and sovereignty: Irish nationality and its development, 1558-1625', in *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, ed. by Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 112-39
- Campbell, J.F., ed., *Leabhar na Féinne: Heroic Gaelic Ballads Collected in Scotland Chiefly from 1512 to 1871* (London: J.F. Campbell, 1872; repr. Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1972)
- Campbell, J.L., 'The Letter Sent by Iain Muideartach, Twelfth Chief of Clanranald, to Pope Urban VII, in 1626', *Innes Review*, 4 (1953), 110-16
- Campbell, J.L., 'Varia: "The Beginning of Mac Vurich's Panegyrick on the MacLeans"', *SGS*, 9 (1961), 90-91
- Campbell, J.L., and Derick Thomson, *Edward Lhuyd in the Scottish Highlands 1699-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963)
- Campbell, John Lorne, *The Catholic Church in the Hebrides, 1560-1760* (Glasgow: St. Antony's [1983])
- Campbell, John Lorne, ed., *Highland Songs of the Forty-five* (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 2nd edn, 1984)
- Canny, Nicholas, 'The formation of the Irish mind: religion, politics and Gaelic Irish literature 1580-1750', *Past and Present*, 95 (1982), 91-116
- Carey, John, *A New Introduction to Lebor Gabála Éirenn* (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1993)

- Carmichael Watson, J., ed., *Òrain is Luinneagan le Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh/Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 9 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1934)
- Carmichael Watson, J., 'Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh Cecinit', in *Féil-Sgríbhinn Eóin Mhic Néill/Essays and Studies Presented to Professor Eoin MacNeill*, ed. by Eóin Ó Riain (Dublin: Three Candles, 1940), pp. 166-79
- Carney, James, ed., *Poems on the Butlers of Ormond, Cahir, and Dunboyne (A.D. 1400-1650)* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1945)
- Carney, 'A Tract on the O'Rourkes', *Celtica*, 1 (1946-50), 238-79
- Carney, James, ed., *Poems on the O'Reillys* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1950)
- Carney, James, *Medieval Irish Lyrics Selected and Translated with The Irish Bardic Poet: A study in the relationship of Poet and Patron* (Mountrath, Portlaoise: Dolmen Press, 1985)
- Carney, James, 'Society and the Bardic Poet', *Studies*, 62 (1973), 233-50
- Carney, James, 'Literature in Irish', in *Medieval Ireland: 1169-1534, A New History of Ireland*, 3, ed. by Art Cosgrove (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 688-707
- Céitinn, Séathrún, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn/The History of Ireland*, ed. by Patrick S. Dinneen, Irish Texts, 4, 8, 9, 15, 4 vols (London: Irish Texts Society, 1902, 1908, 1914)
- Christiansen, Reidar Th., *The Vikings and the Viking Wars in Irish and Gaelic Tradition* (Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1931)
- Clancy, Thomas Owen, and Gilbert Márkus, *Iona: The Earliest Poetry of a Celtic Monastery* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995)
- Clancy, Thomas Owen, ed., *The Triumph Tree: Scotland's Earliest Poetry, 550-1350* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1998)
- Clark, James Toshach, ed., *MacFarlane's Genealogical Collections*, 2 vols, Publications of the Scottish Historical Society, 33 (Edinburgh: Scottish Historical Society, 1900)
- Clarke, Aidan, 'The Plantations of Ulster', in *Milestones in Irish History*, ed. by Liam de Paor (Cork: Mercier Press, 1986), pp. 62-71
- Conley, W.M., 'A Poem in the Stewart Collection', *SGS*, 11 (1966), 26-37
- Connolly, S.J., 'Varieties of Britishness: Ireland, Scotland and Wales in the Hanoverian state', in *Uniting the Kingdom? The making of British history*, ed. by Alexander Grant and Keith J. Stringer (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 193-207
- Connolly, S.J., 'Popular culture: patterns of change and adaptation', in *Conflict, Identity and Economic Development: Ireland and Scotland, 1600-1939*, ed. by S.J. Connolly, R.A. Houston & R.J. Morris (Preston: Carnegie Publishing, 1995), pp. 103-13
- Corkery, Daniel, *The Hidden Ireland: A Study of Gaelic Munster in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: M.H. Gill, 1941)
- Craigie, James, ed., *The Basilicon Doron of King James VI*, 2 vols, Scottish Texts, 3rd Series, 16, 18 (Edinburgh: Scottish Texts Society, 1944, 1950)

- Cullen, L.M., 'Scotland and Ireland, 1600-1800: Their Role in the Evolution of British Society', in *Scottish Society, 1500-1800*, ed. by R.A. Houston and I.D. Whyte (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 226-44
- Cunningham, Bernadette, and Raymond Gillespie, 'The East Ulster Bardic Family of Ó Gnímh', *Éigse*, 20 (1984), 106-14
- Cunningham, Bernadette, 'Native Culture and Political Change in Ireland, 1580-1640', in *Natives and Newcomers: The Making of Irish Colonial Society 1534-1641*, ed. by Ciaran Brady and Raymond Gillespie (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1986), pp. 148-70
- Dawson, Jane, 'The Fifth Earl of Argyle, Gaelic Lordship and Political Power in Sixteenth Century Scotland', *SHR*, 67 (1988), 1-27
- Dawson, Jane, 'Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd in Scotland', in *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620*, ed. by Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, and Gillian Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 231-53
- De Bhulbh, Seán, *Sloinnte na h-Éireann/Irish Surnames* (Faing, Co. Limerick: Comhar-Chumann Íde Naofa Teo., 1997)
- De Blácam, Aodh, *Gaelic Literature Surveyed* (Dublin & Cork: The Talbot Press, 1927)
- De Brún, Pádraig, "'Gan Teannta Buid ná Binse": Scríobhnaithe na Gaeilge c. 1650-1850', *Comhar*, 31, no. 9 (1972), 15-20
- De Brún, Pádraig, Breandán Ó Buachalla, and Tomás Ó Concheannainn, *Nua-Dhuanaire, Cuid I* (Dublin: Institiúid Ardléinn Bhaile Átha Cliath, 1986)
- De Fréine, Seán, *The Great Silence*, 2nd edn (Dublin & Cork: Mercier, 1978)
- Delargy, J.H., 'The Gaelic Story-Teller', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 31 (1945), 177-221
- Dinneen, Patrick S., and Tadhg O'Donoghue, eds, *Dánta Aodhagáin Uí Rathaille/The Poems of Egan O'Rahilly*, Irish Texts, 3 (London: Irish Texts Society, 2nd edn, 1911)
- Doan, James E., 'The Ó Dálaigh Family of Bardic Poets', *Éire-Ireland*, 20, no. 2 (1985), 19-31
- Duffy, Patrick J., 'The Nature of the Medieval Frontier in Ireland', *Studia Hibernica*, 22-23 (1982-83), 21-38
- Duffy, Seán, *Ireland in the Middle Ages* (London: Macmillan, 1997)
- Dumville, David N., 'Ireland and Britain in *Táin Bó Fraích*', *Études Celtiques*, 32 (1996), 174-87
- Dunne, T.J., 'The Gaelic Response to Conquest and Colonisation: The Evidence of the Poetry', *Studia Hibernica*, 20 (1980), 7-30
- Ellis, Peter Berresford, *The Celtic Revolution: A Study in Anti-Imperialism* (Talybont, Ceredigion: Y Lolfa, 1985)
- Ellis, Peter Berresford, *MacBeth: High King of Scotland 1040-57* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1990)

- Ellis, Steven G., 'Nationalist Historiography and the English and Gaelic Worlds in the Late Middle Ages', in *Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism, 1938-1994*, ed. by Ciaran Brady (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1994), pp. 161-80
- Ellis, Steven G., *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors 1447-1603: English Expansion and the End of Gaelic Rule* (London: Longman, 1998)
- Ellis, Steven G., "'More Irish than the Irish Themselves'?: The 'Anglo-Irish' in Tudor Ireland", *History Ireland*, 7, no. 1 (1999), 22-26
- Flower, Robin, 'An Irish-Gaelic Poem on the Montrose Wars', *SGS*, 1 (1926), 113-18
- Flower, Robin, *The Irish Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947)
- Freeman, A. Martin, ed., *Annála Connacht/The Annals of Connacht (A.D. 1224-1544)* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944)
- Gaskill, Howard, "'Ossian' Macpherson: towards a rehabilitation", *Comparative Criticism*, 8, ed. by E.S. Shaffer (1986), pp. 113-48
- Giblin, Cathaldus, ed., *Irish Franciscan Mission to Scotland 1619-1646: Documents from Roman Archives* (Dublin: Assisi Press, 1964)
- Giblin, Cathaldus, 'Hugh McCaghwell, O.F.M., Archbishop of Armagh (+1626) — Aspects of His Life', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, 11, no. 2 (1985), 259-90
- Gillies, William, 'A Poem on the Downfall of the Gaoidhil', *Éigse*, 13 (1969-70), 203-10
- Gillies, William, 'Some Aspects of Campbell History', *TGSI*, 50 (1976-78), 256-95
- Gillies, William, 'Courtly and Satiric Poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore', *Scottish Studies*, 21 (1977), 35-53
- Gillies, William, 'The Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (I)', *SGS*, 13, Part 1 (1978), 18-45
- Gillies, William, 'Gaelic and Scots Literature Down to the Reformation', in *Actes du 2^e Colloque de Langue et de Littérature Écossaises (Moyen Age et Renaissance)*, ed. by Jean-Jacques Blanchot and Claude Graf (Strasbourg: University of Strasbourg, 1979), pp. 63-79
- Gillies, William, 'The Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (II)', *SGS*, 13, Part 2 (1981), 263-88
- Gillies, William, 'The Gaelic Poems of Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy (III)', *SGS*, 14 (1983), 59-82
- Gillies, William, 'The Classical Irish Poetic Tradition', in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by D. Ellis Evans, John G. Griffith, and E.M. Jope (Oxford: Jesus College, 1983), pp. 108-20
- Gillies, William, 'Heroes and Ancestors', in *The Heroic Process: Form, Function and Fantasy in Folk Epic*, ed. by Bo Almqvist, Séamas Ó Catháin, and Pádraig Ó Héalaí (Dún Laoghaire: Glendale Press, 1987), pp. 57-74
- Gillies, William, 'Gaelic: The Classical Tradition', in *The History of Scottish Literature, Volume 1: Origins to 1660 (Mediaeval and Renaissance)*, ed. by R.D.S. Jack (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), pp. 254-62
- Gillies, William, 'The Invention of Tradition — Highland Style', in *The Renaissance in Scotland: Studies in Literature, Religion, History and Culture*, ed. by A.A. MacDonald, Michael Lynch, and Ian B. Cowan (London: E.J. Brill, 1994), pp. 144-56
- Grant, I.F., and Hugh Cheape, *Periods in Highland History* (London: Shephard-Walwyn, 1987)

- Green, Alice Stopford, *The Making of Ireland and its Undoing, 1200-1600* (London: Macmillan, 2nd edn 1909)
- Greene, David, 'Na léig mo mhealladh, a Mhuire', *SGS*, 9 (1961), 105-15
- Greene, David, 'A satire by Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh', in *Celtic Studies: Essays in memory of Angus Matheson*, ed. by James Carney & David Greene (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 51-55
- Greene, David, ed., *Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir: The Poembook of Cú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir, Lord of Fermanagh 1566-1589* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1972)
- Greene, David, Review of Kenneth Jackson, *The Gaelic Notes in the Book of Deer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), *Studia Hibernica*, 12 (1972), 167-70
- Growney, Eugene, 'Scotland in Early Irish Literature', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Glasgow*, 2 (1891-94), 239-75
- Hamilton, Hans Claude, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, 1509-1573* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1860)
- Hamilton, Hans Claude, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1574-1586* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1867)
- Hamilton, Hans Claude, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1588, August-1592, September* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1885)
- Harrison, Alan, 'John Toland (1670-1722) and Celtic Studies', in *Celtic Languages and Celtic Peoples: Proceedings of the Second North American Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by Cyril J. Byrne, Margaret Harry, and Pádraig Ó Siadhail (Halifax, Nova Scotia: St. Mary's University, 1992), pp. 555-76
- Hayes-McCoy, G.A., *Scots Mercenary Forces in Ireland (1565-1603)* (Dublin: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1937)
- Hayes-McCoy, G.A., 'Gaelic Society in Ireland in the late Sixteenth Century', in *Historical Studies IV*, ed. by G.A. Hayes-McCoy (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1963), pp. 45-61
- Hennessy, William M., ed., *The Annals of Loch Cé*, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1871)
- Hennessy, William M., and Bartholomew MacCarthy, eds., *Annála Uladh/Annals of Ulster*, 4 vols (Dublin: HMSO, 1887-1901)
- Herbert, Máire, 'Sea-divided Gaels? Constructing relationships between Irish and Scots c. 800-1169', in *Britain and Ireland 900-1300: Insular Responses to Medieval European Change*, ed. by Brendan Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 87-97
- Hill, George, *An Historical Account of The MacDonnells of Antrim* (Belfast: Archer & Sons, 1873)
- Hogan, Edmund, *Onomasticon Goedelicum* (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, 1910)
- Hudson, Benjamin T., *Prophecy of Berchán: Irish and Scottish High-Kings of the Early Middle Ages* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996)
- Hughes, A.J., 'Fuar Leam Longphort mo Charad', *Celtica*, 19 (1987), 61-74
- Hughes, A.J., 'The seventeenth-century Ulster/Scottish contention of the Red Hand: background and significance', in *Gaelic and Scots in Harmony: Proceedings of the Second*

- International Conference on the Languages of Scotland*, ed. by Derick S. Thomson (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Department of Celtic, n.d. [1990]), pp. 78-94
- Hughes, Kathleen, 'Where are the writings of early Scotland?', in *Celtic Britain in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Scottish and Welsh sources*, ed. by David Dumville (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1980), pp. 1-21
- Humphrey, Humphrey Lloyd, 'The Breton Language: its Present Position and Historical Background', in *The Celtic Languages*, ed. by Martin J. Ball (London: Routledge, 1993)
- Innes, Cosmo, ed., *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis* (Edinburgh: Iona Club, 1839)
- Irwin, Liam, review of Michelle O Riordan, *The Gaelic Mind and the Collapse of the Gaelic World* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1990), *Irish Historical Studies*, 29 (1994), 259-60
- Jackson, Kenneth, 'Common Gaelic: The Evolution of the Goidelic Languages', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 37 (1951), 71-97
- Jackson, Kenneth Hurlstone, *A Celtic Miscellany: Translations from the Celtic Literatures* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951)
- Jackson, Kenneth, 'The Duan Albanach', *SHR*, 36 (1957), 126-37
- Johnston, T.B., and James A. Robertson, *The Historical Geography of the Clans of Scotland* (Edinburgh: W. & A.K. Johnston, 1873)
- Jones, Siân, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing identities in the past and present* (London: Routledge, 1997)
- Jones Hughes, T., 'Society and Settlement in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *Irish Geography*, 5 (1965), 79-96
- Kearney, Hugh, *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
- Kelly, Fergus, 'Tiughraind Bhécain', *Ériu*, 26 (1975), 66-98
- Kerrigan, Catherine, ed., *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991)
- Kirk, Robert, *Tiomna Nuadh ár dtighearna agus ár slanuigheora Josa Criosa, ar na tharruing go fireannach as Greigis go Gaóidheilg . . . le R. Kirke, M.A.* (London: R. Ebheringtham, 1690)
- Knott, Eleanor, 'Filidh Éireann go hAointeach: William Ó Ceallaigh's Christmas Feast to the Poets of Ireland, A.D. 1351', *Ériu*, 5 (1911), 50-69
- Knott, Eleanor, 'A Poem by Giolla Brighde Ó Heoghusa', *Gadelica*, 1, 10-15 (1912).
- Knott, Eleanor, 'The Flight of the Earls (1607)', *Ériu*, 8 (1916), 191-94
- Knott, Eleanor, ed., *A Bhfuil Aguinn Dár Chum Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (1550-1591)/The Bardic Poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (1550-1591)*, Irish Texts, 22 and 23 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1922, 1926)
- Knott, Eleanor, *An Introduction to Irish Syllabic Poetry of the Period 1200-1600*, 2nd edn (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1957)

Knott, Eleanor, 'Mac an Bhaird's Elegy on the Ulster Lords', *Celtica*, 5 (1960), 161-71

Laoide, Seosamh, *Alasdair Mac Colla* (Dublin: Gaelic League, 1914)
Leabhar Gabhála Éireann

Lee, John, 'A Biophysical Evaluation of Ireland and Scotland for Crop Production', in *Rural land use on the Atlantic periphery of Europe*, ed. by Alexander Fenton and Desmond A. Gillmor (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1994), pp. 25-38

Leersen, Joep, *The Contention of the Bards* (Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh) *and its Place in Irish Political and Literary History*, Irish Texts, Subsidiary Series, 2 (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1994)

Leersen, Joseph Theodoor, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael: Studies in the idea of Irish nationality, its development and literary expression prior to the nineteenth century* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1986)

Lydon, James, 'The Scottish Soldier in Medieval Ireland: The Bruce Invasion and the Galloglass', in *The Scottish Soldier Abroad 1247-1967*, ed. by Grant G. Simpson (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1992), pp. 1-15

Mac Airt, Seán, ed., *Leabhar Branach: The Book of the O'Byrnes* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944)

Mac Airt, Seán, ed., *The Annals of Inisfallen (MS. Rawlinson B. 503)* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1988 [1944])

MacAlister, R.A. Stewart, ed., *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, 5 vols, Irish Texts, 34, 35, 39, 41, 44 (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1937 [1940], 1939 [1941], 1956)

Mac an Tuairneir, Paruig, ed., *Comhchruinneacha do dh'òrain taghta, Ghaidhealach* (Edinburgh: T. Stiubhard, 1813)

MacAonghuis, Iain, 'Sùil air Bàrdachd na Gàidhlig', in *For a Celtic Future: A tribute to Alan Heusaff*, ed. by Cathal Ó Luain (Dublin: Celtic League, 1984), pp. 4-24

MacAonghuis, Iain, 'Baird is Bleidirean', in *Féilscríbhinn Thomáis de Bhaldraithe*, ed. by Seosamh Watson (Dublin: Coiste Féilscríbhinn Thomáis de Bhaldraithe, An Coláiste Ollscoile, 1986), pp. 94-110

(see also under MacInnes, John)

MacBain, Alexander, and Rev. John Kennedy, eds., *Reliquiae Celticae: Texts, Papers, and Studies in Gaelic Literature and Philology Left by the Late Rev. Alexander Cameron, LL.D.*, 2 vols (Inverness: Northern Counties Newspaper and Printing and Publishing Co., 1894)

Mac Caingil, Aodh, *Scáthán Shacramuinte na Aithridhe*, ed. by Cainneach Ó Maonaigh, *Scríbhinní Gaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr*, 1 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1952 [1618]).

Mac Cana, Proinsias, 'The influence of the Vikings on Celtic literature', in *The Impact of the Scandinavian Invasions on the Celtic-speaking Peoples c.800-1100 A.D.: Introductory Papers read at Plenary Sessions of the International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by Brian Ó Cuív (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, repr. 1983), pp. 78-118

- McCaughey, Terence, 'Bards, Beasts and Men', in *Sages, Saints and Storytellers: Celtic Studies in Honour of Professor James Carney*, ed. by Donnchadh Ó Corráin, Liam Breatnach, and Kim McCone (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1989), pp. 102-21
- McCaughey, Terence, 'Protestantism and Scottish Highland Culture', in *An Introduction to Celtic Christianity*, ed. by James P. Mackey (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), pp. 172-205
- Mac Cionnaith, Láimhbheartach, ed., *Dioghlúim Dána* (Dublin: Oifig an tSoláthair, 1938)
(see also under McKenna, Lambert)
- Mhág Craith, Cuthbert, ed., *Dán na mBráthar Mionúr*, 2 vols, Scríbhinní Gaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr, 8 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1967)
- Mac Craith, Mícheál, 'The Gaelic reaction to the Reformation', in *Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State*, ed. by Steven G. Ellis and Sarah Barber (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 139-61
- Mac Craith, Mícheál, 'Creideamh agus Athartha: idé-eolaíocht pholaitíochta agus aos léinn na Gaeilge i dtús an seachtú haois déag', in *Nua-Léamha: Gnéithe do Chultúr, Stair agus Polaitíocht na hÉireann c. 1600-c. 1900*, ed. by Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1996), pp. 7-19
- Mac Craith, Mícheál, 'Litríocht an 17ú hAois: Tonnbhreid an tSeanghnáthaimh nó Tonnchruthú an Nuaghnáthaimh?', in *Léann na Gaeilge: Súil Siar, Súil Chun Cinn*, ed. by Ruairí Ó hUiginn, Léachtaí Cholm Cille, 26 (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1996), pp. 50-82
- MacDonald, A., and A. MacDonald, *The Clan Donald*, 3 vols (Inverness: Northern Counties Publishing Co., 1896)
- MacDonald, A., and A. MacDonald, *The MacDonald Collection of Gaelic Poetry* (Inverness: Northern Counties Newspaper and Printing and Publishing Co., 1911)
- MacDonald, Donald A., 'The Vikings in Gaelic Oral Tradition', in *The Northern and Western Isles in the Viking World: Survival, Continuity and Change*, ed. by Alexander Fenton & Hermann Pálsson (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1984), pp. 265-79
- MacDonald, Fiona A., 'Irish Priests in the Highlands: Judicial Evidence from Argyll', *Innes Review*, 46 (1995), 15-33
- MacDonald, John, 'An Elegy for Ruaidhrí Mór', *SGS*, 8 (1955-58), 27-52
- MacDonald, Kenneth D., 'The MacKenzie Lairds of Applecross', *TGSI*, 54 (1984-86), 411-74
- McDonald, R. Andrew, *The Kingdom of the Isles: Scotland's Western Seaboard, c. 1100-c. 1336* (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1997)
- McDonnell, Hector, 'Agnews and O'Gnímhs', *The Glynnys: Journal of the Glens of Antrim Historical Society*, 21 (1993), 13-53.
- Mac Eiteagáin, Darren, 'The Renaissance and the Late Medieval Lordship of Tír Chonaill, 1461-1555', in *Donegal: History and Society — Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*, ed. by William Nolan, Liam Ronayne, and Mairéad Dunlevy (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1995), pp. 203-28

- Mac Erlean, John C., ed., *Duanaire Dháibhidh Uí Bhruadair/The Poems of David Ó Bruadair*, 3 vols, Irish Texts, 11, 13, 18 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1910, 1913, 1917)
- Mac Fhinn, Pádraig, 'Eire agus Alba I Measg Paipear Staite na Roimhe', *An Ròsarnach, Leabhar IV* (Glasgow: Alasdair Mac Labhrainn agus a Mhic, 1921), pp. 85-95
- McGeown, Hugh, and Gerard Murphy, 'Giolla Brighde Albanach's Vision of Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain', *Éigse*, 7 (1953-55), 80-83
- MacGregor, Martin, 'Church and culture in the late medieval Highlands', in *The Church in the Highlands*, ed. by James Kirk (Edinburgh: Scottish Church History Society, 1998), pp. 1-36
- Mac Guaire, Seán, 'Ireland and the Catholic Hebrides', *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 5th Series, 42 (1933), 345-64
- Macilledhuibh, Ragnall, 'The Quern-Dust Calendar', *West Highland Free Press*, 15 January 1999
- MacInnes, Allan I., 'Scottish Gaeldom, 1638-1651: The Vernacular Response to the Covenanting Dynamic', in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland*, ed. by John A. Dwyer, Roger A. Mason, and Alexander Murdoch (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1982), pp. 59-94
- MacInnes, Allan I., 'Catholic Recusancy and the Penal Laws, 1603-1707', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, 23 (1987-89), 27-63
- MacInnes, Allan I., *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1996)
- MacInnes, John, 'Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod', *SGS*, 11 (1966), 3-23
- MacInnes, John, 'The Oral Tradition in Scottish Gaelic Poetry', *Scottish Studies*, 12 (1968), 29-43
- MacInnes, John, 'Sorley MacLean's 'Hallaig': a note', *Calgacus*, 1, no. 2 (1975), 29-32
- MacInnes, John, 'The Gaelic Literary Tradition', in *Scottish Literature in the Secondary School* (Edinburgh: HMSO, 1976), pp. 56-67
- MacInnes, John, 'The Panegyric Code in Gaelic Poetry and its Historical Background', *TGSI*, 50 (1976-78), 435-98
- MacInnes, John, 'Gaelic Poetry and Historical Tradition', in *The Middle Ages in the Highlands*, ed. by Loraine Maclean of Dochgarroch (Inverness: Inverness Field Club, 1981), pp. 142-61
- MacInnes, John, 'The Gaelic Perception of the Lowlands', in *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig*, ed. by William Gillies (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), pp. 89-100
- MacInnes, John, 'Clan Sagas and Historical Legends', *TGSI*, 57 (1990-92), 377-94
- MacInnes, John, 'The Scottish Gaelic Language', in *The Celtic Connection*, ed. by Glanville Price (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1992), pp. 101-30
(see also under MacAonghuis, Iain)
- MacInnes, Rev. John, 'West Highland Sea Power in the Middle Ages', *TGSI*, 48 (1972-74), 518-56
- MacKechnie, John, 'Treaty Between Argyll and O'Donnell', *SGS*, 7 (1953), 94-102

- McKenna, Lambert, 'Poem to the First Earl of Antrim', *The Irish Monthly*, 48 (1920), 314-18
- McKenna, Lambert, ed., *Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh/The Contention of the Bards*, 2 vols, Irish Texts, 20, 21 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1920)
- McKenna, Lambert, 'The Flight of the Earls', *The Irish Monthly*, 54 (1926), 471-75
- McKenna, Lambert, 'To Mág Aonghusa', *The Irish Monthly*, 55 (1927), 435-38
- McKenna, Lambert, 'To Féilim Ó Broin', *The Irish Monthly*, 55 (1927), 591-95
- McKenna, Lambert, ed., *Aithdioghluim Dána: A Miscellany of Irish Bardic Poetry*, Irish Texts, 37, 40, 2 vols (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1939, 1940)
- McKenna, Lambert, 'Some Irish Bardic Poems', no. 65, *Studies*, 32 (1943), 116-21
- McKenna, Lambert, ed., *Irish Syntactical Tracts* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944)
- McKenna, Lambert, 'Some Irish Bardic Poems', no. 71, *Studies*, 33 (1944), 400-04
- McKenna, Lambert, 'Some Irish Bardic Poems', no. 74, *Studies*, 34 (1945), 204-10
- McKenna, Lambert, ed., *The Book of Magauran/Leabhar Méig Shamhradháin* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1947)
- McKenna, Lambert, ed., *The Book of O'Hara/Leabhar Í Eadhra* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1951)
- (see also under MacCionnaith, Láimhbheartach)

MacKenzie, Annie M., ed., *Òrain Iain Luim: The Songs of John MacDonald, Bard of Keppoch*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 8 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1965)

MacKenzie, Henry, ed., *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland Appointed to Inquire into the Nature of the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1805)

MacKenzie, Jennie, 'The Clàrsach', in *The Middle Ages in the Highlands*, ed. by Loraine Maclean of Dochgarroch (Inverness: Inverness Field Club, 1981), pp. 101-02

MacKenzie, John, ed., *Sàr-Obair nam Bard Gàidhealach, or, The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan and Stewart, 1841)

MacKenzie, W.M., ed., *The Poems of William Dunbar* (London: Faber & Faber, 1932)

McKerral, Andrew, 'West Highland Mercenaries in Ireland', *SHR*, 30 (1951), 1-14

McKerral, Andrew, 'West Highland Mercenaries in Ireland', *Kintyre Antiquarian & Natural History Society Magazine*, 9 (1981), 5-15

MacLauchlan, Thomas, ed., *The Dean of Lismore's Book* (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1862)

MacLean, Sorley, 'Notes on sea-imagery in seventeenth century Gaelic poetry', in Sorley MacLean, *Ris a' Bhruthaich: The Criticism and Prose Writings of Sorley MacLean*, ed. by William Gillies (Stornoway: Acair, 1985), pp. 83-105

MacLean-Bristol, Nicholas, *Warriors and Priests: The History of the Clan Maclean, 1300-1570* (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1995)

- Mac Mhathain, Aonghus, 'Aos Dàna (I)', *Gairm*, 8 (1954), 343-47
 Mac Mhathain, Aonghus, 'Aos Dàna (II)', *Gairm*, 9 (1954), 33-36
 Mac Mhathain, Aonghus, 'Aos Dàna (III)', *Gairm*, 10 (1954), 124-29
 [see also under Matheson, Angus]
- MacMhuirich, Dòmhnall, *An Duanaire: Co-Thional Ùr de dh'Òrain, de Dhuanagan, etc.* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart, 1868)
- MacNeill, Eoin, *Phases of Irish History* (Dublin: M.H. Gill, 1937)
- M'Nicol, Donald, *Remarks on Dr. Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Hebrides* (London: T. Cadell, 1779) [repr. London and New York: Garland Publishing, 1974]
- Mac Niocaill, Gearóid, 'Duanaire Ghearóid Iarla', *Studia Hibernica*, 3 (1963), 7-60
- MacPhail, J.R.N., ed., *Highland Papers*, 4 vols, Scottish History Society Publications, Second Series, 5, 12, 20, Third Series, 22 (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1914, 1916, 1920, 1934)
- Mag Uidhir, Seosamh, ed., *Pádraig Mac a Liondain: Dánta* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1977)
- Major, John, *A History of Greater Britain*, ed. and trans. by Archibald Constable, Publications of the Scottish History Society, 10 (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1892)
- Martin, F.X., 'Introduction', in *Medieval Ireland: 1169-1534*, A New History of Ireland, 3, ed. by Art Cosgrove (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. xlix-lxii
- Matheson, Angus, 'Bishop Carswell', *TGSI*, 42 (1953-59), 182-205
 Matheson, Angus, 'Poems from a Manuscript of Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh' [I], *Éigse*, 10 (1961-63), 270-78
 Matheson, Angus, 'Poems from a Manuscript of Cathal Mac Muireadhaigh' [II], *Éigse*, 11 (1964), 1-17
 [see also under Mac Mhathain, Aonghus]
- Matheson, William, ed., *Òrain Iain Mhic Fhearchair a Bha 'n a Bhàrd aig Sir Seumas MacDhomhnaill/The Songs of John MacCodrum: Bard to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 2 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1938)
 Matheson, William, ed., *An Clàrsair Dall: Òrain Ruaidhri Mhic Mhuirich agus a Chuid Ciùil/The Blind Harper: The Songs of Roderick Morrison and his Music*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 12 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1970)
 Matheson, William, 'Aonghus nan Aoir: A Case of Mistaken Identity', *Scottish Studies*, 21 (1977), 105-08
 Matheson, William, 'Replies: The O'Muirgheasáin Bardic Family', *Notes and Queries of the Society of West Highland and Island Historical Research*, 7 (1978), 24
- Mathew, David, *The Celtic Peoples and Renaissance Europe: A Study of the Celtic and Spanish Influences on Elizabethan History* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1933)
- Meek, Dòmhnall Eachann, 'Gàidhlig is Gaylick anns na Meadhon Aoisean', in *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig*, ed. by William Gillies (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), pp. 131-45

- Meek, Donald E., 'The Gaelic Ballads of Medieval Scotland', *TGSI*, 55 (1986-88), 47-72
- Meek, Donald E., 'Development and Degeneration in Gaelic Ballad Texts', in *The Heroic Process: Form, Function and Fantasy in Folk Epic*, ed. by Bo Almqvist, Séamas Ó Catháin, and Pádraig Ó Héalaí (Dún Laoghaire: Glendale Press, 1987), pp. 131-60
- Meek, Donald E., 'The Gaelic Ballads of Scotland: Creativity and Adaptation', in *Ossian Revisited*, ed. by Howard Gaskill (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), pp. 19-48
- Meek, Donald E., 'The Scots-Gaelic Scribes of Medieval Perthshire: An overview of the orthography and contents of the Book of the Dean of Lismore', in *Stewart Style 1513-1542: Essays on the Court of James V*, ed. by Janet Hadley Williams (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1996), pp. 254-72
- Meek, Donald E., 'Place-names and Literature: Evidence from the Gaelic Ballads', in *The Uses of Place Names*, ed. by Simon Taylor (Edinburgh: Scottish Cultural Press, 1998), pp. 147-68
- Meek, Donald E., 'Norsemen and Noble Stewards': The Castle Sween Poem in the Book of the Dean of Lismore', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 34 (1998), 1-50
- Meek, Donald E., 'The Reformation and Gaelic culture: perspectives on patronage, language and literature in John Carswell's translation of "The Book of Common Order"', in *The Church in the Highlands*, ed. by James Kirk (Edinburgh: Scottish Church History Society, 1998), pp. 37-62
- Megaw, Vincent, and Ruth Megaw, 'Celtic Connections Past and Present: Celtic Ethnicity Ancient and Modern', in *Celtic Connections: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by Ronald Black, William Gillies, and Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1999), pp. 19-82
- Morgan, Hiram, 'The end of Gaelic Ulster: a thematic interpretation of events between 1534 and 1610', *Irish Historical Studies*, 26 (1988), 8-32
- Morrill, John, 'The British Problem, c. 1534-1707', in *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707: State Formation in the Atlantic Archipelago*, ed. by Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 1-38 and 273-81 {{Steven G. Ellis, 'Nationalism and Historiography: the Gaelic Experience' }}
- Morrison, Ian, 'Climatic Changes and Human Geography: Scotland in a North Atlantic Context', *Northern Scotland*, 27 (1980), 1-11
- Munro, Jean, and R.W. Munro, eds., *Acts of the Lords of the Isles, 1336-1493*, Publications of the Scottish Historical Society, 4th series, 22 (Edinburgh: Scottish Historical Society, 1986)
- Munro, Séumas, *Am Filidh: Co-Thional Ùr de dh'Òrain 's de Dhuanagan*(Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1840)
- Murphy, Denis, ed., *The Annals of Clonmacnoise* (Dublin: Dublin University Press, 1896)
- Murphy, Gerard, 'Bards and Filidh', *Éigse*, 2 (1940), 200-07
- Murphy, Gerard, Review of *Carmina Gadelica*, vols IV and V (ed. by J. Carmichael Watson and Angus Matheson respectively), *Éigse*, 3 (1941-42), 226-27, and *Éigse*, 8 (1956-57), 167
- Murphy, Gerard, 'A Vision Concerning Rolf MacMahon', *Éigse*, 4 (1944-45), 79-111
- Murphy, Gerard, 'Poems of Exile by Uilliam Nuinseann mac Barúin Dealbhna', *Éigse*, 6 (1948), 8-15

- Murphy, Gerard, 'Warriors and Poets in Thirteenth-Century Ireland', in *Glimpses of Gaelic Ireland* (Dublin: C.J. Fallon, 1948), pp. 33-64
- Murphy, Gerard, 'Two Irish Poems Written from the Mediterranean in the Thirteenth Century', *Éigse*, 7 (1953-55), 72-74
- Murphy, Gerard, *Early Irish Lyrics: Eighth to Twelfth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998 [1956])
- Nicholls, Kenneth, *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages*, The Gill History of Ireland, 4 (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972),
- Nicholls, K.W., *Land, Law and Society in Sixteenth-Century Ireland* (O'Donnell Lecture, University College Cork, 1976)
- Ó Baoill, Colm, 'Some Irish Harpers in Scotland', *TGSI*, 47 (1971), 143-71
- Ó Baoill, Colm, 'Scotland in Early Gaelic Literature (600-1200 A.D.)', *TGSI*, 48 (1972-74), 382-94
- Ó Baoill, Colm, 'Domhnall Mac Mharcuis', *SGS*, 12 (1976), 183-93
- Ó Baoill, Colm, ed., *Eachann Bacach agus Bàird Eile de Chloinn Ghill-Eathain/Eachann Bacach and Other MacLean Poets*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 14 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1979)
- Ó Baoill, Colm, Review of Angela Partridge, *Caoineadh na dTrí Muire: Téamaí na Páise i bhFilíocht na Gaeilge* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1983), *SGS*, 14, Part II (1986), 158-60
- Ó Baoill, Colm, and Donald MacAulay, *Scottish Gaelic Vernacular Verse to 1730: A Checklist* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Dept. of Celtic, 1988)
- Ó Baoill, Colm, ed., *Gàir nan Clàrsach/The Harps' Cry* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1994)
- Ó Baoill, Colm, ed., *Iain Dubh: Òrain a rinn Iain Dubh mac Iain mhic Ailein (c.1665-c.1725)* (Aberdeen: An Clò Gaidhealach, 1994)
- Ó Baoill, Colm, 'The Scots-Gaelic Interface', in *The Edinburgh History of the Scots Language*, ed. by Charles Jones (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), pp. 551-68
- Ó Baoill, Dónall P., Review of Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, *Dialects of Ulster Irish* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University, 1987), *Celtica*, 20 (1988), 192-98
- O'Brien, M.A., 'A Middle-Irish poem on the birth of Aedán mac Gabráin and Brandub mac Echach', *Ériu*, 16 (1952), 157-70
- Ó Buachalla, Breandán, 'Cúlra is tábhacht an dáin *A leabhráin ainmnithear d'Aodh*', *Celtica*, 21 (1990), 402-16
- Ó Buachalla, Breandán, 'Poetry and Politics in Early Modern Ireland' (review of Michelle O Riordan, *The Gaelic Mind and the Collapse of the Gaelic World* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1990)), *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 7 (1992), 149-75
- Ó Buachalla, Breandán, *Aisling Ghéar: Na Stíobhartaigh agus an tAos Léinn 1603-1788* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1996)
- Ó Caithnia, Liam P., *Apalóga na bhFilí 1200-1650*, Leabhair Thaighde, 45 (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1984)
- O'Connor, Charles, *A Dissertation on the First Migrations, and Final Settlement of the Scots in North-Britain* (Dublin: George Faulkner, 1766)
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'Brian Ó Ruairc', *Éigse*, 9 (1958-61), 254
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'Eachtra Mhuireadhaigh Uí Dhálaigh', *Studia Hibernica*, 1 (1961), 56-69

- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'The Poetic Contention About the River Shannon', *Ériu*, 19 (1962), 89-110
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'Literary Creation and Irish Historical Tradition', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 49 (1963), 233-62
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'A poem by Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh', in *Celtic Studies: Essays in memory of Angus Matheson*, ed. by James Carney & David Greene (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 92-98
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'A Poem for Cathal Croibhdhearg Ó Conchubhair', *Éigse*, 13 (1969-70), 195-202
- Ó Cuív, Brian, *The Linguistic Training of the Medieval Irish Poet* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1973)
- Ó Cuív, Brian, *The Irish Bardic Duanaire or 'Poem-Book'* (Dublin: R.I. Best Memorial Trust, 1973)
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'A Medieval Exercise in Language Planning: Classical Early Modern Irish', in *Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science*, 3, *Studies in the History of Linguistics*, 20 (1978), 23-34
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'A Poem on the Second Earl of Antrim', *SGS*, 13 (1981), 302-05
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'An Elegy on Donnchadh Ó Briain, Fourth Earl of Thomond', *Celtica*, 16 (1984), 87-105
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'Some Irish Items Relating to the MacDonnells of Antrim', *Celtica*, 16 (1984), 139-56
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'The Family of Ó Gnímh in Ireland and Scotland: A Look at the Sources', *Nomina*, 8 (1984), 57-71
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'Ireland's Manuscript Heritage', *Éire-Ireland*, 19, no. 1 (1984), 87-110
- Ó Cuív, Brian, *Aspects of Irish Personal Names* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1986)
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'Vowel Hiatus in Early Modern Irish', in *Celtic Language, Celtic Culture: A Festschrift for Eric P. Hamp*, ed. by A.T.E. Matonis and Daniel F. Melia (Van Nuys, CA: Ford & Bailie, 1990), pp. 96-107
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'The Irish language in the early modern period', in *Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691*, ed. by T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin, and F.J. Byrne, *A New History of Ireland*, 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 509-45
- Ó Cuív, Brian, 'Further Comments on the Ó Gnímh Family of Co. Antrim', *SGS*, 17 (1996), 298-304
- Ó Dochartaigh, Cathair, and Colm Ó Baoill, *Trí Rainn is Amhrán* (Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen Press, forthcoming 1999) (earlier edition, without notes, Belfast: Lagan Press, 1996)
- Ó Donnchadha, Tadhg, ed., *Amhráin Dhiarmada mac Seáin Bhuidhe Mac Cárthaigh* (Dublin: M.H. MacGill & Son, 1916)
- Ó Donnchadha, Tadhg, ed., *Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidhe* (Dublin: Coimisiún Láimhscríbhinní na hÉireann, 1931)
- Ó Donnchadha, Tadhg, 'Cín Lae Ó Mealláin', *Analecta Hibernica*, 3 (1931), 1-61
- O'Donovan, John, ed., *The Tribes and Customs of Hy-Many* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1843)
- O'Donovan, John, ed., *The Genealogies, Tribes and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1844)
- O'Donovan, John, ed., 'The Annals of Ireland, from the Year 1443 to 1468, translated from the Irish by Dudley Firissee', in *Miscellany of the Irish Archeological Society*, I (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1846), pp. 198-302
- O'Donovan, John, ed., *The Tribes of Ireland: A Satire, by Aenghus O'Daly* (Dublin: John

O'Daly, 1852)

O'Donovan, John, ed., *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann/The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland Compiled by the Four Masters*, 7 vols (Dublin: Hodges, Smith, 1856)

O'Dowd, Mary, *Power, politics and land: Early Modern Sligo, 1568-1688* (Belfast: Queen's University Institute of Irish Studies, 1991)

Ó Fiaich, Tomás, 'The Political and Social Background of the Ulster Poets', in *Litríocht na Gaeilge*, ed. by Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, Léachtaí Cholm Cille, 1 (1970), 23-33

Ó Fiaich, Tomás, ed., *Art Mac Cumhaigh: Dánta* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1973)

O'Flanagan, Theophilus, 'Deirdri, or the Lamentable Fate of the Sons of Usnach, An Ancient Dramatic Irish Tale, One of the Three Tragic Stories of Eirin; Literally Translated into English, from an Original Gaelic Manuscript, with Notes and Observations: To Which is Annexed, the Old Historic Account of the Facts on Which the Story is Founded', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*, 1 (1808)

Ó Foghludha, Risteárd, ed., *Cois na Cora, .i. Liam Ruadh Mac Coitir agus a Shaothar Fileata* (Oifig Díolta Foillseacháin Rialtais, 1937)

Ó Gallchóir, Seán, ed., *Séamas Dall Mac Cuarta: Dánta* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1971)

O'Grady, Standish Hayes, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, I (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1926)

Ohlmeyer, Jane, *Civil War and Restoration in the Three Stuart Kingdoms: The career of Randal MacDonnell, marquis of Antrim, 1609-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)

Ó hInnse, Séamus, ed., *Miscellaneous Irish Annals (A.D. 1114-1437)* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1947)

Ó Lochlainn, Colm, *Tobar Fíorghlan Gaedhilge: Deismireachta na Teangadh 1450-1853* (Dublin: Three Candles, 1939).

Ó Lochlainn, Colm, 'Ár ar Ard na Riadh', *Éigse*, 5 (1945-47), 149-55

Ó Lochlainn, Colm, *Irish Men of Learning: Studies by Father Paul Walsh* (Dublin: Three Candles, 1947)

Ó Macháin, Pádraig, 'The Early Modern Irish Prosodic Tracts and the Editing of "Bardic Verse"', in *Metrik und Medienwechsel/Metrics and Media*, ed. by Hildegard L.C. Tristram, *ScriptOralia*, 35 (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1991), pp. 273-88

Ó Macháin, Pádraig, 'Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn: Foinse dá Shaothar', in *An Dán Díreach*, ed. by Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, Léachtaí Cholm Cille, 24 (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1994), pp. 77-113

Ó Máille, Tomás, 'A poem to Tuathal Ó Máille', *Revue Celtique*, 49, (1932), 166-81

Ó Mainnín, Mícheál B., "'The Same in Origin and Blood": Bardic Windows on the Relationship between Irish and Scottish Gaels, c. 1200-1650', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 38 (1999), 1-52

Ó Maolalaigh, Roibeard, 'Place-names as a Resource for the Historical Linguist', in *The Uses*

of *Place Names*, ed. by Simon Taylor (Edinburgh: Scottish Cultural Press, 1998), pp. 12-53

Ó Maolmhuaidh, Frionsias, *Lóchrann na gCreidmheach* (Rome: Typis Sacrae Congreg. de Propaganda Fide, 1676)

Ó Muirgheasa, Énrí, ed., *Céad de Cheoltaibh Uladh* (Dublin: McGill, 1915)

Ó Muirí, Damien, 'Tírghrá agus Grá Tíre i bhFilíocht Chúige Uladh', in *Éire Banba Fódla*, ed. by Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, *Léachtaí Cholm Cille*, 13 (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1982), 166-90

Ó Muraíle, Nollaig, *The Celebrated Antiquary Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh (c. 1600-1671) — His Lineage, Life and Learning*, Maynooth Monographs, 6 (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1996)

Ó Murchú, Máirtín, 'An Ghaeltacht: pobal i mbaol a leáite', *Scríobh*, 6 (1984), 63-69

O'Neill, Timothy, *The Irish Hand* (Portlaoise: Dolmen Press, 1984)

O'Rahilly, T.F., *Measgra Dánta/Miscellaneous Irish Poems*, 2 vols (Cork: Cork University Press, 1927)

O'Rahilly, Thomas F., ed., *Dánfhocail: Irish Epigrams in Verse* (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1921)

O'Rahilly, Thomas F., ed., *Dánta Grádha: Cnósach de sna Dánta Grá is Fearr san Ghaelge (A.D. 1350-1750)*, 2nd edn (Cork: Cork University Press, 1926)

O'Rahilly, T.F., 'A Poem by Piaras Feiritéar', *Éigse*, 13 (1940-42), 113-18

O'Rahilly, Thomas F., *Irish Dialects Past and Present, with Chapters on Scottish and Manx* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1988 [1932])

O'Rahilly, T.F., 'Indexes to the Book of the Dean of Lismore', *SGS*, 4 (1934-35), 31-56

O'Rahilly, T.F., 'A Hiberno-Scottish Family (Ó Muirgheasáin, Morrison)', *SGS*, 5 (1942), 101-05

Ó Raithbheartaigh, Toirdhealbhadh, ed., *Genealogical Tracts I.* (Dublin: Coimisiún Láimhscríbhinní na hÉireann, 1932)

Ó Riain, Pádraig, 'A Poem on Séafraidh Ó Donnchadha an Ghleanna', *Journal of the Kerry Archeological and Historical Society*, 3 (1970), 48-50

O Riordan, Michelle, *The Gaelic Mind and the Collapse of the Gaelic World* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1990)

O Riordan, Michelle, 'Professors and Performers and "others of their kind": Contextualising the Irish Bardic Poet', *The Irish Review*, 23 (1998), 73-88

Ó Súilleabháin, Pádraig, ed., *Lucerna Fidelium*, *Scríbhinní Gaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr*, 5 (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1962)

O'Sullivan, Anne, 'The Tinnakill Duanaire', *Celtica*, 11 (1976), 214-28

O'Sullivan, Anne, and Pádraig Ó Riain, eds., *Poems on Marcher Lords from a sixteenth-century Tipperary manuscript*, *Irish Texts*, 53 (London: Irish Texts Society, 1987)

Ó Tuama, Seán, *Repossessions: Selected Essays on the Irish Literary Heritage* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1995)

Quiggin, E.C., 'Prologomena to a Study of the Later Irish Bards 1200-1500', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 5 (1911), 89-143

Quiggin, E.C., 'A Poem by Gilbride Macnamee in Praise of Cathal O'Connor', in *Miscellany Presented to Kuno Meyer*, ed. by Osborn Bergin and Carl Marstrander (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1912), pp. 167-77
Quiggin, E.C., *Poems from the Book of the Dean of Lismore*, ed. by J. Fraser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937)

Ross, Anthony, 'Dominicans and Scotland in the Seventeenth Century', *Innes Review*, 23 (1972), 40-75

Roy, James Charles, *Islands of Storm: Eileáin Annraidh* (Chester Springs, PA: Dufour Editions, 1991)

Sanger, Keith, and Alison Kinnaird, *Tree of Strings/Crann nan Teud: A History of the Harp in Scotland* (Temple, Midlothian: Kinmor Music, 1992)

Sellar, W.D.H., 'The Origins and Ancestry of Somerled', *SHR*, 45 (1966), 123-42

Sellar, David, 'Highland Family Origins — Pedigree Making and Pedigree Faking', in *The Middle Ages in the Highlands*, ed. by Loraine Maclean of Dochgarroch (Inverness: Inverness Field Club, 1981), pp. 103-16

Sellar, W.D.H., Review of Katharine Simms, *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1987), *Irish Historical Studies*, 27 (1990), 165-67

Shaw, William, *An Enquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems Ascribed to Ossian* (Dublin: Pat Byrne, 1782)

Simmons, Andrew, ed., *Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1998 [1754])

Simms, Katharine, 'Guesting and Feasting in Gaelic Ireland', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 108 (1978), 67-100

Simms, Katharine, *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1987)

Simms, Katharine, 'Bardic Poetry as a Historical Source', in *The Writer as Witness: literature as historical evidence*, ed. by Tom Dunne, *Historical Studies*, 16 (Cork: Cork University Press, 1987), pp. 58-75

Simms, Katharine, 'Images of Warfare in Bardic Poetry', *Celtica*, 21 (1990), 608-19

Simms, Katharine, 'Women in Gaelic Society during the Age of Transition', in *Women in Early Modern Ireland*, ed. by Margaret MacCurtain and Mary O'Dowd (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), pp. 32-42

Simms, Katharine, 'An Eaglais agus Filí na Scol', in *An Dán Díreach*, ed. by Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, Léachtaí Cholm Cille, 24 (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1994), pp. 21-36

Simms, Katharine, 'Late Medieval Donegal', in *Donegal: History and Society — Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*, ed. by William Nolan, Liam Ronayne, and Mairéad Dunlevy (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1995), pp. 183-202

Simms, Katharine, 'Gaelic warfare in the Middle Ages', in *A military history of Ireland*, ed. by Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 99-115

Simms, Katharine, 'Literacy and the Irish Bards', in *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, ed. by Huw Price, *Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literacy*, 33 (Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press, 1998), pp. 238-58

Sinclair, A. MacLean, *The Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765* (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island: Haszard & Moore, 1892)

Sinclair, A. MacLean, *Na Bàird Leathanach: The MacLean Bards*, 2 vols (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island: Haszard & Moore, 1898)

Sinclair, MacLean, 'A Collection of Gaelic Poems', *TGSI*, 26 (1904-07), 235-62

Skene, W.F., *Celtic Scotland: A History of Ancient Alban*, 3 vols (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1887, 1890 [2nd edn])

Steer, K.A., and John Bannerman, *Late Medieval Monumental Sculpture in the West Highlands* (Edinburgh: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, 1977)

Stevenson, David, 'The Irish Franciscan Mission to Scotland and the Irish Rebellion of 1641', *Innes Review*, 54-55

Stewart, James A., 'The Clan Ranald and Catholic Missionary Successes, 1715-1745', *Innes Review*, 45 (1994), 29-46

Stewart, James A., 'Lost Highland Manuscripts and the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745-46', in *Celtic Connections: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by Ronald Black, William Gillies, and Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1999), pp. 287-308

Thomson, Derick S., 'Scottish Gaelic Folk-Poetry ante 1650', *SGS*, 8 (1958), 1-17

Thomson, Derick S., 'The MacMhuirich Bardic Family', *TGSI*, 43 (1960-63), 276-304

Thomson, Derick S., 'The Harlaw *Brosnachadh*: An early fifteenth-century literary curio', in *Celtic Studies: Essays in memory of Angus Matheson*, ed. by James Carney & David Greene (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 147-69

Thomson, Derick S., 'Gaelic Learned Orders and Literati in Medieval Scotland', *Scottish Studies*, 12 (1968), 57-80

Thomson, Derick S., 'The Poetry of Niall MacMhuirich', *TGSI*, 46 (1969-70), 281-301

Thomson, Derick S., 'Niall Mór MacMhuirich', *TGSI*, 49 (1974-76), 9-26

Thomson, Derick S., 'Three Seventeenth Century Bardic Poets: Niall Mór, Cathal and Niall MacMhuirich', in *Bards and Makars*, ed. by Adam J. Aitken, Matthew P. McDiarmid, and Derick S. Thomson (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 1977), pp. 221-46

Thomson, Derick S., 'The Formulaic Nature of the Harlaw *Brosnachadh*', in *Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Scottish Language and Literature (Medieval and Renaissance)*, ed. by Roderick J. Lyall and Felicity Riddy (Stirling/Glasgow, 1981)

Thomson, Derick S., 'The Poetic Tradition in Gaelic Scotland', in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. by D. Ellis Evans, John G. Griffith, and E.M. Jope (Oxford: Jesus College, 1983), pp. 121-32

Thomson, Derick S., ed., *The Companion to Gaelic Scotland* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1983)

Thomson, Derick S., 'The Earliest Scottish Gaelic Non-classical Verse Texts', in *Scottish Language and Literature, Medieval and Renaissance, Fourth International Conference, 1984, Proceedings*, ed. by Dietrich Strauss and Horst W. Drescher (Frankfurt: Verlag Peter Lang, 1986), pp. 533-46

Thomson, Derick S., *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990)

Thomson, Derick S., 'The Seventeenth-Century Crucible of Scottish Gaelic Poetry', *Studia Celtica*, 26/27 (1991-92), 155-62

- Thomson, Derick S., ed., *Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair: Selected Poems*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, Minor Series, 1 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1996)
- Thomson, R.L., ed., *Adtimchiol an Chreidimh: The Gaelic Version of John Calvin's Catechismus Ecclesiae Genevensis*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 7 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1962)
- Thomson, R.L., ed., *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh/John Carswell's Gaelic translation of the Book of Common Order*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 11 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1970)
- Toland, John, *A Collection of Several Pieces by Mr. John Toland*, 2 vols (London: J. Peele, 1726)
- Trevor-Roper, Hugh, 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland', in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 15-41
- Walker, Joseph C., *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (Dublin: Luke White, 1786) (repr. New York: Garland Publishing, 1971)
- Walsh, Micheline Kerney, '*Destruction by Peace*': *Hugh O'Neill After Kinsale* (Armagh: Cumann Seanchais Ard Mhacha, 1986)
- Walsh, Paul, ed., *Leabhar Chlainne Suibhne* (Dublin: Dollard, 1920)
- Walsh, Paul, *Gleanings from Irish Manuscripts*, 2nd edn (Dublin: Three Candles, 1933)
- Walsh, Paul, ed., *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill as Leabhar Lughaidh Úí Chléirigh (The Life of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill transcribed from the Book of Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh)*, 2 vols, Irish Texts, 42-43 (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1948)
- Walsh, Paul, *Irish Chiefs and Leaders*, ed. by Colm Ó Lochlainn (Dublin: Three Candles, 1960)
- (see also under Breathnach, Pól)
- Watson, W.J., 'Classical Gaelic Poetry of Panegyric in Scotland', reprinted and supplemented from *TGSI*, 29 (1914-19), 217-22
- Watson, W.J., 'An Unpublished Poem to Angus MacDonald of Dun Naomhaig', *An Gaidheal*, 19 (1923), 36-38
- Watson, W.J., 'On the Imprisonment of Argyll, in 1661', in *Voices from the Hills (Guthan o na Beanntaibh)*, ed. by John MacDonald (Glasgow: An Comunn Gaidhealach, 1927), pp. 252-55
- Watson, W.J., 'Unpublished Gaelic Poetry — III', *SGS*, 2 (1927), 75-91
- Watson, W.J., 'Early Irish Influences in Scotland', *TGSI*, 35 (1929-30), 178-202
- Watson, W.J., 'Unpublished Gaelic Poetry — IV., V.', *SGS*, 3 (1931), 139-59
- Watson, W.J., 'Marbhnadh Dhonnchaidh Duibh', *An Deo-Gréine*, 12 (1916-17), 132-34, 149-51
- Watson, W.J., 'The History of Gaelic in Scotland', *TGSI*, 37 (1934-36), 115-35
- Watson, W.J., ed., *Scottish Verse from the Book of the Dean of Lismore*, Scottish Gaelic Texts, 1 (Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1937)
- Watson, W.J., 'The Gaelic Literature of Scotland', in *The Highlands and the Highlanders: The Past and Future of a Race* (Glasgow: The Highlands Committee, Empire Exhibition, 1938), pp. 22-44
- Watson, W.J., ed., *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig: Specimens of Gaelic Poetry, 1550-1900*, 3rd edn

(Stirling: An Comunn Gàidhealach, 1959)

Watson, W.J., 'The MacDonald Bardic Poetry', *Clan Donald Magazine*, 6 (1975), 39-46

Watson, W.J., *The History of the Celtic Placenames of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 1993 [1926])

Whelan, Kevin, 'Settlement and society in eighteenth-century Ireland', in *The Poet's Place: Ulster literature and society - Essays in honour of John Hewitt, 1907-87*, ed. by Gerald Dawe and John Wilson Foster (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1991), pp. 45-62

Whelan, Kevin, 'The modern landscape: from plantation to present', in *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*, ed. by F.H.A. Aalen, Kevin Whelan, and Matthew Stout (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997), pp. 67-103

Whyte, Ian D., *Scotland Before the Industrial Revolution: An Economic and Social History, c 1050-c 1750* (London: Longman, 1995)

Wilby, Noel Macdonald, 'The "Encrease of Popery" in the Highlands, 1714-1747', *Innes Review*, 17 (1966), 91-115

Williams, J.E. Caerwyn, 'The Court Poet in Medieval Ireland', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 57 (1971 [1973]), 85-135

Williams, J.E. Caerwyn, and Patrick K. Ford, *The Irish Literary Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992)

Williams, N.J.A., ed. *The Poems of Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe*, Irish Texts, 51 (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1980)

Wright, Thomas, ed., *The Historical Works of Giraldus Cambrensis* (London: H.G. Bohn, 1863)

Theses

- Binéid, Dara, 'Saoldearcadh an Aosa Léinn ca. 1550-ca. 1650' (unpublished M.A. thesis, University College Cork, 1994)
- Bruford, Alan J., 'The Irish Romantic Tales and Their Relationship to Irish and Scottish Gaelic Oral Tradition' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1965)
- Caball, Marc, 'A Study of Intellectual Reaction and Continuity in Irish Bardic Poetry Composed During the Reigns of Elizabeth I and James I' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 1991)
- Duffy, Seán, 'Ireland and the Irish Sea Region, 1014-1318' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1993)
- Kennedy, Mike, 'Is leis an Tighearna an talamh agus an làn: the Scottish Gaelic settlement history of Prince Edward Island' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1995)
- Mac Carthaigh, Eóin, 'Poems on the Uí Dhomhnaill (circa 1641)' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1995)
- MacDonald, Fiona Anne, 'Ireland and Scotland: Historical Perspectives on the Gaelic Dimension, 1560-1760' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Glasgow, 1994)
- MacInnes, John, 'Gaelic Poetry' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1975)
- MacLean, J.A., 'The Sources, particularly the Celtic Sources, for the history of the Highlands in the seventeenth century' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1939)
- Ó Cróinín, Breandán P., 'Bruidhean Chaorthuinn Ón Lámhscríbhinn is Sine i Leabharlann Náisiúnta na hAlban' (unpublished M.A. thesis, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, 1995)
- Ó Foghlú, Seán, 'Four Bardic Poems from *Leabhar Chlainne Suibhne*' (unpublished M. Litt. thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1992)
- Ó Macháin, Pádraig, 'Poems by Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaire' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1988)
- Ó Mainnín, Mícheál, 'An Tuiscint Ghaelach in Albain, c. 1200-1715' (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University College Galway, 1987)
- Simms, Katharine, 'Gaelic Lordships in the Later Middle Ages' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1976)
- Stewart, James A., Jr., 'The Clan Ranald: History of a Highland Kindred' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1982)
- Stiùbhart, Dòmhnall Uilleam, 'An Gaidheal, A' Ghàidhlig agus A' Ghàidhealtachd anns an t-Seachdamh Linn Deug' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1997)