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Highland rogues and the roots of
Highland Romanticism

The second most famous anecdote concerning the late-seventeenth-century poet Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh recounts how MacLeod of Dunvegan – possibly Ruairidh son of Iain Breac – forbade her for a second time to make poetry, this time neither within nor without her house. She is supposed to have composed her work standing over the *maide-buinn*, the threshold.¹

Clearly, this anecdote can be unpacked in a number of ways. It alludes to the well-known Gaelic *adunaton*, usually in the form of a riddle, concerning an item found neither inside nor outside the house. *Glutadh*, peat-dust insulation, is the canonical, if not the most interesting, answer. The tale also suggests how Màiri's songs, and indeed Màiri herself, were regarded not only by posterity, but perhaps also by her contemporaries. Her work was a synthesis: both public, in the sense that it dealt – overtly and covertly – with political themes; and personal, in the sense that its genre, its metre, its starting-point, were specifically female and therefore ostensibly domestic in character. Her compositions are for within the home, and also for without. Màiri herself is neither entirely in the domestic nor in the public sphere.

Returning to the anecdote once more, one can be relatively certain that it also refers to a specific method of *dèanamh na frithe*, a procedure of divination in which the diviner walks in a circle about the fire reciting a rhyme, goes to the threshold, opens his or her eyes, and then interprets the future according to the first living creatures seen.² Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh's position in tradition is thus emphatically liminal, not just between the public and the personal, between male and female, but indeed between this world and what was to come.

The theme of 'crossing the Highland [and for that matter Lowland] Line' allows the writer to stand astride quite a few thresholds, real or imaginary, useful or arbitrary: Gàidhealtachd and Galldachd; Scotland and England; orality and text; turns of the century; poetry and song; perhaps also feminine and masculine.

The fundamental importance of song – and indeed all forms of heightened language – must be emphasised, in a Gaelic world saturated by words in all their forms, from the Ossianic epic to the briefest anecdote, from prayer to charm to curse to work-song. These were sung, chanted, recited and discussed from dawn to dusk and beyond. In the absence of outside institutions, the crucial importance of the

spoken or sung word in shaping and controlling social norms cannot be stressed too highly. The position of the poet as arbiter of public reputation was paramount. Thus we find the Rev. Alexander MacDonald of Islandfinnan requesting that a MacMhuirich bard aid him in the social control of his parish, and his son, the great poet Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair, performing the same role himself as a catechist in Ardnamurchan in the 1730s.³ But we must be careful: about the same time Allan Ramsay is being asked to compose a poem ‘lashing this Goth [who had] blowen up with gunpowder the ancient Celtick stones of Abury’.⁴ As ever, we are not dealing with absolute differences between the two halves of Scotland, but rather differences in emphases.

Another basic point concerns the sheer difficulty faced by any scholar attempting to wrestle with the protean nature of Gaelic oral tradition, a tradition whose allusiveness is remarkable even by European standards.⁵ A number of interpretations were proposed above for one single anecdote, one single piece of ‘heightened language’. What then of the vast corpus of Gaelic poetry, or rather, what of Gaelic song? The situation here is even more intractable. In Scottish Gaelic culture there is a notable lack of ballads in which a story is narrated within and through the song itself. Rather, the audience is expected to be acquainted with the narrative already, to recognise the allusions, to be fine-tuned to the performer’s message. Political content is often even more allusive, above all in the majority of songs which tend to be sung from an oppositional, usually Jacobite, perspective, dissenting from the authorities of the day whether local or national, created and performed within a culture where the need to secure assent from a diverse audience meant that references were deliberately kept vague and ambiguous.

An additional caveat is one fundamental to the majority of songs composed during the eighteenth century, but one little discussed in other papers in this collection, given that most of the work under consideration was composed, indeed written and even published by a small group of male poets. In discussing Gaelic songs, we work within a highly fluid oral medium wherein stanzas and occasionally entire songs migrate between different oeuvres, wherein different authors, times, places, and circumstances can, both surprisingly and predictably, somehow produce the same song. With some of this material, namely canonical compositions of the best-known poets, the literary scholar is on fairly firm ground. Most ascriptions, however, inevitably entail varying degrees of scepticism.

Over and above the usual prerequisite deep familiarities with linguistic, literary, and historical contexts, the Gaelic scholar is faced with the challenge of grasping that crucial socio-cultural context, the oral tradition in its widest sense, not just its contents – stretching from proverbs to prose narratives, topography and genealogy to popular belief in all its myriad manifestations – but also the transmission of this material through space and time. The embarrassment of misconstruing Gaelic literature is not only the province of that most intractable Scottish tribe, the ‘Highland experts’ unable

to understand a word of the language of the people whose culture and history they have taken upon themselves to expound to the wider world. Indeed, there are moments when all of us go astray. As I have written elsewhere, 'in the badinage of the céilidh house we are but gauche and obtuse intruders'.⁶

In this paper I shall attempt briefly to sketch out a field of study in which Lowland and Gaelic scholars might cooperate and learn from each other, principally by examining how during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries a certain style of fashionable pastoral art-song, as much in vogue in the London metropolis as in the Scottish Lowlands, crossed the Highland/Lowland literary divide and came to be employed in both men and women's poetry. I hope that this might raise some questions concerning multilingual 'literary space' in these islands during the early modern era, the possibility of long-term cultural chronologies, and indeed the fraught mutual relationship between socio-economic change and change in gender identities and representations.

The confused era following the forfeiture and destruction of the Lordship of the Isles known as *Linn nan Creach*, the Age of the Forays, was a series of decades marked by prolonged regional conflict and internecine strife, especially but not only on the western seaboard. In the mid-sixteenth century widespread and vicious feuding broke out between the Campbells of Glenorchy and their erstwhile allies the MacGregors, resulting in the violent dispossession of Clann Ghriogair and, eventually, their proscription by James VI in one of his last acts before departing for England in 1603. Bands of broken MacGregor refugees scattered and settled throughout the Gàidhealtachd, whether reset by those sympathising with their plight, or else imposing themselves upon reluctant host communities. In an effort not just to maintain their own morale, but in order to provoke widespread sympathy for their cause, the magnificent songs lamenting the desperate state of *Clann Ghriogair air fògradh*, the exiled Clan Gregor, played a pivotal function.⁷ Such songs represent the roots of a genre of romantic, or proto-romantic, poetry which was to become exceptionally important in, indeed almost representative of, Gaelic literature as a whole. In such songs, the role of women as providers for and protectors of menfolk who found themselves *fo'n choill*, outlawed, was paramount.

After the crushing of the Ulster rebellion of Cathair Ó Dochartaigh and the kidnapping of most of the island chiefs in 1608, the Edinburgh authorities were able to extend their control over the western Gàidhealtachd. Estates across the region were reorganised along more commercial lines, with rents raised accordingly. Such political and economic developments provoked dissatisfaction at all levels of society, resulting in intensified feuding and, in its wake, many more dispossessed and outlawed 'broken men'. At the same time, the cattle droving trade grew steadily and exponentially, and markets were established and expanded. Fresh opportunities thus arose for the theft and resale

of stolen beasts and stolen goods, together with the protectionist rackets and blackmail inherent in such a trade. Bands of armed men, increasingly experienced veterans of Continental wars, began to operate, generally upon the fringes of the Gàidhealtachd. Deprived of the usual clan ties, often at feud, these men had to find shelter and protection. They did so not only by offering their covert armed assistance to local magnates, but also by appealing to a disaffected populace who feared a similar fate of dispossession for themselves. Despite their dependence upon the new commercial world, the caterans posed as representatives of an older, more traditional, heroic order, attractive and charismatic figures acting out traditional roles increasingly forsaken by clan chiefs themselves.⁸ It is hardly surprising that they created a romantic – if we might use this term – persona for themselves, the more so given the often brutal reality of their trade. Their appeal to women was part and parcel of their allure, and it may be no coincidence that almost the only ‘photofit’ description we have of any criminal in official seventeenth-century records is black propaganda by the Privy Council, wherein Seumas an Tuim, James Grant, outlawed uncle of the murdered Iain Ruadh Charrainn, John Grant of Carron in Glen Moriston, is described as ‘a man of little stature, bald headed, braid faced, fair culloured, broun bairded, weake eyed, bow hoghed, fatt bellied and about fiftie yeeres of age’.⁹

Nevertheless, women gave Seumas an Tuim and others like him food and shelter, and in contemporary records they appear to a disproportionate extent among the reseters of these characters.¹⁰ They would remain so as long as outlaws operated in the Gàidhealtachd. A song attributed to the later seventeenth-century cateran Domhnall Donn mac Fir Bhoth-Fhionntainn, Donald MacDonald of Bohuntine, supposedly composed upon his capture by his arch-enemy the Laird of Grant, ends with the verses:

Nam biodh fios mi bhith ’n-sàs
Gun dùil ri fhuasgladh gu bràth,
’S lionmhor ghabhadh mo phàirt ’s an uair seo.

’S iomadh maighdeann glan ùr,
Chluinnteadh faram a giùin,
A chuireadh na crùin gu m’ fhuasgladh.

Gu bheil té dhiubh ’n Srath Spé
’S nam biodh fios aice fhéin,
Nàile, chuireadh i ceud gu luath ann.¹¹

If they would know I was captive, with no expectation of release, many would take my part at this time. Many a bright young maiden whose gown would be heard to rustle would

*give crowns to release me. There is one of them in Strathspey, and if she would know,
by Saint Nàile, she would quickly give a hundred.*

In order to fashion their romantic personae, the outlaws and cattle thieves drew upon traditional courtly motifs, possibly to an unusual extent compared with previous songs and poems composed by men in the Scottish Gàidhealtachd. In this respect, it should be stressed that such motifs are remarkably scarce in extant vernacular and classical verse dating from the late medieval period and from *Linn nan Creach*.¹² This fact is somewhat obscured in that, despite the paucity of surviving classical courtly verse from Scotland, two of the most celebrated examples of the genre in the entire Gaelic world were in fact composed by members of the foremost bardic family in Scotland, the MacMhuirichs. One of these, *Námba dhomb an dán*, is the work of Eòin MacMhuirich, in the words of literary historian Mícheál Mac Craith ‘an chéad fhile gairmiúil a chum dán grá a bhfuil eolas cinnte againn ina thaobh’ [‘the first professional poet of whom we have certain knowledge who composed a love poem’].¹³ The other, *Soraidh slán don oidhche a-réir*, a poem ascribed to Niall Mór MacMhuirich in the Red Book of Clan Ranald, and in which the use of the *alba* motif in the fifth stanza certainly suggests a measure of English influence, is described by the same author as ‘an ceann is gleoite ar fad, b’ fhéidir’ (‘perhaps the most accomplished of them all’).¹⁴ Only two Gaelic poems in the admittedly somewhat skewed poetry collection assembled in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* are entirely courtly in character, although the anthology embraces anti-courtly and non-courtly verse aplenty.¹⁵ The first half of the seventeenth century was a time when the courtly genre was in full bloom in Irish. In Scotland, however – although the great classical poet Cathal MacMhuirich was certainly able to compose a courtly stanza¹⁶ – there are no extant entirely courtly works to be found in the admittedly slender surviving classical corpus. The same also holds true for those vernacular texts which have come down to us. Indeed, in Derick Thomson’s survey of ‘The earliest Scottish Gaelic non-classical verse texts’ we only find various versions of the celebrated song *Cailín o Chois Siùire mé*.¹⁷ Nevertheless, a handful of other songs, or at any rate stanzas within them, may suggest faint echoes of *amor bereas* in the earlier Scottish Gaelic tradition which have been rather stifled by the inclinations of later generations and later compilers.¹⁸

What we do have from the early seventeenth century onwards are songs composed by outlawed ‘masterless men’ assiduously cultivating their romantic appeal to women. These outlaws and caterans represent something of a new type in the Scottish Gaelic world. Previously, characters who lived in the wilderness on the margins of society, far from being romantic figures, were rather more akin to fearsome semi-savages occupying a liminal, somewhat ambiguous position.¹⁹ One of the earliest fugitive poets outwith Clann Ghriogair is Fearchar mac Iain Òig, Farquhar MacRae from Kintail in the Seaforth estate, whose wife incited him to the impulsive murder of the factor

who had just confiscated his prized copper kettle in lieu of a newly raised rent with grassum. During the next seven years MacRae's wife provided for him while he was *fo'n choill*, mainly in Coire Gorm a' Bhealach in Gleann Lic. In his song *Cha b'e dìreadh a' bbruthaich* MacRae ironises the courtly motif of 'troma-cheist', the heavy question or anxiety his wife has placed him under: the consequence of love, certainly; but it was she who had brought about his flight in the first place. His exile may allow him to participate in the aristocratic pastime of the hunt, but it is as much from necessity as from pleasure:

'S i do nighean-sa Dhonnchaidh chuir an troma-cheist seo orm:
Té do'n d' fhàs an cùl dualach 's e m'a guaillean mar òr,
'S e sìos mu dà shlinnein anns an ionad bu chòir.
'S nuair a thigeadh a' foghar b'e mo roghainn bhith falbh
Leis a' ghunna nach diùltadh 's leis an fhùdar dhubh-ghorm,
'S bheirinn fiadh às a fhireach 's breac a linne 'n t-Sruth Mhóir.
O na saoilinn thu m' fhreagairt dhèanainn fead cheann a' mheòir.²⁰

It is your daughter, Duncan, who put me under this great anxiety: a girl whose curly hair grew over her shoulders like gold, down about her two shoulderblades as was fitting. And when the autumn would come I'd choose to go with the gun which does not misfire and the black-blue powder, and I'd bring a deer from the high ground and a trout from the pool of the Sruth Mór. O, if I thought you'd answer me I'd whistle with my fingertips.

The most notorious Gaelic outlaws of the early seventeenth century, however, were considerably more formidable characters operating on the other side of the country, on the Gàidhealtachd frontier in Strathspey. Having won a fearsome reputation, Seumas an Tuim, James Grant, was eventually arrested by the authorities in 1630 and incarcerated in Edinburgh Castle. His daring escape, after his wife had smuggled him a rope hidden in a cog of butter, represented a humiliating blow to the Privy Council, which thereupon put a price on Grant's head. Pàdraig Geàrr, Patrick MacGregor, brother of the chief of the clan, turned bounty hunter, in part to obtain government support for his kindred; but the aggressive behaviour of himself and his men alienated the people of Strathspey and he was killed while leading an attack upon Seumas an Tuim. This was by no means the end of the affair. Bloodfeud had now been kindled between James Grant and his supporters on the one hand, and, on the other, the kinsfolk of Pàdraig Geàrr MacGregor under the leadership of his father, Iain Dubh Geàrr, and his uncle, Pàdraig Ruadh, better known as An Gille Ruadh, *anglice* Gilderoy. Thus two outlaw bands at loggerheads were now disrupting the eastern border of the Gàidhealtachd, while the Edinburgh authorities were trying to destroy them both. In the case of the MacGregors at least, this attempt was eventually successful.²¹

Although tradition about Seumas an Tuim was somewhat scant by the time of the first wave of major folklore collectors in the second half of the nineteenth century, a couple of sources record the following stanza:

Tha mo ghràdh thar gach duine
 Air Seumas an Tuim;
 Ruitheadh tu, leumadh tu 's dhannsadh tu cruinn
 Chuireadh tu treun-fhir a bhàrr am buinn
 Cha do dh' fhàilnich riamh do mhisneachd do
 Thapadh 'nad lùim.²²

My love over every man is for Seumas an Tuim; you would run, you would leap, and you would dance neatly. You would knock the strong man from the soles of his feet. When leaping, your courage and strength never failed you.

There is the same stress on dancing and agility in the song, or rather port-a-beul, *Ruidhle Thulaichean* or the Reel of Tulloch, supposedly composed by Iain Dubh Gearr. As we have it today, the song relates how he escaped an ambush in Killin, and then how 'Iseabail Dubh Thulaich' helped him to kill his enemies – her own brother among them – when they launched an ill-advised attack on the outlaw in Strathspey:

The forsaidd song was made by Iain Duth who was Courting a young Lady and an other man was Courting her at the same time and sent for John to meet him in an ale house and had 18 men with him but Black John defeated them all & afterwards run to Strathspey and the pursuit followed him and he tells in the song how the Las[s] behaved in Loading and him shooting.²³

The romance of such songs, and the numerous local aiders and abettors of the outlaws, should not distract us from the often brutal conduct of the caterans themselves, especially the MacGregors. In the words of the Privy Council:

they have broken louse and associat unto thamselffes a lawlesse byke of infamous and theevish lymmars with whome thay go ravagin athort the countrie, and on all places where thy may be maister they sorne upon his Majesteis good subjects, taking from thame all and everie thing that comes narrest to thair hands, and whare they find anie opposition or resistance they threaten his Majesteis subjects with all kynde of extremitie and sometimes with death . . .²⁴

John Spalding describes the same band as follows:

Thir lawless McGrigour, wnder cullour of seiking James Grant, opprest the countrie wp and doun, sorning and taking thair meit, defloiring virgynes and menis wyves, and begetting of barnes in hourdome, without pvnitioun quhaireuer thay went.²⁵

The Record of the Privy Council describes how Iain Dubh Geàrr viciously turned the tables on John Stewart of Drumquhen by ambushing his intended assailant on Christmas Day 1636:

[he] lurked in the said hous [in Tulloch] whill the said umquhill Johne came there and how soone they gott sight of him they sett upon him with shotts of hacquebutts and musketts, shott him through the thighes, brak his thigh bones, cutted aff his fingers, cutted aff his head and danced and made merrie about him a long time . . .²⁶

Motifs, songs and anecdotes concerning cattle thieves are found in profusion and confusion across the region, from female as well as male performers. Confident attribution of these productions is generally unattainable, the more so given that entrepreneurial caterans would adopt the names of their illustrious forerunners. Thus we have an Iain Dubh Geàrr Òg appearing in the sources from 1640 onwards;²⁷ another Pàdraig Ruadh MacGregor making a name for himself as a cateran in Strathspey in 1670;²⁸ while the son of the renowned cateran Donald MacDonald – ‘Donald mc Ranald vc Allester termed the gawin kennin or quhyt faced stirk’ (or the ‘Halket Stirk’) – adopted his father’s title after his death.²⁹ As with names, so also with poetry: a number of songs ascribed to Domhnall Donn contain facts clearly at odds with the little we know of their supposed creator.³⁰

The popularity of songs supposedly composed by the caterans, and anecdotes concerning them, reflect the concomitant growth of popular printed literature about ‘rogues’ in English. The *beau idéal* of such characters is of course Robin Hood, a figure just as prominent in Scottish Lowland culture as in his own native land. In this regard, a letter written by Robert Campbell of Glenfalloch on 16 November 1638 to his brother, Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, concerning Iain Dubh Geàrr MacGregor, is noteworthy:

thair is na nowells in this c[on]trie bot Jhone Gar and his me[n] is playand Robin Hud and Littill Johnis passagis thay spylled sum est lowlaen me[n] at ye burne of Camis cuming to this merkat . . .³¹

The celebrity accorded their later seventeenth-century successors is clearly analogous to that of contemporary highwaymen in England. An anecdote dating to 1646 concerning

Alexander Fraser, the young Master of Lovat, serves as an example of the notoriety enjoyed by Highland reivers. Feeling snubbed by his guardian John, first earl of Wemyss, the youth threatened peevishly:

if I be thus used any longer, and that you provoke me to return north again, I will purchase for my selfe, and turn John Dow Gare among yow at last. My Lord Weemes could not understand what he meant by John Dow Gare, and asked Mr William Fraser [of Phopachy] who this was? He told his Lordship that this John was a notorious leading robber and outlaw that troubled all the North with excursions, and never traveled without 20 stout fellowes attending him well armed, put a tax uppon townes and villages as he went through, and made all compon with him, bribing him with loane and soumes of money; and, my Lord, yow will do well to mollify his temper and prevent his youthly forward and froward designs, for if he once take it in his head being my Lord Lovats sone, he will get many to follow him, and if he join with the rebels, he may creat trouble enough and anger yow all.³²

Whether bluffing or not, Fraser was made a captain in Leslie's regiment.

Despite the ignorance of the earl of Wemyss, the renown of Highland caterans was evidently not confined to the Gàidhealtachd alone, as can be seen from the threats of two brothers in Monkland near Glasgow, James and George Cleland, made against Mr Walter Whiteford, 'sub-dean of Glasgow, one of his Majesty's chaplains', 'assuming to thameselves the name of James Grant, and threatning to committ mare insolenceis than fell out be him'.³³ The most interesting and unexpected translation, however, is that undergone by Pàdraig Ruadh MacGregor, an Gille Ruadh, whose name, if nothing else, achieved posthumous celebrity in the eponymous English-language ballad *Gilderoy*. The first extant version of the ballad in print is in the collection *Westminster-Drollery* of 1671, while a mention of its hero in John Lacy's play *Sanny the Scot* of 1675 suggests that the text was already well-known to the metropolitan audience.³⁴ The earliest recorded mention of the 'excellent Scottish tune, call'd Gilderoy' dates from a broadside of 1664, while the introduction to the text in admittedly later eighteenth-century editions might allow us to trace its origin back to the Commonwealth era: 'it is somewhere said of him' that he 'pick'd Cardinal Richlieu's Pocket in the King's Presence, return'd to England, robb'd Oliver Cromwell, hang'd a Judge, and was at length taken and executed in Scotland, a little before the Restoration'.³⁵ We might tentatively suggest that the earlier version of the ballad – or at least the melody accompanied by a rudimentary narrative – was brought back to London by veterans who had served in Scotland with General Monck; this is certainly the case with some Gaelic airs which enjoyed a contemporary vogue.³⁶

Whatever its origins, this first text of *Gilderoy* was superseded in later collections

by a ‘version which, with corruptions and expurgations calling themselves “improvements”, has come down in unceasing popularity through all the Scottish Song-books to the present day.’³⁷ From a literary perspective, the more elaborate later text is somewhat surprising in that, drawing upon imagery in the earlier *Gilderoy* – ‘his silken Garters on his legs,/And the Roses on his shoone’³⁸ – it explicitly plays down the Highland connections of its hero:

Gilderoy was a bonny Boy,
 had roses tull his shun,
His Stockings made of the finest silk,
 his Garters hanging down:
It was a comely sight to see,
 he was so trim a Boy;
He was my Joy and Heart’s Delight,
 my handsom Gilderoy.

Oh, sike a charming Eyen he had,
 a breath as sweet as Rose;
He never wore a Highland plad,
 but costly silken Cloaths . . .³⁹

To label *Gilderoy* as ‘the idealisation of the Highland freebooter’⁴⁰ thus appears somewhat wide of the mark – although of course the lines quoted above may very well have been composed as a reaction against such a phenomenon. The creation, or re-creation, of the romantic, or proto-romantic, Highland cateran is a phenomenon which might be dated to some years later, towards the end of the seventeenth century; rather than being the work of London ballad singers, it appears to have arisen in the Scottish Lowlands.

LADY SQUEAMISH: Mr Truman, Mr Goodvile, and Ladies, I beseech you do me the favour to hear Mr Malagene sing a Scotch Song: I’le swear I am a strange Admirer of Scotch Songs, they are the pretti’st soft melting gentle harmless things –

SAUNTER: By Dad, and so they are. – In January last – (*Sings*)

VALENTINE: Deliver us! A Scotch Song! I hate it worse then a Scotch Bagpipe, which even the Bears are grown weary of, and have better Musick. I wish I could see her Ladship dance a Scotch Jigg to one of ’em.

MALAGINE: I must needs beg your Ladships pardon, I have forgotten the last new Scotch Song: But if you please, I’le entertain you with one of another nature, which I am apt to believe will be as pleasant.⁴¹

During the last quarter of the seventeenth century ‘Scotch songs’ or ‘Scotch snatches’ began to win some – although clearly not universal – popularity in the metropolis at all levels of society.⁴² Indeed, the enforced sojourn of James, Duke of York, in Edinburgh as a result of the Exclusion Crisis of 1679 – a few years not just of respite but indeed of favour being shown to the clans – might well have led to another wave of interest in Highland culture in the metropolis.⁴³ From street ballads, the genre was introduced to the stage, taken up by that quintessential early modern cultural entrepreneur Thomas D’Urfey, followed soon afterwards by John Lacy and Aphra Behn. ‘Scotch songs’ were performed as entr’actes by characters with no connection with Scotland, and indeed as stand-alone pieces too; many of the genre were eventually incorporated into D’Urfey’s multivolume song anthologies.⁴⁴ With their rural setting, artificial, often insipid and urbane sentiment, abstraction, and clichés, the genre was an offshoot of existing English pastoral song, outfitted with ‘Scots’ characters with names such as ‘Jocky’, ‘Sawney’, ‘Jenny’ or ‘Moggie’, and a greater or lesser smattering of Lowland Scots words adding extra vigour. It would appear, however, that at least some of the male parts were sung by characters dressed in tartan trews. In Behn’s *Widow Ranter* the heroine is attended by a ‘Bag-Piper, Playing before a great Boule of Punch, carried between two Negro’s, a Highlander Dancing after it’. Behn’s dancing ‘high Land-Vallet’ is clearly meant to be clad in a plaid.⁴⁵ Generally, however, it is unlikely that late-seventeenth-century London metropolitan audiences made too much distinction between Highlander and Lowlander any more than they do nowadays, the more so given that drovers of the Highland middling sort – and indeed the Highland ‘Scotch peddlars’ of rather lower social status – swaggering around the streets of London dressed in plaid would of course speak Lowland Scots.⁴⁶ In the various versions of Michael Wright’s triple portrait of John Lacy, one of the characters he plays is a Scotsman dressed in a plaid, whether Wareston in John Tatham’s *The Rump* of 1660, or the playwright’s own Sauney the Scot.⁴⁷

The rise of the ‘Anglo-Scots art song’ during the late seventeenth century is clearly a British phenomenon, ‘a part of a general, all-British lyric culture’.⁴⁸ It is not sufficient, however, to identify and delineate a particular *espace littéraire*; one also needs to chart centres of production and patterns of diffusion and dissemination. In this respect, these popular or tea-table songs were created as much on the stage and indeed in the streets of London as they were in Scotland itself. In a protean culture functioning according to market demand, recognising little distinction between ‘artificial’ and ‘popular’ genres or for that matter between ‘oral’ and ‘written’, wherein tunes, motifs, settings, and manner of delivery were in constant flux, we have ‘Scots’ songs created by English entertainers, while Scots – and probably English too – adapted existing English songs into Scots versions.⁴⁹

The most influential sub-genre to derive from the phenomenon was that based upon the motif of the ‘Bonnie Highland Laddie’, celebrating ‘the love of a Highland

man and a Lowland woman.’⁵⁰ The earliest versions of the type suggest that it developed as an offshoot to popular songs from the south in which the patriotic English soldier was exalted by his sweetheart to the detriment of his foreign counterparts.⁵¹ Although the ‘Highland Laddie’ theme – subsuming the popular *Lizzye Balie* songs among others – clearly draws upon one of the most common, and doubtless one of the oldest, motifs in international love poetry wherein ‘an upper-class woman or just an ordinary farmer’s daughter goes off with a poor man or an outcast, whether beggar, serving-man, gipsy or highland marauder’⁵² into a vogueish pastoral setting, growing interest at the time in the figure of the Noble Savage, a character in which hard and soft masculinities are combined, should also be borne in mind.⁵³ The rise of the genre in Scotland has been traced in important but still rather neglected studies by Thomas Crawford, William Donaldson, and Murray Pittock.⁵⁴ Although these critics have suggested that it was the adaptability of the Highland Laddie songs for political ends which sealed their popularity, one rather suspects that ‘the wish-fulfilment role of the Highlander’ in contemporary popular culture was not entirely due to Jacobite sympathies alone; witness Edmund Burt’s remarks:

But to return to the Marriages of the Highlanders,— Perhaps, after what has been said of the Country, it may be asked, what Lowland Woman would care to lead a Life attended with so many Inconveniences? Doubtless there are those who would be as fond of sharing the clanish State and Power with a Husband, as some others are of a Name, when they sell themselves for a Title; for each of these Kinds of Vanity is very flattering: besides, there are many of the Lowland Women who seem to have a great liking to the Highland-men, which they cannot forbear to insinuate in their ordinary Conversation.⁵⁵

Whether the songs were primarily political or not, what is interesting for our present purpose is that it was clearly not long – perhaps only a few years – before the motif of the Highland Laddie began to be employed by Gaelic caterans, men who had learnt such songs either from Lowland soldiers or merchants in the Gàidhealtachd, or else, having crossed the Lowland line, as drovers or soldiers themselves. Thus we have canonical verses of the type such as:

O’er benty Hill with him I’ll run
And leave my Lawland Kin and Dady
Frae Winter’s Cauld and Summer’s Sun
He’ll screen me with his Highland Plaidy.

or:

Thoul't row me in thy tartan plaidy.

being remodelled in Gaelic. For instance, in a song ascribed to Domhnall Donn, *Thogainn fonn gun bhith trom*:

Lùib mi i 'nam bhreacan fhéin,
Liom a b'éibhinn mar thachair.

Biodh sneachd ann 's gaath-a-tuath,
Phaisginn suas i 'nam achlais.¹⁶

I folded her in my own tartan plaid, for me it was joyful what happened. Let there be snow and a north wind, I would fold her up under my arm.

In such late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century popular song is to be found the genesis of the creation of the romantic Highlander and the romantic Highlands. Motifs were rapidly adopted and refashioned by Gaelic poets for their own ends, in hybrid compositions which, ironically, have been described as the essence of pure, authentic Gaelic song. In fact, these texts represent the mingling, to a greater or lesser extent, of Gaelic tradition with a new infusion of pastoral and popular song – together with their tunes – from outwith the Gàidhealtachd, from printed English broadsheet sources. It is not only beasts which were being traded or lifted over the line, but motifs, themes, symbols, metres and airs as well.¹⁷

As the earlier example of *Gilderoy* suggested, it was not until this period that tartan plaid began to be an essential emblem of Gaelic masculine virility. Two conjectures might be advanced as to why this was the case. Firstly, by the late seventeenth century the plaid was increasingly becoming a male garment in the Gàidhealtachd, as women abandoned the traditional female plaid or *earasaid* in favour of contemporary Lowland fashions. In addition, the tartan, that clothing of brawn, vigour, and spectacular display *par excellence*, was more and more being compared to and distinguished from garments of 'renunciation' worn in the south, namely the black hat and cloak worn by Presbyterian ministers, and, on a wider British stage, the rise of that most emblematic whig garment, the sober three-piece suit.¹⁸

It is hardly surprising, then, that we have women's songs in Gaelic also praising the 'Highland plaidy' and its related accoutrements. The song ascribed to Domhnall Donn's lover the Laird of Grant's daughter has the stanza:

'S math thig féile dhut 's an fhasan,
Boineid ghorm is còta breacain,
Osan gearr is trì chuir ghartan,
'S glas lann air do chruachan.

The kilt in fashion well becomes you, a blue bonnet and a tartan coat, short hose and thrice-tied garters, and a grey blade on your hip.

A crucial point not to be overlooked, of course, is the reference to fashion: ‘*s an fhasan*’.

Despite the fact that they did not yet travel across the Lowland frontier as frequently as their male counterparts, female poets were nevertheless well aware of the symbolism of tartan, of its effect upon outsiders. As a praise song to Allan Maclean, tutor of Bròlas, by the Mull woman Mairearad ni’n Lachlainn demonstrates, they could employ the allusive power of tartan as a motif in order to urge the adoption of Jacobite policies. The poet stresses how Maclean’s father had been received by the Duke of York’s court, in effect a Stuart court in exile, in Edinburgh:

’Nuair a chunnacas na h-àrmainn,
Na fìor Ghàidheil gun fhòtas,
Is nach d’iarr iad de dheise orra
Ach breacan is còta,
Is sgìath bhreac nam ball iomad
Air an slinnein gu còmhrag
’S ann a thuirte gach duine,
Siud a’ chuladh tha bòidheach!

When the nobles saw the true Gaels without blemish, didn’t they want any garment upon them but a tartan plaid and a coat, and a speckled many-bossed shield on their shoulder for fighting. Every man exclaimed, ‘What a beautiful garment!’

The veiled erotic imagery of the tartan is dealt with in a rather more straightforward fashion in the following early-eighteenth-century waulking song recorded from a Mrs Mary Morrison by John Lorne Campbell in Barra:

’S truagh, a Rìgh, nach mi ’m breacan
Thug thu dhachaigh o’n fhéill.

’S ’nuair a thilleadh o’n fhrasrach
Bhithinn paisgte fo d’ sgéith.

’S ’nuair a rachadh i fhàsgadh
Bhithinn sgaoilte ri gréin.¹⁹

A pity, Lord, that I am not the tartan you took home from the fair. When you’d return from the shower, I’d be folded under your arm. When it had been wrung out, I’d be spread out in the sun.

The use of ‘courtly’ motifs in Scottish Gaelic texts of the period by and about caterans is perhaps the most conspicuous example of their wider vogue with contemporary male poets. Among texts in which a synthesis of classical Gaelic influence with that of English and Lowland song might be discerned is *Gura muladach tha mi*, a poem dating from the third quarter of the seventeenth century by Gilleasbaig na Ceapaich, chief of the Catholic MacDonells of Keppoch. The author adopts the romantic persona of one suffering grievously for a lost love, praising not only her beauty, but also her feminine virtues, before turning the song into an aristocratic *jeu d’esprit* with a final exaggerated stanza undermining the melancholic picture of the previous verses.⁶⁰

Cha ghearaininn bàs dhoibh,
 Nan cuirteadh fo’n fhàd mi, roimh’n àm:
 Ach sùgradh mo leannain
 Bhith aig ùmadaigh balaich, gun taing.

*I wouldn't wish death for them, if I were put untimely under the turf, but my darling
 uselessly courting a clownish dolt.*

Although Gilleasbaig na Ceapaich was acquainted with the representative of the MacMhuirich classical bardic family of his time, Niall Mór, and could apparently employ classical *corr-litir* script, he was educated – like many Highland heirs – in Forres, and was evidently proud of the travels he had undertaken throughout Scotland.⁶¹ It is therefore likely that *Gura muladach tha mi* is indebted to Lowland chapbooks as well as to classical *dánta grá*. It is fascinating to see Gilleasbaig apparently using song to bolster the rather uneasy position of his family after the celebrated Keppoch Murder, for instance in the song ‘*S mór a’ bhleid is an stràic*’ composed against his enemies Domhnall Donn and the piper Donald Campbell.⁶²

The love poem *Thugas ceist do mhnaoi ghasda* by Gilleasbaig’s son Aonghas Odhar employs the same persona of the suffering lover, albeit speaking rather more earnestly and certainly more directly to the object of his affections.⁶³ Again, it is likely that the work is indebted to contemporary Lowland songs as well as to the classical Gaelic tradition: lines such as ‘*Cha robh Diana ri faicinn/Ann an coltas ri d’ phearsa mar thrian*’ – ‘Diana was not to be seen but as a third of your likeness’ – probably owe rather more to contemporary parlour songs than to the Mediterranean classical tradition. The resistance of the poet to the persona convention demands be adopted might be suggested by the couplet:

Dhomhs’ cha bheag e mar pheacadh
 Ma nitear mo chasgairt le mnaoi.

For me it is not a small sin if I’m to be slain by a woman.

A somewhat more light-hearted example is offered by Anndra mac an Easbaig, Andrew Maclean. His *Tbugas gaol nach fàillinneach* plays with courtly conventions and is apparently set to the tune of the great panegyric *Gun tug mi ionnsaidh bhearraideach*.⁶⁴ Although ostensibly a love poem, the date given for its composition in Ronald MacDonald's *Eigg Collection* indicates that the song was addressed to a child – Barbara, daughter of Bishop John Fullerton – by a man old enough to be her grandfather.⁶⁵ Maclean was to some extent at least versed in the classical Gaelic tradition, as evinced by two somewhat inelegant verses composed in *séadna* metre to Edward Lhuyd for his *Archæologica Britannica* of 1707.⁶⁶ It is worth noting that the poet's mother was brought up in Eaglesham, albeit of Gaelic, and indeed ecclesiastical, stock: she was herself the child of a bishop, the Bishop of Argyll. It is virtually certain that Maclean was brought up in two cultures.

Another contemporary 'love song' suffered a rather interesting fate. *Slàn iumradh do'n ùr-mhnaoi* was composed by Mr John Beaton, minister of Bracadale in Skye from 1667 to 1708 and one of the famous Beaton medical family.⁶⁷ Although the author employs courtly motifs aplenty, with much praise of the new wife's beauty, his song is emphatically not a love poem composed in the persona of a suffering paramour. Rather, it works as an epithalamium praising her good bearing, civility, learning, and piety:

Glac gheal a nì 'n sgrìobhadh,
Gu finealt' 'nuair b' àill,
'Ga tharraing gu lionmhor,
Le innleachd do làmh;
Leis an leabhar am Biobla
Gu cinnteach gach tràth;
Glac creideas is firinn
'S lean a-chaidh ris mar ghnàths.

A white hand which writes beautifully when you wish, the skill of it drawing [the pen] copiously; with the Bible assuredly every time seize belief and truth, and follow them always as your habit.

Beaton's song represents a reworking by a member of the clergy for moral ends of the love poetry so fashionable at the time; it is comparable to the marriage poem *Tba tamall o sguir mi de'n dàn* by Beaton's contemporary the Rev. John Maclean.⁶⁸ Indeed, the fact that a number of verses from *Slàn iumradh* also appear in texts of the well-known love song *A' Bbean-Chomainn* might indicate that it was composed to the same tune.⁶⁹ A later version of Beaton's song in the MacDiarmid Collection suggests, however, that it was a victim of its own success. Pursuing a rather unusual trajectory for works

of this type, *Slàn iumradh* was absorbed into the tradition where, ironically, it was refashioned into a straightforward romantic work – albeit with remnants of its original moral message – sung in the character of a rejected lover. Beaton’s first lines ‘*Slàn iomradh do’n ùr-mbnaoi, / Dh’ fhàg mi’n Ugairidh thall*’ (‘farewell to the new bride I left over in Ugairidh’) are converted into ‘*Tha mo chion air an ùr-ghibht a dh’ fhàg mi’n Ugairidh thall*’ (‘My love on the “new gift” I left over in Ugairidh’).⁷⁰

The songs briefly listed above represent a fusion of classical Gaelic with contemporary English and Lowland vernacular verse. They are composed in a high register of vernacular Gaelic with classical inflections, and employ stressed rather than syllabic metre. Courtly, ‘romantic’ motifs also appear in more popular contemporary Gaelic song by men. Among their number is the love song *Mo Màili Bheag Òg*, clearly something of a hit of its day judging from the fact that Sileas na Ceapaich recycled both tune and chorus as Jacobite propaganda.⁷¹ It is likely, following the earliest sources, that this obsessively romantic song, and the pathetic murder story behind it, originated in Ulster, a region whose own Gaelic literature was considerably more affected by English than was the case in Scotland: a notable example of how the literary market for songs in the Atlantic Archipelago was rather more complex than we might imagine.⁷² The ‘Irish youth’ having won the heart of ‘a nobleman’s daughter in the Highlands’:

Having received the lady’s consent, he eloped with her. Her two brothers pursued them on horseback, and found them on a Sunday morning in a glen, where they had passed the night; – the struggle commenced between the young gentlemen and the unfortunate lover, who had the inexpressible anguish of killing his sweetheart in the contest, with his own sword. He was then taken prisoner, and carried to jail, where he composed this heart-melting song a few days before his execution.⁷³

’S truagh a rinn do chàirdean,
Mo Mhàili bheag òg,
’Nuair thoir misg iad mo ghràdh dhomh,
Mo chuid de’n t-saoghal thu,
Nan tugadh iad do làmh dhomh,
Cha bhithinn anns an àm seo
Fo bhinne airson gràidh dhut,
Mo Mhàili bheag òg.

Your relations did wrong, my little young Màili, when they forbade my love for you, my portion of the world. If they had given your hand to me, I wouldn’t be now under sentence for love of you, my little young Màili.

In *Mo Mhàili Bheag Òg*, the usual love motifs are made all too real, intensified through the singer's plight, a martyr for love, and indeed through the compulsively repetitive structure of the text. At one level, *Mo Mhàili Bheag Òg* can be read as a yardstick of the increasing fashionability of passionate, wholehearted, direct, somewhat unsophisticated, indeed even obsessive love songs. Later traditions ascribe it to a soldier, 'a young Highland officer, who had served under King William on the continent soon after the Revolution'.⁷⁴

At least one other romantic song can certainly be traced to the Flanders campaigns, one which may have enjoyed some popularity at the time. In it we find the stanza:

'Nuair bha mis' ann am Flànrras,
Bha mi thall ann am shaighdear,
Gur h-ioma bean àillidh
Le fàineachan daoimean
Thigeadh gu m' sheòmar
'S dh'fhuraineadh pòg orm;
'S gum b'annsa Nighean Domhnaill
Ged nach beò i [*sc. mi*] ach oidhche.⁷⁵

*When I was in Flanders, I was there as a soldier, and many a beautiful woman with diamond rings would come to my chamber to ask me for a kiss; but I would prefer Donald's daughter though she [*recte I*] would only live one night.*

The mention of Flanders reminds us that the experience of the Scottish Gael during the late seventeenth century, especially of those involved in soldiering, was rather more widespread than the United Kingdom alone. Indeed, the paradoxical role of the early modern soldier as unlikely proselytiser of new standards of European culture and civility is still badly under-researched.⁷⁶ Documentary sources suggest that a surge in the number of Highland cattle-raiders at the end of the seventeenth century was due to the return of veterans, skilled in the arts of foraging as well as fighting, after having been disbanded in 1698 following the Peace of Rijswick. Probably contemporary with *Mo Mhàili Bheag Òg* is *A Mhairgheadh Òg*, '*Òran an Amadain Bhòidhich*' ('The Song of the Beautiful Fool'), another song of somewhat exaggerated emotion, again concerning a forbidden affair in which the beloved – apparently another cateran, indeed a figure often confused with Domhnall Donn himself – is killed by accident. One finds the same stress on pastoral background and agility as in the Highland Laddie type. Hence:

Shiubhlainn leat an saoghal,
Mo Mhàili bheag òg,
Cho fad' ri cùl na greine,
A gheug as àillidh gnùis,

Ruithinn agus leumainn,
 Mar fhiadh air bhàrr nan sléibh-tean,
 Air ghaol 's gum bithinn réidh 's tu,
 Mo Mhàili bheag òg.

I would travel the world with you, my little young Màili, as far as the back of the sun, o branch of the loveliest face; I would run and jump like a deer on the mountain slopes, if we could live together, my little young Màili.

The motif is even stronger in *Òran an Amadain Bhòidhich*, with one version as follows:

Ochòn, a Rìgh, mo nighean donn,
 Nach robh mi thall am Muile leat.

Ochòn, a Rìgh, etc.
 Gum marbhainn iasg is sitheann fhiadh,
 'S cha bhiodh, a chiall, oirnn uireasbhuidh.

Gum marbhainn, etc.
 'S gum marbhainn coileach dubh air geug,
 Mu'm biodh 'na éi[s]teadh iomadh fear.

'S gum marbhainn, etc.
 'S an earbag bheag á bun a' phris,
 Ged 's clis a chì 's a chluinneas i . . .⁷⁷

Woe, Lord, my brown-haired girl, if only I was over in Mull with you. I'd kill fish and venison, and, my darling, we'd want for nothing. I'd kill the blackcock on the branch, before many men could get into its earshot, and the little roe from beneath the bush, no matter how sharp its sight and hearing.

Just as with the contemporary highwaymen in England and rapparees in Ireland, caterans played a rather uneasy role as folk heroes, denied legal powers, constantly living under the threat of capture by the authorities, including their own chiefs. As we have seen with their forebears in the earlier part of the century, the importance of oral culture in enhancing their image was paramount.⁷⁸

Gilleasbaig na Ceapaich, chief of the MacDonells of Keppoch, appears to have used songs in order to bolster his authority; so also with Domhnall Donn, who created a romantic persona for himself not just with text, but also by employing his musical gifts (tradition tells that he could play the clàrsach).⁷⁹ Domhnall Donn's songs are

somewhat simple and vernacular in character, closer in character to songs made by women than to the classically inflected poetry still being composed by his own social class. At the heart of this self-image is romantic love. One instance of this is a song in praise of his close friend Donald Campbell, the piper of Gilleasbaig na Ceapaich, in which Campbell is eulogised for obtaining his desire among women:

Thugadh bean leat bho'n Bhreugaich
'S an cluinnt' beucadaich mheang.

'S ro mhath b' aithne dhomh 'n nighean
A bha 'cridh' ort an geall;

Anns a' ghleannan bheag laghach,
'S am biodh tu tadhal os n-àird.⁸⁰

*You took a wife for yourself from Breugach, where the bleating of kids was to be heard.
I knew very well the girl whose heart was set on you, in the pretty little glen which you
would visit openly.*

In the songs of Domhnall Donn can be discerned a new concept of Gaelic heroism, in which the poet portrays himself as much courtier as cateran. An example of this is his song *Nach b' fhèarr leat mi agad*.⁸¹ Some versions of this song have stanzas by Fearchar mac Iain Òig interwoven, suggesting that the tune of the two pieces was the same:

Nach b' fhèarr leat mi agad
Na mac breabadair beò?

Gar an [s.c. nach] dèanainn dhuit fighe
Bhiodh siheann mu d' bhòrd.

Gum biodh fuil an daimh chabraich
Ruith ri altan do mheòir.

Is i do nighean-sa 'Dhonnchaidh
Chuir an truime-cheist mhór orm.

*Wouldn't you rather have me than any son of a weaver living? Although I [wouldn't] sew
for you, there would be venison on your table. The blood of the antlered stag would run
to the joints of your fingers. It is your daughter, Duncan, who put me under this great
anxiety.*

In metre and vocabulary alike, such stanzas are especially close to women's popular song of the period – indeed, the implication is that Domhnall Donn's work may have been aimed at a female audience in the first place.

The martyr's death suffered by Domhnall Donn sealed his fame as a romantic hero. The songs he composed in his final months, supposedly incarcerated in the Laird of Grant's prison, clearly romanticise his capture in the hope of winning from their audience pity, sympathy, and maybe the money to pay for his release. His posthumous fame meant that Domhnall Donn became the cateran *par excellence*, as has been seen, songs such as *Òran an Amadain Bhòidhich*, items with apparently no connection whatsoever to Domhnall Donn, were nevertheless ascribed to him in tradition.⁸² What hearsay we do have concerning Domhnall Donn rather indicates that grubby reality did not live up to his romantic image, let alone his posturing as a 'social bandit'. He abducted 'an nighean donn a bha'n Cataibh'; he killed the son of the bard Iain Lom at Highbridge; he was captured after a drunken spree in a stable.⁸³ Having suffered smallpox like so many of his contemporaries, he may not even have been particularly handsome; indeed, lines such as '*Ged is crom leibh mo cheann/S ged is cam leibh mo chasan*' ('Although in your eyes my head is bent, and although in your eyes my legs are crooked') might suggest quite the opposite. It is worth noting that the rather curious absence of contemporary documentary evidence regarding the demise of such a notorious cateran might be accounted for if we were to identify Domhnall Donn with the 'Donald Broun' apparently hanged along with a certain Peter Broun at Gallow Hill in Banff in June 1701. This execution took place despite an attempt by the Laird of Grant to have them both forcibly abducted and tried under his own heritable jurisdiction. The two Brouns were captured along with the notorious freebooter 'Macpherson' who is supposed to have composed the famous 'Macpherson's Rant' before his own execution.⁸⁴ As with the seventeenth-century MacGregors, we have here a good example of caterans operating on the Highland/Lowland Line who inspired contemporary song in both Gaelic and Scots, manifested and transmitted variously in oral, written, and printed forms.

We have seen how much the rise in the popularity of love songs inspired a slew of sub-genres, whether humorous pastiches or recensions for moral purposes. They also, of course, inspired various anti-courtly songs. A remarkable example demonstrating how the courtly stream might incite its exact opposite can be found in the flying ascribed in tradition to Domhnall Gruamach – the brother, it will be noted, of Domhnall Donn himself – and the martial poet Iain Lom:

Domhnall Gruamach:

A bhean nam pòg meala,
 'S nan gorm-shùile' meallach,
 'S ann a tha mo chion falaich
 Fo m' bhannaibh do m' ghràdh.

Chan eil mi 'gad léirsinn
 Ach mar gum biodh reul ann,
 An taic ris a' ghréin so
 Tha 'g éiridh gach là.

Iain Lom:

Ar leatsa gur reul i
 'S gur coslach ri gréin i,
 'S ann a dh' fhàs i ro éitigh
 Fo h-éididh a bhàn.

Boladh ùilleadh an sgadain
 De dh' ùrla na h-apa;
 'S i as cùbaiche faicinn
 Tha 'n taice ri tràigh.⁸⁵

Domhnall Gruamach: *Woman of the boneyed kisses, and the deceiving blue eyes, my secret love is bound to my darling. I can only see you as a star, like this sun which rises every day.*

Iain Lom: *You think she is a star, that she's like the sun, but really she's grown loathsome, down under her clothing. Oily smell of the herring, with an ape's face; the furthest bent of those beside the beach [i.e. looking for shellfish].*

The vogue for Gaelic love poetry in the late seventeenth century may well have given renewed impetus to the obscene and anti-female strain in poetry too, that sharp, sardonic voice lampooning romantic rhetoric. We might look at *Marbhphaisg air na mnathan feadhair*, 'Tro'd nam Ban Eigeach', by Iain Dubh mac Iain mhic Ailein,⁸⁶ where the satire against female loquacity gains its very strength and vigour from a description of that loquacity.

Marbhphaisg air na mnathan feadhair
 Nach gleadhadh an antlachd!
 Tha mo chluasan air fàs bodhar
 Le gleodhar an càinte;
 Nis bho chaidh iad bho riaghailt
 Leigeam srian le'n aimhleas,
 'S tàirneamaid gu àite diomhair
 Bho mhiothlachd an càinnte.⁸⁷

A curse on the women of the fair who won't keep their discontent [quiet]. My ears have grown deaf with the babble of their scolding. Now since they've gone out of control, let me take the bridle from their mischief. Let's go to a secret place away from their offensive speech.

This strain is not, of course, aimed at women alone, but revels in matters related to sex and obscenity in general.⁸⁸ In *Féill nan Crann* by the Clàrsair Dall,⁸⁹ however, and in *An Obair Nodha* by Fear Ghriinneirt,⁹⁰ it is female lusts on which the poet dwells. The latter poem is as it were an answer to the religion spread by the Presbyterian Church at the time, as can be seen from the related reference to the ‘*teagasg nodha-s*’ in a stanza from *Crosanachd de ghné choluadar eadar a’ cholainn ’s an t-anam* by Donnchadh nam Pios:

Thubhairt guth is e ’freagar:
An t-anam. ‘S mise t’ anam uasal;
 Na gabh fiamh no eagal
 Roimh mo theagasg nuadh-sa.⁹¹

A voice spoke in answer: [the soul] ‘I am the noble soul; Do not be afraid of my new teaching.’

Again, we cannot understand the full humour of Morison’s poem unless we are aware of the context of the growth of small fairs and markets throughout the Gàidhealtachd at the time.⁹² The same goes for Sileas na Ceapaich’s answer to Fear Ghriinneirt’s poem, ‘An aghaidh na h-Obair Nodha’, where the market is the place where young men and women meet and court each other, away from their parents’ eyes:

’Nuair théid sibh thun na féille
 Na géillibh do luchd nan gibhtean;
 Innsidh mi dhuibh reusan
 As feudaíl nach coisinn mios iad:
 Ged a gheibh sibh làimhnean,
 Fàinne no deise ribean,
 Is daor a nì sibh phàigheadh
 ’Nuair dh’ àrdaicheas air a’ chriosan.⁹³

When you go to the fair, don't yield to folk with gifts; I'll tell you a reason why they're a treasure that won't earn you respect. Although you get gloves, a ring, or a bunch of ribbons, you'll pay for it dearly, when your girdle begins to rise.

I hope that this paper has outlined a field of study which might encourage closer cooperation between literary scholars working with Scottish Gaelic, Scots, and English, inviting wider reflections concerning mutual contact and influence between and among the various literatures of the multicultural early modern Atlantic Archipelago. Such research requires a sensitivity to historical context, processes, and cyclical shifts, an awareness of rapidly changing socio-economic circumstances and of associated transformations in culture and gender relations, of new horizons and opportunities, indeed an increasingly fluid range of feminine and masculine identities. Although, with some notable exceptions, scholars have been content to situate the foundations of Highland romanticism in the later eighteenth century, in the wake of the Jacobite risings and Macpherson's *Ossian*, this is clearly not the case. The construction in the late seventeenth century of the figure of the Highland Laddie, that potent amalgam of heroism, proto-Romanticism, and hard and soft primitivism melded together, was a fundamental step towards the construction of a gendered image for the Scottish Gael/Highlander which would prove highly resilient until the present day. For contemporaries, however, this literary figure represented a reworking of older heroic values, in an increasingly post-heroic age.⁹⁴

Notes

- ¹ Stith Thompson motif-index H1052; Jan de Vries, *Die Märchen von klugen Rätsellösern* (Helsinki, Folklore Fellows Communications 73, 1928), 198–9; for comparable ‘paradoxical tasks’, see motif-index F555.3.1; H862; H1051, 1053–77, H1378. Kate MacDonald, ‘Hilliù-an, hilleò-an’, *Tocher* 27 (1977), 150–1; James Carmichael Watson (ed.), *The Gaelic songs of Mary MacLeod* (1934: Edinburgh, Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1965), xi–xvii; Rev. William Matheson, ‘Notes on Mary MacLeod’, *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* xli (1951–2), 15–16; John MacInnes, ‘Notes on Mary MacLeod’, *Scottish Gaelic Studies* xi (1966), 9–10; idem (ed. Michael Newton), *Dùthchas nan Gàidheal: Selected Essays* (Edinburgh, 2006), 245, 261; Colm Ó Baoill, ‘“Neither out nor in”: Scottish Gaelic women poets 1650–1750’, in Sarah M. Dunnigan, C. Maire Harker and Evelyn S. Newlyn (eds), *Woman and the Feminine in Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing* (Basingstoke, 2004), 136, 140–1, 150; also Máirín Nic Eoin, *B’ait leo bean: gnéithe den idé-eolaíocht inscne i dtradiisiún liteartha na Gaeilge* (Dublin, 1998), 243–55, 283–8.

- ² Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica* (6 vols, Edinburgh, 1900–71), ii, 158–9; v, 286–97; Rev. John Gregorson Campbell (ed. Ronald Black), *The Gaelic Otherworld* (Edinburgh, 2005), 142–3, 395, n.470.
- ³ Ronald Black, *Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair: the Ardnamurchan Years* (Inverness, 1986), 21–3; idem (ed.), *An Lasair: Anthology of 18th-century Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh, 2001), 190–2, 459–60.
- ⁴ National Archives of Scotland [NAS] GD18/5023/3.
- ⁵ On this point, see especially Thomas A. DuBois, ‘Native hermeneutics: traditional means of interpreting lyric songs in northern Europe’, *Journal of American Folklore* 109 (1996), 235–66.
- ⁶ Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, ‘The uses of historical traditions in Scottish Gaelic’ in John Beech, Owen Hand, Mark Mulhern and Jeremy Weston (eds), *Scottish Life and Society: Oral Literature and Performance Culture* (Edinburgh, Compendium of Scottish Ethnology 10, 2007).
- ⁷ Martin MacGregor, ‘A political history of the Clan Gregor until 1571’ (University of Edinburgh, unpublished PhD thesis, 1989); idem, “‘Surely one of the greatest poems ever made in Britain’: the lament for Griogair Ruadh MacGregor of Glen Strae and its historical background’ in Edward J. Cowan and Douglas Gifford, *The Polar Twins* (Edinburgh, 1999), 114–53; see Colm Ó Baoill and Donald MacAulay (eds), *Scottish Gaelic Vernacular Verse: A Checklist* (Aberdeen, revised edition 2001) [henceforth *ÓBMA*], [no.] 10: *Moch madainn air latha Lìnasd (Griogal cridhè)*; *ÓBMA* 408: ‘*S mi am sbuidhe an seo am ònar/Air còmbharn an rathaid*’; *ÓBMA* 422: *Tha mulad, tha mulad, tha mulad ‘gam lìonadh (MacGriogair á Ruadh-sbruth)*’; *ÓBMA* 427: *A mhic an fhir ruaidh (Saighdean Ghlinn Lìobhann)*. For the choral context of *ÓBMA* 398 and *ÓBMA* 402, see John MacInnes, ‘Gaelic poetry’ (University of Edinburgh, unpublished PhD thesis, 1976), 337–9. For the possible function of such songs in maintaining MacGregor morale, see *ibid.*, 223–4.
- ⁸ Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603–1788* (East Linton, 1996), 32–7; Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, ‘An Gàidheal, a’ Ghàidhlig agus a’ Ghàidhealtachd anns an t-seachdamh linn deug’ (University of Edinburgh, unpublished PhD thesis, 1997), 355–78; for comparable developments in Ulster, see Raymond Gillespie, ‘The transformation of the borderlands, 1600–1700’ in Raymond Gillespie and Harold O’Sullivan (eds), *The Borderlands: Essays on the History of the Ulster–Leinster Border* (Belfast, 1989), 84–7; also Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (Harmondsworth, 1985), especially 18–19, 22, 24, 83–7.
- ⁹ *Records of the Privy Council of Scotland* [RPC], 2nd series, IV (1630–2), 544.
- ¹⁰ See RPC, 2nd series, VI (1635–7), 215–18, 231–4; VII (1638–43), 487–94.
- ¹¹ *ÓBMA* 57.

- ¹² Despite its ostensible classical origins, reinforced in Derick Thomson's editions of the text in 'Bho Làmh-Sgriobhainnean MhicLathagain (xi)', *Gairm* 144 (Autumn, 1988), 351–2; *The MacDiarmid MS Anthology* (Edinburgh, 1992), 120–5; and also *An Introduction to Gaelic Poetry* (Edinburgh, 1989), 61–2, the poem 'S luaineach mo chadal a-nochd (ÓBMA 219) should be dated to the late seventeenth century at the earliest: Helen Jane Theresa O'Sullivan, 'Developments in love poetry in Irish, Welsh and Scottish Gaelic, before 1650' (Glasgow University, unpublished MLitt dissertation, 1976), 95–9. Its appearance in the Royal Irish Academy MS 24 C 55, 287 suggests that the work possibly originated in Ireland, rather than being the work of the early- sixteenth-century chief Eachann Mór MacLean of Duart as has been suggested. O'Sullivan also casts doubts on the classical origin of the collection of stanzas concerning women known as *Tha bean an crìch Albainn fhuar* (ÓBMA 341): 'Developments in love poetry', 99–101.
- ¹³ Mícheál Mac Craith, *Lorg na biasachta ar na dánta grá* (Dublin, 1989), 61.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 225, n.51.
- ¹⁵ These are *Thugas ró-gbrádh do mhnaoi fir* and *Fada atú i n-easbaidh aoibhnis*: William Gillies, 'Courtly and satiric poems in the Book of the Dean of Lismore', *Scottish Studies* 21 (1977), 35–6; also Martin MacGregor, 'The view from Fortingall: the worlds of the Book of the Dean of Lismore', *Scottish Gaelic Studies* xxii (2006), 71–3; *ibid.*, 'Creation and compilation: *The Book of the Dean of Lismore* and literary culture in late medieval Gaelic Scotland' in Ian Brown, Thomas Owen Clancy, Susan Manning and Murray Pittock (eds), *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature* (3 vols, Edinburgh, 2007), i, 215–17; William Gillies, 'Gaelic literature in the later Middle Ages: *The Book of the Dean of Lismore* and beyond', in *ibid.*, 224.
- ¹⁶ Ronald Black, 'The genius of Cathal MacMhuirich', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 1 (1976–8), 355.
- ¹⁷ Derick S. Thomson, 'The earliest Scottish Gaelic non-classical verse texts' in Dietrich Strauss and Horst W. Drecher (eds), *Scottish Language and Literature, Medieval and Renaissance: Fourth International Conference 1984, Proceedings* (Frankfurt am Main, 1986), 533–46; ÓBMA 511.
- ¹⁸ For example, *Tha an oidhche nochd fuar*: John Lorne Campbell and Frances Collinson (eds), *Hebridean Folksongs* (3 vols, Oxford, 1969–81), ii, 207–20; *Trom òr o chalanas*: *ibid.* iii, 261–5. For a satire on the courtly genre, see *Mór inghean Ghiboarlain* (ÓBMA 450), a song ascribed (probably because of the 'gaberlunzie' allusion) to James V.
- ¹⁹ A list of such characters would include Dubh-Shith, Iain Beag nan Saighead, Iain Beag mac Anndra, and Gille Pàdara Dubh.
- ²⁰ ÓBMA 328; see also the verse preserved in William Mackenzie, 'Leaves from my Celtic portfolio III', *TGSI* viii (1878–9), 28: 'Dbedìn Dia cha bhì gillean/Riut a' mire 's mi beò.'

(‘With the grace of God boys will not be sporting with you while I am alive.’) The song may tentatively be related to the revision of the Seaforth estate rental made by Ruairidh na Còigich, Ruairidh MacKenzie, Tutor of Kintail, after the death of his brother Coinneach, Lord MacKenzie, in 1611.

- ²¹ The career of Seumas an Tuim can be pieced together from *RPC*, 2nd series, IV (1630–2), xlviii–l, 99–100, 164, 204, 544–6, 550–1, 553, 561–2, 576–8; V (1633–5), 500–1, 503, 506–7, 529; VI (1635–7), 17–18, 21–2, 45, 46, 111, 138, 170–1, 176–7, 230, 236, 258, 272, 304, 379–80; William Fraser (ed.), *The Chiefs of Grant* (3 vols, Edinburgh, 1883) I, 226–37; II, 14–15, 58, 59–60, 61–3, 69–70; III, 228, 229, 231, 341, 441–2, 443–4, 448–51; John Spalding, *Memorials of the Troubles in Scotland and in England. A.D. 1624–A.D. 1645* (Aberdeen, Spalding Club, 1850), I, 11n., 20, 21–3, 29–30, 43–4, 52–5, 61, 63, 67, 69, 70, 126, 141, 169, 205, 208, 210, 244; II, 338, 341; also I, 390–2, 394, 395, 396, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 404; Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* (Edinburgh, 1813), 414–16, 420–1, 459–60, 481; James Gordon, *History of Scots Affairs, from MDCXXVII to MDXLI* (Aberdeen, Spalding Club, 1841), III, 71–2; George Bain (ed.), *The Lordship of Petty* (Nairn, 1925), 62–71; National Library of Scotland [NLS] Acc. MS 7708/22. For Pàdraig Geàrr, see Spalding, *Memorials* I, 44, 46, 52, 61, 69, 126. Iain Dubh Geàrr first appears in 1635 as one of those attempting to capture Seumas an Tuim: *RPC* 2nd series, VI, 529. The career of himself and his brother Pàdraig, an Gille Ruadh, can then be traced in *ibid.*, xxxviii–xl, 128, 207–10, 215–18, 218–20, 231–4, 236, 252, 256, 257, 274, 301 (An Gille Ruadh executed in Edinburgh in July 1636), 304, 308–9, 321–2, 327–8, 363–4, 366–7, 376–7; VII (1638–43), xlviii–l, 21–2, 56–8; Fraser (ed.), *Chiefs of Grant* I, 236, 254; II, 60, 62–3; III, 231, 451–3; Spalding, *Memorials* I, 94–5, 126, 129, 205, 229, 236 (Iain Dubh Geàrr killed by a bullet on the bank of the Spey in November 1639); Robert Gordon, *Earldom of Sutherland*, 460, 481–2, 496; James Gordon *History of Scots Affairs* II, 267–8; III, 71–2; NAS GD 112/39/62/2, /4, /67/18, /74/8/1, /2.
- ²² ‘Glenmore’ [Donald Shaw], *Highland Legends and Fugitive Pieces of Original Poetry* (Edinburgh, 1859), 89–90; also NLS Acc. MS 7708/22 fo.7. For ‘luim’, see *Dwelly’s Illustrated Gaelic to English Dictionary* s.v. luim.
- ²³ EUL Mackinnon MS 10C [by Benjamin Urquhart, 1823], fo.400. *ÓBMA* 163; *O thbulaichean gu bealaichean*. There are two Isobels appearing in the Privy Council records in connection with the caterans. Firstly, in the list of those assisting the MacGregors in *RPC*, 2nd series, VI, 215–18, there is a mention of ‘William Fettes and [] Fettes, Gilleroyes whoore in Cabrach’; later there is a reference to ‘Issobell Sandesone, Gilleroyes whoore’. Secondly and rather more likely is the reference of 1637 in *ibid.*, VII, 376–7, to a family in Tulloch who assisted Iain Dubh Geàrr: ‘John Grant, alias McJokkie, . . . Grant, his

wife, Issobel Grant, his daughter.’ A reference in a 1639 letter by an Archibald Campbell to Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy should also be noted: ‘if they should prove that Johne Dow Gaire his wyff and complices haiue bein publictlie resaitt in the Marques of Huntlie his boundes: That then the Marques does present Johne Dow Gaire and his complices and to be lyebill for all the wronges that they haue done.’

²⁴ RPC, 2nd series, VI, 128.

²⁵ Spalding, *Memorialls* I, 61.

²⁶ RPC, 2nd series, VI, 366–7.

²⁷ RPC, 2nd series, VII, 487, 488, 490, 492; Spalding *Memorialls* I, 298–9; II, 5, 176, 237–8.

²⁸ Rev. James Fraser (ed. William Mackay), *Chronicles of the Frasers: The Wardlaw MS* (Edinburgh, Scottish History Society 1st series, 47, 1905) 486–9; also ‘Glenmore’, *Highland Legends*, 140–7; Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart*, 32, 126.

²⁹ NAS GD 112/39/106/7, Sir John Campbell of Glenorchy to Lord Glencairn, 12 Sep 1660; for the Halket Stirk, see Fraser (ed.), *Chiefs of Grant* I, 280–2; Paul Hopkins, *Glencoe and the End of the Highland War* (Edinburgh, 1998), 29, 37, n.49, 393, n.210; also 31–2, 60, 320, 379. For the increase in cattle thieving after the Restoration, see *ibid.*, 28–9; David Stevenson, *Alasdair MacColla and the Highland Problem in the Seventeenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1980), 281–3. For further historical context, see Hopkins, *Glencoe and the End of the Highland War*, 10–82; Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart*, 123–58; Stiùbhart, ‘An Gàidheal, a’ Ghàidhlig agus a’ Ghàidhealtachd’, 231–354.

³⁰ See especially ÓBMA 52: *A Mhairgbread òg, ’s tu rinn mo leòn* (‘Òran an Amadain Bhòidhich’) and ÓBMA 60: *Tbogainn fonn gun bbiith trom* (‘An nighean donn a bha’n Cataibh’). A similar process has apparently occurred with a number of songs later attributed to Domhnall Donn’s sworn enemy Iain Lom.

³¹ NAS GD 112/39/67/1816. For the popularity of Robin Hood in the Lowlands at the time, see Stephen Knight, *Robin Hood: a Complete Study of the English Outlaw* (Oxford, 1994), 27–8, 31, 32–9, 108–9, 111.

³² Fraser (ed. Mackay), *Wardlaw MS*, 324.

³³ RPC, 2nd series, V, 506–7.

³⁴ Anon., *Westminster-Drollery, or, A Choice Collection of the newest songs & poems both at court and theaters by a person of quality; with additions* (London, 1671), 112–14; James Maidment and W.H. Logan (eds), *The dramatic works of John Lacy, comedian, with prefatory memoir and notes* (Edinburgh, 1875), 362.

³⁵ M.P., *Two Strings to a Bow; or, The Cunning Archer* (London, 1664); the earliest printed account of Gilderoy’s life appears to be in Capt. Alexander Smith, *A Compleat History of the Lives and Robberies of the Most Notorious Highwaymen, Footpads &c.* (2 vols, London,

- 1719) ii, 297–304, drawn upon in [Ambrose Philips], *A Collection of Old Ballads, Corrected from the Best and Most Ancient Copies Extant* (London, 1723), 306. For the origins of the phrase ‘higher than Gilderoy’s kite’, see Smith, ii, 303–4.
- ³⁶ See Hyder E. Rollins (ed.), *Cavalier and Puritan: Ballads and Broad-sides Illustrating the Period of the Great Rebellion 1640–1660* (New York, 1923), 70, 315; also Samuel Pepys (ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (11 vols, London, 1970–83) vii, 224–5; ix, 130–1.
- ³⁷ Joseph Woodfall Ebsworth (ed.), *The Bagford Ballads, illustrating the last years of the Stuarts* (2 vols, Hertford, 1878–80), i, 102.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, i, 101.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, i, 105.
- ⁴⁰ Thomas Crawford, *Society and the Lyric* (Edinburgh, 1979), 148.
- ⁴¹ Thomas Otway, *Friendship in Fashion* (London, 1678), 30.
- ⁴² See, for example, Hyder E. Rollins, *An Analytical Index to the Ballad-entries (1557–1709) in the Registers of the Company of Stationers* (Hatboro, PA, 1967), nos. 222, 2666 and 2757.
- ⁴³ Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart*, 191.
- ⁴⁴ For examples of the genre in the works of Thomas D’Urfey, see his plays *A Fond Husband, or, The Plotting Sisters* (London, 1677), 10; *Trick for Trick, or, The Debauch’d Hypocrite* (London, 1678), 17–18; *The Virtuous Wife, or, Good Luck at Last* (London, 1680), 30–1; *The Royalist* (London, 1682), 32; *A Fool’s Preferment, or, The Dukes of Dunstable* (London, 1688), 13–14; *The Marriage-bater Match’d* (London, 1692), 56; *The Campaigners, or, The Pleasant Adventures at Brussels* (London, 1698), 26. Also Aphra Behn’s plays *The City-beiress, or, Sir Timothy Treat-all* (London, 1682), 29, 32; *The Widdow Ranter* (London, 1690), 19; and her *Poems upon Several Occasions with a Voyage to the Island of Love* (London, 1684), 93–8, 123–5; and Peter Motteux’s *Love’s a Jest* (London, 1696), 18; William Mountfort’s *Greenwich Park* (London, 1691), 46; Henry Neville Payne, *The Morning Ramble* (London, 1673), 45. See also Thomas D’Urfey, *A New Collection of Songs and Poems* (London, 1683), 14–15, 16–17, 39–40, 48, 74–8; *ibid.*, *Choice New Songs* (London, 1684), 3–6, 14–16; *ibid.*, *Several New Songs* (London, 1684), 1–2; *ibid.*, *A Third Collection of New Songs* (London, 1685), 10–11; *ibid.*, *New Poems, Consisting of Satyrs, Elegies, and Odes* (London, 1690), 132–5, 139–41, 143–4, 183–5; *ibid.*, *A Choice Collection of New Songs and Ballads* (London, 1699), 10; and *ibid.* *Songs Compleat, Pleasant and Divertive; Set to Musick* (London, 1719), I, 36–7 (The NORTHERN Resenter – *made to a Scotch Tune call’d Robin the Highlander*), 42–4, 53, 121, 148–9, 169, 254–5, 294–5, 304–5, 306–7, 326–7, 330–1; II, 30–1, 83–5, 150–1, 159 (based on ‘a bonny young Highland laddy’), 169–70, 200–1, 202–3, 228–9, 265, 268–9 (*The Honest HIGHLANDER’S new Health to the QUEEN*), 302–3, 348 (*A PROLOGUE Spoken like a SCOTCH HIGHLANDER with a Sword and Target – at Preston in*

- 1715); III, 88–9, 225–6, 228–9, 230–1, 231–2, 233–4, 257–8, 259, 262–3, 279–80, 297–8, 307; IV, 65, 90–1, 204–5, 211–12, 230–1, 271, 347–8; VI (from *Pills to Purge Melancholy*), 25, 164–6, 274–6, 350–2, 359–60; also Hyder E. Rollins, *Pepys Ballads* III, 111–13; VI, 282–6; Henry Playford, *A Collection of Original Scotch-tunes, (full of the Highland humours) for the violin* (London, 1700); Wing J758–9A; S950All. See also Martin Martin, *A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland* (London, 1703), 200, concerning the people of Skye: ‘There are several of ’em, who Invent Tunes very taking in the *South* of *Scotland*, and elsewhere; some Musicians have endeavoured to pass for first inventers of them by changing their Name, but this has been Impracticable, for whatever Language gives the Modern Name, the Tune still continues to speak its true Original; and of this I have been shew’d several Instances.’ For the popularity of the ‘Anglo-Scots art song’ genre in Scotland, see Patricia H. Wise, ‘The alternative tradition in Scottish poetry, 1560–1720’ (Australian National University, unpublished PhD thesis, 1982), 280–1.
- ⁴⁵ Aphra Behn, *The Widow Ranter* (London, 1690), 18, 19; also James Orr Bartley, *Teague, Shenkin and Sawney: being an historical study of the earliest Irish, Welsh and Scottish characters in English plays* (Cork, 1954), 149–51.
- ⁴⁶ Edward Burt, *Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland to his Friend in London* (1754; Edinburgh, 1876), i, 186: ‘this you have seen in London, and it is chiefly their Mode of dressing when they are in the Lowlands, or when they make a neighbouring Visit, or go anywhere on Horseback; but when those among them who travel on Foot, and have not attendants to carry them over the Waters, they vary it [the plaid] into the *Quelt* . . .’
- ⁴⁷ The Hampton Court version appears in Ernest Law, *Masterpieces of the Royal Gallery of Hampton Court* (London, 1904), as well as picture 20 in Bartley, *Teague, Shenkin and Sawney*. John Evelyn describes the painting in a diary entry (retrospectively written) on 3 Oct 1662: ‘his [Michael Wright] best in my opinion is Lacy the famous *Roscius* or Comedian, whom he has painted in three dresses, a Gallant, a Presbyterian minister, and a *Scots* highlander in his plaid.’ [E.S. de Beer (ed.), *The Diary of John Evelyn* III (1650–1672), 338–9]. The portrait and the characters portrayed therein are discussed in Charles W. Cooper, ‘The triple-portrait of John Lacy: a Restoration theatrical portrait: history and dispute’, *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 47 (1932), 759–65.
- ⁴⁸ Crawford, *Society and the Lyric*, ix.
- ⁴⁹ Crawford, *Society and the Lyric*, 6, 31, 113.
- ⁵⁰ William Donaldson, *The Jacobite Song: Political Myth and National Identity* (Edinburgh, 1988), 57; James Hogg (ed. Murray Pittock), *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2003), 115–17, 335, 509–12.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 55–7; also John Holloway (ed.), *The Ewing Collection of English Broadside Ballads in the Library of the University of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1971), 62: *The Coy Cook-Maid*.

- ⁵² Crawford, *Society and the Lyric*, 106.
- ⁵³ The *locus classicus* is Hoxie Neale Fairchild, *The Noble Savage: a Study in Romantic Naturalism* (New York, 1928), 1–49.
- ⁵⁴ Crawford, *Society and the Lyric*; Donaldson, *Jacobite Song*, 49–66; Murray Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics in Eighteenth-century Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 1994), 57–8, 141–2.
- ⁵⁵ Burt, *Letters* ii, 216–17.
- ⁵⁶ ÓBMA 60.
- ⁵⁷ The migration of song tunes between the Gaelic- and English-speaking regions of these islands remains to be researched. For melodies originating in the latter area, one method might be to investigate Gaelic songs composed in an iambic rhythm apparently more suited to English than to Gaelic scansion. See (although it should be noted that she herself discounts the influence of English) Allison Ann Whyte, ‘Scottish Gaelic Folksong 1500–1800’ (Glasgow University, unpublished BLitt dissertation, 1971), 36–7, 41, 74, 136. For an early example, see ÓBMA 98 (*Mi gabhail Srath Dhruim Uachdair* by Iain Lom); also ÓBMA 3 (*Tha iongnadh air an Dreòlainn*); 18 (*Tha thu ’d mbac do Fhear Bboth Fhionntainn*); 84 (*An deicbeamb latha de thùs a’ Mhàirt*); 197 (*Tha mulad mór, tha mìgbean orm*); 377, 460 (*Tha mulad, tha sgìos orm, / Tha mìgbean, tha gruaim*); also 483 (*Tùrsa mo mbean-mainn, tùrsa is ainm dhom*), ‘Irished to the toon qn the king coms home in peace again’. Note also the problems encountered by members of the Synod of Argyll in translating the Psalms from English into Gaelic, but preserving the metre: *An cend chaogad do Shalmaibh Dhaibhidh, ar a dtarraing as an Eabhra, a meadar dhana Gaoidhbilg, le Seanadh Earraghaoidheal* (Glasgow, 1659), 2–3.
- ⁵⁸ See David Kuchta, *The Three-piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550–1850* (Berkeley, CA, 2002).
- ⁵⁹ Black (ed.), *An lasair*, 12–13.
- ⁶⁰ ÓBMA 69.
- ⁶¹ See ÓBMA 67 (*Chuireas làmh do sgrìobhaireachd*); 68 (*Chunna mi eaglais Ghlaschu*); 72 (*S’ mairg a dhiomol cèd is caismeachd*); Somerled MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber: Historical and Traditional* (Glasgow, 1971), 149; NLS MSS 1334 fo.79; 3784 fos.56^v–57.
- ⁶² ÓBMA 73.
- ⁶³ ÓBMA 48. For Aonghas Odhar’s wild character, which may have led to him effectively being outlawed, see Hopkins, *Glencoe and the End of the Highland War*, 461, 463, 464; NLS MSS 1305 fo.63; 1307 fos.171, 175, 177; Charles Fraser-Mackintosh (ed.), *Letters of Two Centuries, Chiefly Connected with Inverness and the Highlands, from 1616 to 1815* (Inverness, 1890), 146–7. Aonghas Odhar married in 1703 or 1704 the widow of John Fraser of Cnoc Choilleim: Ó Baoill (ed.), *Bàrdachd Shìlis*, xxxviii–xxxix. In the opinion of his brother, Colla nam Bò, Coll MacDonell of Keppoch: ‘my Broyr is like to be ruined by

- this unhappie marriage qch he did rashlie wtout my Consent or knowledge': NLS MS 1305 fo.71 (Coll MacDonell to John MacKenzie of Delvine, 17 May 1704).
- ⁶⁴ ÓBMA 204. See Colm Ó Baoill (ed.), *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain: Eachann Bacach and Other Maclean Poets* (Edinburgh, Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1979), 78–80, 247–52, 293–6; also Thomson (ed.), *MacDiarmid MS*, 83–98. The same satiric aims are to be found in the poetic debate *Thoir soraidh gu Iain Manntach uam*, between Briain, am Bàrd Asainteach, and Iain Lom: ÓBMA 99.
- ⁶⁵ Raonuill MacDomhnuill (ed.), *Comb-chruinneachidh Orannaigh Gaidhealach* (Edinburgh, 1776), 300; see Ó Baoill (ed.), *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, 248.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 76, 244–7, 293.
- ⁶⁷ ÓBMA 2; John Bannerman, *The Beatons: a Medical Kindred in the Classical Gaelic Tradition* (Edinburgh, 1986), 64–70.
- ⁶⁸ ÓBMA 255; also Ó Baoill (ed.), *Bàrdachd Chloinn Ghill-Eathain*, 104–10.
- ⁶⁹ ÓBMA 518 (*Is ann feasgar Di-haoine*).
- ⁷⁰ Thomson (ed.), *MacDiarmid MS Anthology*, 57–63.
- ⁷¹ ÓBMA 486; Ó Baoill (ed.), *Bàrdachd Shìlis*, 16–18, 127–9, 226–9.
- ⁷² For the song's origins, see NLS MS 14949b fo.16 ['The Original supposed Irish']; and compare John Mackenzie (ed.), *Sàr-obair nam bàrd Gaelach: or, The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry* (Edinburgh, 1877), 368, with his earlier account in the (anonymously compiled, but clearly by Mackenzie) *Co'chruinneachadh de dh' oranan taoghta* (Glasgow, 1836), 16; also Ó Baoill (ed.), *Bàrdachd Shìlis*, 229. Note also the tradition ascribing the song to an Irishman 'Lachlann Ógaidh' recorded in Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica* ii, 340–1; but see [Mackenzie (ed.)], *Co'chruinneachadh*, 28–9. See Énrí Ó Muirgheasa (ed.), *Céad de cheoltaibh Uladh* (Dublin, 1915), 78–9, 243–5; also 88; idem (ed.), *Dhá chéad de cheoltaibh Uladh* (1934: Dublin, 1969), 383–4.
- ⁷³ [Mackenzie (ed.)], *Co'chruinneachadh*, 16.
- ⁷⁴ Mackenzie (ed.), *Sàr-obair*, 368.
- ⁷⁵ Edinburgh University Library MS MN C fo.21; also Thomson (ed.), *MacDiarmid MS*, 132.
- ⁷⁶ Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, 'Highlanders in the Low Countries', *Dutch Crossing* 29 (2005), 107–24.
- ⁷⁷ Gillesbuig Mac-na-Ceàrdadh (ed.), *An t-Òranaiche* (Glasgow, 1879), 523. The fashion for impassioned love song reaches its height during the 1720s with the feverish, tragic compositions of Mac Fir Dhail an Easa (ÓBMA 131–3), whose songs, and persona, greatly influenced Uilleam Ros later in the century.
- ⁷⁸ See Somhairle MacGill-Eain, *Ris a' Bhruthaich: Criticism and Prose Writings* (Stornoway, 1985), 211–34.

- ⁷⁹ Rev. Alexander Maclean Sinclair (ed.), *The Gaelic Bards from 1411 to 1715* (Charlottetown, 1890), 171.
- ⁸⁰ *ÓBMA* 59 (*Slàn iomradh do m' ghoistidh*).
- ⁸¹ *ÓBMA* 58.
- ⁸² See MacGill-eain, *Ris a' Bhruthaich*, 231–3.
- ⁸³ For traditional accounts of Domhnall Donn, see William Mackenzie, 'Leaves from my Celtic portfolio, first series', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* vii (1877–8), 56–7; William Mackay, *Urquhart and Glenmoriston* (Inverness, 1893), 187–90, 487–9; Alexander MacDonald ('Gleannach'), *Song and Story from Loch Ness-side* (1914: new ed. Inverness, 1982), 79–91.
- ⁸⁴ Crawford, *Society and the Lyric*, 148–53; also Fraser (ed.), *The Chiefs of Grant*, i, 325–6; James Grant (ed.), *Records of the County of Banff 1660–1760* (Aberdeen, New Spalding Club, 1922), 104–5; John Stuart (ed.), *The Miscellany of the Spalding Club* iii (Aberdeen, Spalding Club, 1846), 175–91; Somhairle MacGill-Eain, 'Domhnall Donn of Bohuntin', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* xlii (1953–9), 91–110; and Hopkins, *Glencoe and the End of the Highland War*, 29, 361, 442, 477, n.36–7.
- ⁸⁵ *ÓBMA* 100. The influence of such poetic debates on Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair's *Moladh* and *Diomoladh Mòraig* will be immediately apparent. See also *ÓBMA* 368 (*Cbualas naidbeachd o t'armailt*) by Donnchadh Dubhshùileach Stiùbhart, Colla na Ceapaich's standard-bearer, satirising Kenneth MacKenzie of Suddie who was killed at the Battle of Mulroy in 1688.
- ⁸⁶ *ÓBMA* 79; Colm Ó Baoill (ed.), *Iain Dubh: òrain a rinn Iain Dubh mac Iain mbic Ailein* (c.1665–c.1725) (Aberdeen, 1994), 21–2, 48–50; also 83–4.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 21; see also Nic Eoin, *B'ait leo bean*, 176–82.
- ⁸⁸ See, for example, Derick S. Thomson, 'Niall Mór MacMhuirich', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* xlix (1974–6), 22; and stanzas ascribed to the Clàrsair Dall and Iain Lom in NLS MS 14876 fos.43^v–44^r: '2 Verses of a Satyr made on John Maundaghe by Rory Morison' and 'John Maundaghe retorts on him'.
- ⁸⁹ *ÓBMA* 355.
- ⁹⁰ *ÓBMA* 178 (*Gun do labhair Màiri*).
- ⁹¹ *ÓBMA* 315 (*Cbualas guth air mhadainn*). For another use of the contemporary meaning of *nodha*, see *ÓBMA* 239 ('*N àm dol sìos* by Iain mac Ailein).
- ⁹² Ronald Black, 'Scottish fairs and fair-names', *Scottish Studies* 33 (1999), 1–75.
- ⁹³ *ÓBMA* 152. See also *ÓBMA* 149 ('*S mór mo mbulad 's mi 'm ònar: 'Laoidh air Bàs a Fir agus a b-Ighne*').
- ⁹⁴ See MacInnes, *Dùthchas nan Gàidheal*, 265–319; Stiùbhart, 'An Gàidheal, a' Ghàidhlig agus a' Ghàidhealtachd', 311–54.