

Festschrift for Professor D S Thomson. Donald MacAulay, James Gleasure and Colm Ó Baoill (ed.). *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 17, University of Aberdeen, 1996. iv + 402 pp.

Readers of *Scottish Gaelic Studies* will have welcomed the appearance of this long-awaited volume, there being a gap of six years between its publication and the previous one. The present volume is dedicated to Professor Derick S. Thomson (alias Ruairidh MacThòmais), a stalwart in the field of Celtic and Gaelic studies. His huge contribution to scholarship is outlined in a somewhat brief dedication (pp. 1–3), and summarised in an impressive — albeit incomplete — chronological list of his publications, ranging over a half a century (1943–92). The list of contributors to the volume provides a fairly representative panorama of Gaelic scholars with Scottish research interests at the beginning of the 1990s, the main body of which has in Scotland changed fundamentally in the interim. Four of the contributors sadly passed away before the volume could be published, including the late Alan Bruford, John Lorne Campbell, Ian Grimble and Gordon MacLennan. Since publication, a further five have passed away, namely I. C. Smith (October 1998), J. E. C. Williams (June 1999), D. E. Domhnallach (July 1999), B. Ó Cuív (November 1999) and H. Pálsson (Summer 2001).

A discreet statement at the end of the list of Professor Thomson's publications informs readers that 'the above lists Thomson's publications up to 1992. It should be pointed out that, for the most part, the articles which follow were also in their present form by that date.' (p. 23) The implication here seems to be that authors may not have been given the opportunity to review or update their articles immediately prior to publication, and this should be kept in mind when reading a number of the contributions. There are a high number of errors, many but not all of them typographical, to be found throughout the volume, and a lack of uniformity and inconsistency in editorial practices is evident. Despite this, however, the volume contains much of value and worth for students of Gaelic and Celtic Studies.

The range of topics covered in this volume reflects to some extent the breadth of Professor Thomson's own scholarship, with an expected emphasis on Scottish Gaelic (ScG) studies, although only two articles are actually written in Scottish Gaelic, those by D. E. Domhnallach and I. MacAonghais [*sic*: read 'MacAonghuis']. The volume contains thirty-eight essays, almost half of which is devoted to the study of Gaelic language, and it is with these that the present review is concerned.¹ The other contributions may be described succinctly as follows. J. Bannerman discusses the historical and place-name evidence for 'the residence of the King's poet' and also the evidence for his presence and role at inaugurations in twelfth- and thirteenth-century

¹This review was prepared for a journal of linguistics which has since ceased publication.

Scotland. R. Black provides the Gaelic text (with English translations) relating to the Gaelic calendar contained in a nineteenth-century manuscript (NLS MS 1832) written by the Perthshire scholar James Macintyre. Black notes that much of the material is either new or varies significantly from 'established knowledge', thus emphasising the general importance of Macintyre's manuscript, which, incidentally, also contains much of interest to paremiologists (students of proverbs). Bruford discusses the role and position of women singer-poets in the Gaelic tradition. D. E. Domhnallach transcribes part of a conversation with the South Uist bard *cum* author Domhnall Iain Dhonnchaidh, which he recorded with Iseabail T. Domhnallach in 1982. The printed text provides some useful insights to the bard's attitudes to, and understanding of, his own *bardachd* and the craft of composition in that medium. Of particular interest and importance is the bard's visualisation of a topic or scene whilst composing, although the description here should perhaps be viewed with some caution given the overtly leading nature of the questioning. D. Dumville reviews the annalistic evidence for the seventh-century battle *Cath Fedo Euin*, fought between the Cruitin and Dál Riata. J. Gleasure provides a number of minor corrections to Thurneysen's text of Kuno Meyer's transcript of the Rawlinson B 512 version of *Scéla Mucce Meic Dathó*. I. Grimble gives an account of Professor Thomson as poet, scholar and journalist. Given Professor Thomson's valuable contribution to Welsh scholarship, Gruffydd appropriately provides an edition, with commentary, of the only fragment of Welsh verse known to have survived from Strathclyde, namely the so-called Strathcarron Interpolation (*Canu Aneirin*, ll. 966–77). MacAonghuis provides a broad transcript of an account of Cù Chulainn and the history of the Fiann, recorded by him in 1960 from the Tíree *seanchaidh* Domhnall Chaluim Bàin. This contribution is particularly important given the rarity of lore connected with Cù Chulainn in the Gaelic tradition nowadays, and represents one of the very few recordings of such material in the last century. P. Mac Cana provides a literary footnote on the Caillech Bérrí ('the Old Woman of Beare') poem. T. McCaughey reassesses and provides some new insights into the background of the elegiac vernacular *dàn*, 'Och ón mo thuras o'n dé', apparently composed by the eighteenth-century Iain Ciar Dhùn Ollaidh, chief of the MacDougalls. F. MacDonald offers some 'perspectives on the running of contraband cargoes between Ireland and the Scottish highlands in the mid-eighteenth century'. D. Meek deals with 'images of the natural world in the hymnology of Dugald Buchanan and Peter Grant'. C. Ó Baoill gives a literatim transcript of the only manuscript source for the sixteenth-century Coll poem *Caismeachd Ailean nan Sop*, a detailed discussion of which, by the same author, has since appeared in *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 18 (1998) 89–110. W. J. Watson had earlier claimed that this text represented 'perhaps our earliest

specimen of stressed metre' in ScG, and which he referred to as 'a strophic *iorram*' (1976 [1918]: xlvii). Ó Baoill argues against this and claims that the metre of this text is a 'loose' form of the syllabic *dian mhídhshéang/séadna mór* metre ($8^2 + 7^3$) (1998: 90). B. Ó Cuív provides some further comments on the Ó Gníníh poetic family of Co. Antrim. Dealing with the episode of Colum Cille's copying of St Finnian's psalter in Mánuis Ó Dónaill's *Betha Colaim Chille*, J. E. Rekdal discusses the significance of 'apparently contradictory components of a [saint's] Life and of its main character', suggesting that the dichotomy once existing between pre-Christian and Christian traditions was turned into an 'aesthetic convention' in Irish Lives of saints. Viewed against the different cultural and social environments in Nova Scotia and Scotland over the last century or so, J. Shaw examines and compares the developments of song composition in both areas, and discusses to what extent in Nova Scotia Gaelic speakers had begun to produce a literature which was distinctive from that of the Old World. I. C. Smith draws attention to a direct sensuous perception in Professor Thomson's poetry. C. Whyte discusses possible external literary influences on Somhairle Maclean's 'A' Bhuaille Ghréine' ('The Sunny Fold', XIII in *Dàin do Eimhir*).

Of the language articles, six deal with what may be loosely termed lexicography; four with the field of historical linguistics. Other articles are devoted to Gaelic phonology, tense and aspect in ScG, place-name studies, sociolinguistics and the sociology of language.

The majority of the lexicographical articles are traditional accounts, some of them consisting almost entirely of lists of words, idioms and assorted phrases. Campbell's collection of 'Gaelic asseverations, exclamations and imprecations' is an edition with commentary of a collection made by the Eigg bard and Gaelic prose writer, Rev. Dr Kenneth MacLeod (1871–1955). Most of the phrases come from Eigg but some, presumably from the Rev. MacLeod's father and aunt, have a Skye provenance. MacLeod's collection is now to be found in the Carmichael-Watson Collection of papers, housed in the Special Collections of the Main Library of the University of Edinburgh, shelf mark C-W 163 (vi) — not C-W 61 (2) as stated. To judge from a number of letters in the same collection, it seems probable that MacLeod sent his collection to Professor W. J. Watson in the early 1930s at a time when the latter was apparently collecting Gaelic asseverations, exclamations and imprecations from a number of Gaelic speakers throughout Scotland. All idioms are translated by Campbell and many are accompanied by commentary from both MacLeod and Campbell. The idioms make for fascinating and entertaining reading, and are of considerable lexicographical and folkloristic interest.

Campbell's commentary is characteristically elucidatory. Campbell, following MacLeod's lead, translates *Mo theach-a* (No. 42; *Mo theach-sa* MS) as 'By my house' and, if correct, provides a fossilised instance

of the older nominative form of modern *taigh* ('house'), also apparently witnessed in the proverb *Is fhurasd' a chur a-mach, fear gun an teach aige fhéin*, translated by Nicolson in his *Gaelic proverbs* (1996 [1881]: 282) as 'Tis easy to put out a man whose own the house is not'. The *teach*-interpretation would seem to be supported by the similar *Mo bhaile-sa* and *Air a' bhaile* (No. 43), which Campbell translates as 'By my farm' and 'By the farm' respectively. Support for the latter translation is given in MacLeod's note that these are 'often used by tacksmen'. One wonders, however, if the latter might not contain the word *baile* ('vision, frenzy'), which later yields *boil(e)* ('madness, rage') in ScG and *buile* in Irish. Similarly, one wonders if *mo theachsa* might not derive from *mo theachdsa* (with reduction of the cluster *-chds-* to *-chs-*), with the possible meaning of 'my going (i.e. passing away)', etc.

The plural *torrunnan* occurs twice in numbers 29 and 30 without comment by Macleod: *Air na torrunnan (gun toir mi[se] ort e!)* (29), *A thrì thorrunnan (gheibh thusa e!)* (30). Campbell translates these as 'burial mounds', and makes the connection with *torran* (< *torr* + *án*), 'little mound', which can be used to refer to the burial site of 'unbaptised children, suicides and murderers'. This interpretation of *torran* provides an insight into some of the many *Torran* (with final *-an/* as opposed to plural forms with final *-ən/*) place-names throughout Scotland. However, the plural form with *-unnan* in the above examples poses a slight problem for a derivation from *torrán*, since we would expect plural forms with *-ain* or *-anan*, but not *-annan/-unnan*, which seem to imply *-ənən/* rather than *-anən/*. This suggests that the underlying word here may in fact be the simplex *torr* with plural allomorph *-annan* rather than the usual *-an*. Alternatively, *torrunn/torrann* ('loud noise, thunder') may be the element involved here; cf. English 'by thunder!'. Number 68, *Gun toireadh Freasdal for'atha dheth!* ('May Providence take his wages in kind from him!'), contains the curious word spelled *for'atha*. Although MacLeod did not understand the word, he did suggest that the second *a* may have represented an epenthetic vowel. It is unclear what the suspension stroke (´ in the manuscript) following the *r* was intended to represent. It may represent an apostrophe to indicate a lost fricative, or conceivably be a diacritic to indicate that the stress was on the preceding first syllable as used, for instance, in MacAlpine's *Pronouncing Gaelic dictionary* (1955 [1832]). For an instance of the former use, see *MacFhear'ais* for *MacFhearghais* in Macintyre's manuscript referred to above (Black, 39). Campbell suggests a connection with ScG *far-thagh, foireadh* ('a certain amount of farm produce allowed to farm servants in old times'). He also compares it with Old Irish *forg(g)u* ('the pick, the best'). Campbell in his interpretation was clearly influenced by Macleod's note that 'the imprecation was used when a man you disliked greatly was *away from home*' [italics added]. He concludes that the idea seems to be 'may the away from home servant lose his choice of wages in kind'. While *for'atha* may be plausibly derived from *forg(g)u*, in

which case we may have another instance of what Watson in his contribution to the Festschrift refers to as hiatus-filling *h* (on which see below) — albeit in the unstressed position — the meaning does appear to be somewhat forced. Other possible derivations for *for'atha* are the words *foirbhthe* and *forbha*. A past participle of Old Irish *for-fen*, *foirbhthe* has in Irish literary sources and in ScG the meanings of ‘perfect, complete, mature, aged’. See Dwelly’s *Illustrated Gaelic-English dictionary* s.v. *foirfe*, *foirbhidh*, and the (*Contributions to a*) *Dictionary of the Irish language (DIL)* s.v. *foirbthe*, especially for its use as an abstract. Compare also ScG *foirfeach* (‘elder of the church’). The verbal noun *forbha* (see *DIL* s.v. *forba*) which can mean ‘completing, perfection, the best’ may also be of relevance here. If we accept a form of the verb *for-fen* as a possibility, then we may translate: ‘May Providence take “old age” or “maturity” — perhaps “religious maturity” — from him’ or, possibly, ‘May Providence take the task of his completing his away-work from him’, thus conspiring to keep the person in question away from home.

In number 12, *Toisgeal air* is translated by Macleod as ‘Bad luck on it’ with no further comment. *Toisgeal* is, however, used in ScG to denote ‘left (side)’ when used for instance with *làmh*, *glùin*, *cluas* — in the last case particularly when referring to ear-markings in sheep. As with other words for ‘left (side)’, the word has gained the further meaning of ‘sinister’, which explains its use here. For a derivation of this from *soiscéal* (‘gospel’), see O’Rahilly in *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 2, 23. (MacLennan’s (1979 [1925]: s.v. *toisgeal*) suggestion of a connection with Irish *tuaisceart* is problematical and most likely incorrect.) Gaelic linguists will be interested in the retention of hiatus in the personal name *Brithean* (p. 22) from Old Irish disyllabic *Briön* (cf. Irish *Brian*). The imprecatory response to a warm welcome by a friend not seen in years, *Ha! Iutharnaich riabhaich na galladh, ’s ann a tha toilichte mise!* (‘Ha! You grizzled bitch’s hell-hound, so am I pleased [to see you]’), provides a good example of the emphasis of the subject by placing it at the end of the sentence rather than by fronting. The separation of verb and subject in such instances, though otherwise uncommon, is partially indicative of a tendency towards analytic structures in emphatic constructions (cf. Irish *a theach seisean* ‘his house’, *air seisean* ‘on him’, *cuir thusa* ‘you put (imperative)’, etc.).

Grann’d’s article ‘The Lexical Geography of the Western Isles’ confines itself to dealing with the Gaelic etymons for ‘flower’. Based on the geographical distribution of the different etymons for ‘flower’, three different dialect areas emerge, illustrated clearly in the accompanying map, with *flùr* occurring in southern dialects (South Uist, Barra, etc.), *sìthean* in northern dialects (Lewis) and *dìthean* in Harris and North Uist. Benbecula, situated between North and South Uist, is clearly a mixed area where both *flùr* and *dìthean* occur ‘equally commonly’. Grann’d suggests tentatively that this mixed usage may reflect the mixed religious backgrounds of the inhabitants of Benbecula. Be that as it

may, this type of variation is exactly what we might expect in the vicinity of geographical dialect boundaries such as that between North and South Uist. More information on speaker networks as well as patterns of usage might shed some light on the statement that both forms are used 'equally commonly'. Despite formidable phonological difficulties, previous suggested derivations from Middle Irish *dithen* ('darnel'; cf. Mod. Ir. *diothain*) and *sían* ('foxglove' in *sían sléb[h]e*) are adhered to for *dithean* and *sithean* (p. 149). Cameron (1900: 58) in his book on *The Gaelic names of plants* (which is not referred to in this article) lists *an dithean òir* [*sic* short *i* in *dithean*] as 'the golden flower' (s.v. *chrysanthemum segetum* 'corn marigold'), which prompts one to suggest tentatively that the element *ioth* ('corn') may be underlyingly present: < **an t-iothán*, **an t-ithén*. Cameron himself suggests that *dithean* ('darnel') may derive from *dith* ('want, poverty') and adds 'it may be so named from its growing on poor sterile soil, which it is said to improve' (1900: 122). Compare, however, the form *dihe*, which is quoted by Cameron from an early eighteenth-century Irish source (1900: 1). The geographical proximity of both forms *dithean* and *sithean* may suggest that one form has been contaminated by the other, perhaps based on the similar phonetic realisations of radical *d*- and *t*- (including 'lenited' *s*-, i.e. *t-s*-) following the article in certain northern Hebridean dialects. Compare the common *t*- ~ *s*- variation in ScG which may be the result of the shared lenition product of initial *t*- and *s*- (with and without the article), e.g. *side* ~ *tìde*, *seillean* ~ *teillean*, *sabaid* ~ *tabaid*, *teabhac* ~ *seabhac*. It is possible that the element *síth/dh* ('peace, calm, still, etc.') may have influenced the phonology. For the element *sith* in plant names, see Cameron (1900: 72).

MacLennan's contribution consists of a list of forty-eight words and phrases with commentary and translation, mostly from the 'repertoire' of the late Annie Bhán Nic Grianna of Rannafast, Co. Donegal, for which readers should now refer to MacLennan (1998 [1997]). Phonetic/phonetic transcriptions are rare in this article, which is a pity as the inclusion of such would have cast some helpful light on particular phrases. MacLennan suggests that the phrase *tá súileas agam* ultimately derives from phrases such as *tá súil as Dia agam* with reinforcement from abstracts such as *dóchas* in phrases like *tá dóchas agam*; *tás agam* (< *tá a fhios agam*) might also have been mentioned in this context. A transcription of the phrase, in particular of the vocalism of the *-as* syllable, would have been helpful. The formation of new nouns/adjectives from nouns/adjectives, or quasi-nouns/adjectives from nouns/adjectives, plus accompanying prepositions is instanced in the ScG echo forms of phrases such as *is toil* (< *is toigh le*), *is caomhl* (< *is caomh le*). MacLennan's suggestion that the occurrence of short *o* in *tog* in the phrase *tog ort* points to a 'Scottish origin since the vowel is always long in the Irish form of the verb (*tóg*)' (p. 262) is unconvincing. The suggestion of

ScG influence here is of course unnecessary and improbable. The shortening of vowels in imperatives is attested elsewhere in Gaelic dialects, e.g. Connacht *tabhair dom* > *tóir dhom* > *to(i)r 'om* [torum]; cf. ScG *éirich* > *eirich*. The reduction of *ó* in *tóg* may also be due to contamination with *tug* (past tense root and occasional imperative of *tabhair*) whose semantic range overlaps with that of *tóg*: see *DIL* s.v. *do-beir, do-fócaib*. Orthographic forms used by MacLennan do in some instances reflect dialectalisms, such as *gomh* for *chomh*, where voicing rather than the usual lenition affects the initial consonant of original *com(h)*, although it is not made clear if the orthographic system has been devised by MacLennan himself or whether it has been directly transcribed from the Irish Folklore Commission's archives. In this context *cláimhe* is quite misleading for underlying /kɫe:v'ə/, where *claidhmhe* or perhaps *claeimhe* might have better conveyed the synchronic realisation. The genitive form *athra móire* is worth noting and is here explained as being 'feminine in the genitive singular under the influence, obviously of *máthair mhór* (grandmother), genitive singular *mathra móire*' [with short *a*] (p. 256).

Ó Dochartaigh's essay discusses the borrowing of two lexical items in ScG, which exist side by side with native equivalents. He discusses the problems raised by the geographical distribution of the native and borrowed words. The words involved are *nàbaidh* ('neighbour') and *cuibheall* ('wheel'), borrowed from Norse and English respectively. Based on the recently published *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland (SGDS)* — of which Ó Dochartaigh is editor — isoglosses are drawn in two separate maps, which are clear-cut in the case of *nàbaidh/coimhearsnach* but more complex in the case of *roth/cuibheall*. It is worth pointing out here that the isoglosses for the latter map are drawn inaccurately as they imply, erroneously, the use of *roth* in northern parts of the mainland such as Ross-shire and Sutherland, which is not in fact supported by the *SGDS* returns. The author warns that the isoglosses drawn should be treated with some caution because of the way in which responses were elicited from informants. Considering the sphere of Norse influence from Lewis to Argyll, Ó Dochartaigh suggests that the borrowing of a core lexical item such as *nàbaidh*, where ScG already had a native word, in northern dialects but the retention of reflexes of Gaelic *comarsa* in southern dialects, implies 'differences in social organisation' between the Gaels and the Norse in northern and southern areas. The possibility that *nàbaidh* may have been first borrowed with a specific meaning, but which later became the generic in some dialects, is not discussed but may be implicit.

Ó Dochartaigh also makes the interesting suggestion that *cuibheall* and its derivatives were first borrowed with the specific meaning of 'spinning wheel', with subsequent semantic extension to other uses of 'wheel'. He claims that *cuibheall* originated and spread from the town

of Inverness, from which we might expect a great deal of external linguistic influence, and penetrated outlying areas, in this case, taking in most of modern Inverness-shire and Ross-shire — the areas of highest concentration of *cuibheall*-forms. Although the derivations of *roth* and the borrowed words *nàbaidh* and *cuibheall* are relatively straightforward in phonological terms, the synchronic forms of modern ScG *coimhearsnach* are not so immediately obvious. The underlying elements in ScG *coimhearsnach* and Irish *comharsa* are generally taken to be *comh* + *ursa* (*ursa* = ‘door-post’: see MacBain 1982 [1896]: s.v. *coimhearsnach*; *DIL* s.v. *comarsa*). This explains neatly the modern Irish forms but not the ScG forms (/kōĩ/-, /kē/-) which clearly derive from a form with palatalised, rather than broad, *mh*: compare the vocalism with that of ScG *coimhead* (/kōĩ/-, /kē/-). The Scottish form could be explained as a further instance of the well-known variation in Gaelic generally between non-palatal and palatal consonants word medially (cf. *nàrach/náireach*, *giolla/gille*, etc.). It is also possible that the Scottish form is to be derived from a variant form of *ursa* (later also *ursa(i)nn*) with initial front vowel (i.e. *comh* + *irsa/ersa-*), forms of which are attested in the historical record: see *DIL* s.v. *airsa*.²

Stockman provides a list of lexical correspondences between ScG and Antrim Irish based on a collection of folktales, songs, etc., published by the neglected Ulster Gaelic scholar Aoidhmín Mac Gréagóir between 1927 and 1928.³ The author warns that the collected material may have been slightly doctored by Mac Gréagóir and therefore calls for due caution among linguists when using this corpus. This collection, and indeed other materials collected by Mac Gréagóir, are of great importance and value for the study of the now defunct dialects of northern and eastern Ulster. In contrast to MacLennan’s article referred to earlier, the phrases and idioms in which the head words appear are unfortunately not translated, nor is any commentary provided on individual items. This detracts somewhat from the overall usefulness of the article. This contribution is nevertheless an addition to Colm Ó Baoill’s (1978: 73-87 and *passim*) work on the same subject which, curiously, is not referred to, despite the fact that some of the listed words are also noted by Ó Baoill. Much work remains to be done on the study of the Gaelic lexicon, shared and otherwise, in northern Ireland and southern Scotland, a task which will ultimately shed considerable light on the important interface between Gaelic Scotland and Ireland.

R. L. Thomson’s essay, the only one dealing with Manx, compares the Scottish and Manx lexical material collected by Edward Lhuyd while on visit to Scotland and the Isle of Man at the end of the

²Cf. *ar an iuirsim* with palatal onset from the Irish of Carna, Co. Galway. I am grateful to Dr Brian Ó Curnáin for providing me with this example.

³For information about this scholar, see now Ó Duibhinn (1995–96). Note also that the ‘forthcoming’ edition of a selection of Mac Gréagóir’s work, referred to in Stockman’s first footnote, has now been published in Mac Giolla Domhnaigh and Stockman (1991).

seventeenth-century. Thomson succeeds in illustrating the complex lexical relations which existed between Manx and certain dialects of ScG almost three hundred years ago. Of particular interest is the marginally more frequent agreement of cognate terms between Inverness and Man than that between Argyll and Man, although it is not clear how Thomson's results would compare with a comparative scientific study of core vocabulary items between both areas if such a study were possible. In some cases where Argyll differs from Inverness and Man, it is interesting that Argyll agrees with Irish, e.g. 'man': *duine* (M, In) ~ *fear* (A, Ir); 'bee': *seillean* (M), *teillean* (In) ~ *beach* (A, Ir); 'thirst': *pathadh* (M, In) ~ *tart* (A, Ir); 'weak': *anbhfann* (M, In) ~ *lag* (A, Ir). The occurrence in Argyllshire of *ta* for expected *tha* (in the phrase *ta mi 'g iarraidh*) is noteworthy.

Two papers deal with issues relating to Gaelic phonology. Nilsen, focusing on the Gaelic of eastern Nova Scotia, calls attention to a number of instances of what may be collectively referred to as the labialisation of originally velarised sonorants. He refers to instances of /L/ > /w/, /N/ > /m/, /N/ > /w/ — the last of which is relatively uncommon in Scotland. Of the 207 informants of *SGDS*, the labialisation of /N/ to /w/ appears to be frequent with only one informant, i.e. informant 70 from Appin, of whom Kenneth Jackson noted 'that she seems to show a high proportion of anomalous forms' (Ó Dochartaigh 1994–97, i: 87); see the returns for point 70 in *SGDS*, namely 168 *ceannaich*, 405 *feannadh*, 712 *rionnag*.⁴ The change /L/ > /w/ can, in some cases, be traced back to a particular dialect area in Scotland. For instance, the *gwug Eigeach*,⁵ as it is commonly referred to, is to be found in the counties of Antigonish and Inverness, many of whose Gaelic speakers are traced back to Lochaber in Scotland, where /L/ > /w/ is a well-known shibboleth, although the change in question is by no means confined to that area in Scotland (see *SGDS*: 75 *ball*, 292 *dall*, 857 *toll*, etc.). Nilsen notes, however, that this feature is also to be found in other areas such as Victoria County and Christmas Island, whose Gaelic speakers are not traceable to dialect areas in Scotland which exhibit the change /L/ > /w/. We seem, therefore, in some instances to be dealing with a feature which has become more widespread in Nova Scotia since Gaelic was first introduced there.

The change /N/ > /m/, though less common than /L/ > /w/, is also attested in Scotland where it is particularly common in the pronominal forms of the preposition *ann an*: see *annam* (*SGDS*: 42). It occurs sporadically in other words, e.g. *ceannaich* (*SGDS*: 168, points 39, 165),

⁴Number references to *SGDS* refer to items not pages.

⁵The 'Eigg cluck', i.e. the pronunciation of a non-palatalised /l/ with rounding accompanied perhaps by a velar secondary articulation, is not mentioned by Nilsen, but see Jackson (1949: 92–3). A post-velar or uvular articulation for this sound in some Nova Scotian dialects has been suggested by Watson (1999: 355).

feannadh (SGDS: 405, point 165), *rionnag* (SGDS: 712).⁶ In Nova Scotia, as in Scotland, the change /n/ > /m/ occurs frequently in the first and second person forms of the preposition *ann an* ('in'), e.g. *ionnam*, *ionnad*, perhaps by contamination with forms of the preposition *um/mu*, although this is perhaps unlikely in light of the discussion below; Watson also notes the development in *ann* (1999: 355). It is significant, to judge from the examples provided by Nilsen, and also from the evidence which may be observed in Scotland, that the change occurs commonly when /n/ is preceded by labialised vowels such as /u(:)/, e.g. *ionnam* /uməm/, *Lunnainn* /Lumɪn'/, *ceann* /k'ɛum/, *lionn* /L'u:m/; and *o* in the case of *connadh* (Watson 1999: 355). However, it is also found in words which do (and did) not contain labialised vowels, e.g. *Anna*, *annasach*, *faclannan*, *Eachann*, *boireannach*.⁷ It seems likely that the change /n/ > /m/ was phonologically conditioned in its initial stages, and most likely occurred originally in the vicinity of labial vowels, and from such contexts spread to other environments and words. Nilsen observes from two speakers from Inverness County the change /n/ > /w/ in the plural allomorph *-annan* /əwən/. Such instances may be seen as cases of dissimilation. An intermediate stage of /n/ > /l/, which is admittedly unnecessary and perhaps unlikely, would connect all three changes discussed by Nilsen.

Watson discusses what O'Rahilly coined as hiatus-filling *h* in ScG and Irish dialects, whereby original hiatus, and hiatus resulting from the vocalisation of original fricatives, is marked by the presence of a glottal fricative /h/. This is noted for some western mainland ScG dialects, such as Glengarry, and also for some Donegal Irish dialects, and a single explanation is put forward for both. Passing reference is also made to Nova Scotian dialects but no reference is made to Myles Dillon's (1962) relevant study of the development of intervocalic *h* in the Irish of Cois Fhairge, Co. Galway. The main question is whether or not *h* might arise naturally as a syllable boundary marker in such instances, just as the glottal stop may have developed in similar contexts. Watson rejects this and opts for a different solution, explaining hiatus-filling *h* as a form of hypercorrection arising as a direct result of the vocalisation of historical intervocalic *h* (< *th*), which he notes for East Ulster and certain of 'the western mainland and south-west Scottish Gaelic dialects' (p. 377). In other words, a dialect which developed variation between /bɛhə/ and /bɛ-ə/ (*beatha*), through loss of historical *h*, would extend such variation by hypercorrection to instances of hiatus (irrespective of origin), thus giving variation between the likes of /Ra-əd/ and /Rahəd/ (*rathad* with historical hiatus), /N'i-ən/ and /N'ihən/ (*nighean* with hiatus arising from

⁶Informant 165 is reported as being 'fairly fluent but has never spoken Gaelic much; he learned it from listening to parents and from Gaelic sermons.' (Ó Dochartaigh 1997: 92). The change /n/ > /m/ is common in Embo, East Sutherland; see Dorian (1978: 156).

⁷Seumas Watson (Cape Breton) has noted the development in *boireannach* in some Nova Scotian dialects.

the vocalisation of historical *gh*), and so on. Watson, therefore, sees this development as ultimately an intradialectal rather than an interdialectal phenomenon, i.e. that it occurred originally in dialects which had begun to lose historical intervocalic *h*. The suggestion is a plausible one and one which can easily be checked against the monograph sources, and especially *SGDS*, which was published subsequent to Watson's article being written.

One of the principal sources for western mainland ScG is Dieckhoff's *A pronouncing dictionary of Scottish Gaelic*: (1992 [1932]). Although many instances of hiatus-filling *h* occur in this source, intervocalic *h* does not appear to be lost in the dialect(s) described in it: see *athair*, *atharraich*, *mathair* [sic], *cathair*, *soitheach*, *tuathail*, etc. This would seem to argue against Watson's hypothesis in the case of the Glengarry dialect, though it could be argued that hiatus-filling *h* spread to such dialects from the type of innovative dialects suggested by Watson. Glengarry would thus compare with the evidence of Carrowroe, Co. Galway, discussed by Dillon (1962: 578).

Leaving aside a certain number of special cases (some of which are discussed below), and lects where *h* only rarely occurs, the occurrence of hiatus-filling *h* in *SGDS* materials occurs most commonly in three main lects, namely 92 (Bunacaimb, Arisaig) >> 12 (Harris) >> 75 (Spean Bridhe, Lochaber) — where '>>' indicates 'occurs more commonly than'. Although the change *h* → ∅ is attested for lect 75 (*athair* (*h*~∅), *beatha*, *feitheamh*, etc.) — thus offering support for Watson's argument — the change is restricted in lects 12 and 92 to what may well be special cases, where it occurs only in *saothair*, *soitheach* (lect 12) and *ràithe*, *soitheach* (lect 92). The retention of intervocalic *h* is, however, the norm in lects 12 and 92, and it is, therefore, difficult to accept that the development of hiatus-filling *h* in such lects has come about due the vocalisation of *h* in these lects. Indeed, the evidence of lect 92 would seem to suggest that the development in this case represents a particular type of hypercorrection, namely a hyperdialectism. In other words, the development in this case may be viewed as a reaction against the loss of intervocalic *h* in neighbouring dialects: it can be no coincidence that lect 92 occurs next to the north-west coastal border isogloss for the change *h* → ∅. The evidence of lect 12, which is not contiguous to *h*-deleting lects, illustrates that the development of hiatus-filling *h* can develop independently in some cases.

The phenomenon of hiatus-filling *h* is fraught with many difficulties because of the possibilities of morphological analogy and backformation, especially in bimorphemic forms. Watson himself refers to some such instances, e.g. genitive *taighe*, the different nature of which, incidentally, is reflected in the very different geographical distribution of *h*-forms: see *SGDS*: 822. Indeed, the occurrence of hiatus-filling *h* outside the central west mainland area may be indicative of a different development in such cases, e.g. *h*-forms of *saoghal* in Carloway,

Lewis (*SGDS*: 738, point 4) and Ardhasaig, Harris (*SGDS*: 738, point 11). If these do not represent independent cases of the development of hiatus-filling *h*, they may be related to the development (and subsequent reduction) of *v* (possibly $> f$) for original *gh* in this word: see *SGDS*: 738, points 8, 126–56.

Watson refers to hiatus-filling *h* in *cumhachd*, *amhach*, *comhartha* in the southern Hebrides, noting their occurrence in areas where intervocalic *h* is usually retained, but without noting the special nature of such examples. The evidence of *SGDS* illustrates very clearly that certain instances of hiatus-filling *h* arising from intervocalic *mh* provide very different geographical distributional patterns to *h* arising from other fricatives, thus marking the class of words containing original nasalised labial fricatives apart from the others. The existence of this subclass outside the main, so-called hiatus-filling-/h/-area in Scotland suggests that a different explanation is required for these instances of *-mh- > h*. *SGDS* provides the following examples: *comharradh* (*SGDS*: 241), *cumhachd* (*SGDS*: 287) and also *famhair* (*SGDS*: 393). This special subclass can be explained by the phenomenon of *rhinoglottophilia*, that is, the well-documented affinity between nasality and glottality: see Matisoff (1975) and Ohala (1983) for discussion. Ohala has, in a number of articles, provided convincing evidence, both acoustic and physiological, for the occurrence of nasality in the environment of consonants ‘characterized by high airflow: the glottal fricative [h], voiceless fricatives and affricates, and aspirated stops’ (1983: 233). The Gaelic evidence would seem to supply a natural corollary to Ohala’s findings whereby nasality (in this case the nasalised labial fricative) has been replaced by glottal articulation, either by devoicing the originally voiced labial fricative or replacing it with the glottal fricative [h]. It is also worth noting that the development *mh > h* occurs frequently in words where *-mh-* is accompanied by high airflow voiceless consonantal segments (e.g. *c*, *ch*, *f*) within preceding or following syllables, e.g. *cumhachd*, *amha(i)ch*, *comhartha*, *famhair*, *amharc* (cf. /afərɔk/, Connacht), *samhaidh* (cf. /safi/Raasay, ScG).⁸ Similar examples may be quoted from Irish dialects, such as *amharc* [ahəŋk], *cumhang* [kuhən], given by Watson (p. 379). Professor Eric Hamp notes that ‘*oidhche* [ʔiçə] must have developed its unexpected nasalisation in the nexus *oidhche mhath*’ (1986: 138). However, the independent nasality found in *oidhche*, the well-known cases of *faic(eadh)*, *faicinn* (*faiceail*), *faigh(eadh)*, *faighinn* (*faighean*) and the less well-known cases of *chì* (*SGDS*: 381–2) may all be explained by the phenomenon of *rhinoglottophilia*: note that each contains one or more of the high airflow segments *f*, *c* (also [xʰ] in cases of preaspiration) or *ch*. See Borgstrøm (1940: 28, 40, 117, 134, 143, 197) for examples, and also *uisge* (*SGDS*: 889, 890) and *suidh* (*SGDS*: 811).

⁸It is worth noting that the phenomenon does not always occur in instances where it might be expected: see, for instance, *cumhang* (*SGDS*: 288), where [h] is attested only at one point (point 12).

Rhinoglottophilia may also account for instances of hiatus-filling *h* in the case of *ng* (perhaps involving the intermediate stage of [ŋ]), e.g. *daingean* [daihən] (Inishowen, Donegal) and *sreangacha* [srahahə] (Dunlewy, Donegal) — both examples from Watson (pp. 378–9). Nasalisation of the preceding syllable may also account for the development of *h* (for *gh*) in the unstressed syllable in the likes of *coingheall* (*SGDS*: 228, points 10, 11, 28, 29, etc.). The occasional occurrence of /h/ in place of an original non-nasalsed labial fricative *bh*, such as *faobhar* [fihür] and *cubhar* [kλhər] (Watson: 378) may, based on what has been said above, imply an intermediate stage with nasalisation in the stressed syllable of such words. It is worth noting that both examples contain one or other of the high airflow segments *f* or *c*. In support of this we may note (a) that the stressed vowel of *faobhar* is frequently nasalised in some ScG dialects, particularly in the Western Isles, and occasionally in other areas (see *SGDS*: 396, points 10–12, 14–18, 20, 22–3, 25–8, 30, 95, 178, 206) and (b) that hiatus-filling *h* occurs frequently in this word outside the hiatus-filling-*h*-area in Scotland (see *SGDS*: 396, points 109, 111–16, 158–9, 163–4, 166, 169). Indeed, instances of *h* in *faobhar* outside the hiatus-filling-*h*-area may imply the existence of nasalisation in this word in earlier times although a development *faobhar* > **faofar* > *faohar* cannot be ruled out. Although Watson's discussion is confined to stressed syllables, we may compare the development of *h* in the unstressed position in the likes of *coingheall* (*SGDS*: 228), *ainmhidh* (*SGDS*: 239) and [vh] in Lewis in *gainmheach* (*SGDS*: 449–50). It is unlikely, however, that nasalisation can explain the development of hiatus-filling *h* for *bh* in the unstressed position in the likes of *arbhar* (*SGDS*: 54, points 102, 121, 123), *dearbh* (*SGDS*: 303, points 10, 12–13, 22, 112, 119, 121–3), *dh'fhalbhadh* (*SGDS*: 391, point 12), *mharbhadh* (*SGDS*: 602, point 92). It is possible that the past participle *dearbhtha* may have influenced the development in the case of *dearbh(a)*.

Watson's treatment also includes hiatus across word boundaries and cites as examples *bò* [h]eile, *an t-uisge* [h]eile from Cape Breton, and *feadh an lae* [f'ehəle:] from Mayo Irish. He explains as hiatus-filling *h* the occurrence in Donegal of forms such as [tə] ~ [tahə] [*recte*] and [təd] ~ [tahəd] [*recte*] for expected *tá sé* and *tá siad* respectively, deriving them from original *tá é* and *tá iad* with the 'Scottish' use of vowel-initial (V) subject pronouns, rather than from lenited forms of *sé*, *siad*, etc. This article is marred somewhat by the occurrence of back-to-front images of intended phonetic symbols (e.g. [e] for [ə], [c] for [ɔ]), the occurrence of ['] for the aspirate marker [ˈ] (e.g. [k'uhɛk] for [k'uhəxk] or -[ɔkk] *cumhachd*, 377), and the use of ¶ for § — many of which are doubtless computer-reading errors.

Two articles deal with time, tense and aspect in ScG, each with a slightly different focus, the first by Cox and the second by MacAulay.

Both point up inadequacies in traditional descriptions which rely on ‘incompatible models’, usually Latin and English, but in some cases also Irish. Cox’s contribution is intended as a working paper on definitions and presentation. We are told at the outset that the approach is ‘entirely synchronic and from a Gaelic point of view’ (p. 82). However, the author appears to fall into the trap, which he set out to avoid, when he notes that the Past Tense is multi-functional, and may have absolute, perfect and even pluperfect meaning or function. The sentence *dh’fhaighnich mi dha na [= an do] rinn e an obair* is translated satisfactorily as ‘I asked him whether he *had done* the work’ [italics added]. To say that Gaelic *rinn* has (plu)perfect force in instances such as this is to view things from the point of view of English. In this example, *rinn* from a Gaelic perspective is aspectually unmarked and must be categorised as being simply past. This article would have benefited generally from more illustrative examples. For instance, *chuir* and *bha*, as well as being absolute pasts, are also classified as past with conditional aspect. Unfortunately, no examples are provided to illustrate what is intended here. It is probable that instances like the following are intended: *mur deanamaid feum le’r casan, cha tug sinne sradh le’r musgan* (‘Had we not made use of our feet, we would never have fired our guns’; Calder 1923 [1980]: 247). If so, such instances of the past cannot be classified as being aspectually conditional. They are rather aspectually or modally affirmative and assertive. Cox sets out in two-dimensional tables, with Time and Aspect axes, his chosen paradigm for verbs. One is surprised to note that *cuiridh* and *bidh* are not classified in these tables as present habituais, despite an earlier statement to this effect (p. 82). *Bha* is not classified as having a perfective function. The presentation of the tables is somewhat cumbersome, especially for the Gaelic reader who is confronted with two sets of adjectives for present and past, depending on whether time or tense is being referred to: past and future time are *tìmh seachdail* and *tìmh teachdail*, whereas past and future tense are an *tràth caithte* and an *tràth nuadh* respectively. One wonders if these differences of meaning could not be sufficiently signalled in the head nouns *tìmh* and *tràth*. Leaving finite verbal forms aside, the aspectual description of periphrastic constructions involving *bi* + preposition + verbal noun is more convincing, where the emphasis is laid correctly on the augmenting function of prepositions.

MacAulay’s contribution brings forward the description, and therefore our understanding, of temporal, modal and aspectual systems in ScG. He quite rightly criticises traditional descriptions for their over-reliance on models where systemic distinctions of the kind discussed here are made for the most part through verbal morphology. The productive use in ScG of periphrasis and the importance of non-verbal items (i.e. ‘adverbial phrases’) in expressing certain temporal contrasts, calls for an entirely different descriptive system. MacAulay distinguishes between those distinctions which are made (a) at word level and (b) those

which are made at sentence or phrase level. The former are described in terms of two adjacent but distinct systems, one temporal (*tense*) and the other modal (*mode*). A particular word form may be *tensed* or *non-tensed* (*Tense*) and *definite* or *non-definite* (*Mode*). Traditional future and conditional forms are categorised as being non-tensed and non-definite, whereas traditional past is classified as being tensed (past) and definite. The verb *bi*, unlike all other verbs, has in addition a non-past form *tha*. The categorisation of *tha* as an unmarked form, non-past, is convincing when we consider that *tha* does not always refer to the point of speaking, e.g. *tha uisge fliuch* ('water is [generically] wet'). However, as MacAulay points out, this applies only to what he refers to as 'traditional' Gaelic as opposed to 'contemporary Gaelic usage', which is heavily influenced by contemporary English. The classification of 'future' and 'conditional' forms as non-definite is supported by two considerations: (a) the un-actualised nature of events referred to, and (b) the neutral quality of 'future' and 'conditional' forms which can be seen in the following sentences:

- (i) Bithidh Iain an Dùn Éideann a-màireach.
'Iain will be in Edinburgh tomorrow.'
- (ii) Bithidh Iain an Dùn Éideann a h-uile latha.
'Iain is in Edinburgh every day.'
- (iii) Bhitheadh Iain an Dùn Éideann a-màireach ...
'Iain would be in Edinburgh ...'
- (iv) Bhitheadh Iain an Dùn Éideann a h-uile latha.
'Iain used to be in Edinburgh every day.'

The contrast between (i) and (ii), and (iii) and (iv), is marked by contextual and co-textual markers (such as *a-màireach* and *a h-uile latha*), not by verbal forms. MacAulay settles for the labels *non-definite 1* for traditional 'future' and *non-definite 2* for 'conditional' which, as labels, unfortunately, do not capture the multiple functions of these forms. Although non-past might suitably describe the use of non-definite 1 forms, it is difficult to think of a single term which would satisfactorily cover the various functions of non-definite 2 forms, which may have habitual, past or contingency connotations. Far less space is devoted to the discussion of aspect. After listing the three main aspectual sub-categories of progressive, perfective and prospective aspect, all of which are expressed sententially, a list of some of the possible combinations of each is presented.

Dorian's article deals with linguistic variation in the East Sutherland villages of Brora (B), Golspie (G) and Embo (E) in the latter half of the twentieth century. This article describes a newly discovered type of linguistic variation which is referred to as 'personal-pattern variation',

thus making a valuable addition to the list of well-known social variables in language such as geography, age, gender and register. Such instances of personal-pattern variation apparently lack evaluative force and are neither ‘markers’ nor ‘indicators’, in the Labovian sense, in that they appear not to be explicable in terms of age, gender and so on. Only one instance of personal-pattern variation is discussed here, namely variation between the past dependent forms of *bi*, i.e. *robh* and *d’robh*. Reference may now be made to an excellent and more detailed article by Dorian on this topic, where a good many other instances of personal-pattern variation are discussed: see ‘Varieties of variation in a very small place: social homogeneity, prestige norms, and linguistic variation’, in *Language* 70 (1994) 631–96. We are told that there is ‘no easy social-network or accommodation-theory’ which explains the personal-pattern variation in many instances, such as the opposite patterns of usage of *cha robh* and *cha d’robh* exhibited by husband (E23) and wife (E27). However, one would like to have had recourse to more information on variation within blood-family networks against which this claim could be tested. This has presumably been difficult because of gaps in knowledge of the various networks in question. Although there is said to be variation between / $(x)a\ r\text{ɔ}/$ and / $(x)a\ t\ r\text{ɔ}/$, it is unfortunate that the phonemically transcribed texts in the article under review and in Dorian’s later article do not provide examples of the form / $xa\ t\ r\text{ɔ}/$ (only / $a\ t\ r\text{ɔ}/$), which gives the presumably erroneous impression that the occurrence of /*t*/ may be conditioned by the realisation of the preceding *cha*. It is interesting to note that the preterite particle seems to always occur with nasalising particles / $-n\ d\ r\text{ɔ}/$ in all three villages which, from a diachronic point of view, suggests that in this dialect area, (a) the use of the preterite particle with (certain) irregular verbs may have originated in such environments, and (b) that the development of an intrusive /*d*/ — never /*də*/ with irregular verbs — may have been a phonological rather than a morphological one in origin. A number of misprints occur; the most commonly occurring one involves confusion between the diacritics ['] and [˘].

Nigel Grant’s article is informative and offers some perspectives on the development of Gaelic education in Scotland. Readers should note that some of the figures presented are now out of date. Attention should be brought to one infelicity. The conclusion is drawn from the use of the term ‘the Irishe language’, which occurs in an Act of the Privy Council of 1616, that Gaelic was denied a Scottish base during the reign of King James VI. This is misleading since the Gaelic language in Scotland had been referred to as Irish(e) since at least the sixteenth century, which reflected both the language’s origins and its allegiances at that time, labels such as the ‘Scottish tongue’ being used to refer to the Lowland ‘Scots’ since at least the fourteenth century. See Withers (1984: 23) for details.

Kenneth MacKinnon's contribution is based on special tabulations of 1981 Census returns, the first for which data on Gaelic speaking, reading and writing abilities by occupation were produced. The data is considered both at a national and a local level. All occupational categories are essentially economic classifications since they relate to employment. Marked contrasts in social class structure emerge between Gaelic speakers in Gaelic strongholds and in the Lowlands. Generally speaking, it may be said that in strong Gaelic-speaking areas, Gaelic speakers are under-represented in higher echelon social classes (higher managerial and professional) and over-represented in lower classes (mainly manual categories). This has resulted from a number of factors such as the continued strength of crofting and the continued influx of non-Gaelic speakers into the higher level groups in these areas, where at the same time educated Gaelic speakers are attracted 'away' due to lower levels of economic development 'at home'. The effects of social mobility of Gaelic speakers in Lowland areas is illustrated by the fact that Gaelic speakers in these areas are better represented in the two highest social classes than non-Gaelic speakers, and under-represented in lower classes. The picture which MacKinnon's analysis paints illustrates clearly the unbalanced nature of Gaelic-speaking society, both in traditional and non-traditional areas. MacKinnon correctly points out that a more effective connection is needed between the two 'occupational cores' of the crofting community (in traditional Gaelic-speaking areas) and the upwardly-mobile professional sector if the distorted social structure of Gaelic-speaking society is to be addressed. New developments in traditional Gaelic areas coupled with a positive policy involving the recruitment of people who are predominantly Gaelic-speaking would go a long way to providing this. The problems with the development of the Gaelic community, or 'Gaelic networks', in Lowland areas is of course a different question entirely.

Gillies's article illustrates the important and worthwhile contribution which language studies can make to Scottish historical studies. It also illustrates the importance of non-Gaelic sources for the diachronic study of the Gaelic languages. The article sets out to cast further linguistic light on the *toschederach*, particularly its simplex *derach*, and in so doing to stimulate further debate about the historical questions which this office raises. Our 'word' is richly attested in non-Gaelic sources ranging mostly from the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries — although in some instances from as early as the fourteenth century — with more than forty attestations known to date (see pp. 131–3 for a list). Gillies establishes convincingly at the outset that the first element — when it occurs — is the Gaelic word *tòiseach*, which in modern dictionaries is given the rather general meaning of 'leader'. Pointing to 'only one example of *toyss-*' against 'many with *-os(s)-* or *-osch-*',

which seem to imply an underlying monophthongal realisation, he concludes that the original /oi/ diphthong had been monophthongised to ò in this word by the fifteenth century. In this context, we may note that Gillies does not refer to two examples from Glassary, Kintyre, with *oi* from his own lists — one from 1436 and the other from 1581 — which may, conceivably, represent underlying diphthongal realisations. We may note that Jackson concluded, based on the evidence of the earlier twelfth-century Gaelic notes in the Book of Deer, that the Old Irish diphthong had not been monophthongised in this word by the twelfth century, although there are instances of *o*, *ó* and *e* in this manuscript also, e.g. *thósec*, *thosec* (two examples) (Hand A); cf. *tesech*, *thesseach* (Hand C). This may imply an earlier date for the monophthongisation than claimed by Jackson (1972: 134). If the interpretation of both scholars is accepted, then we may date the monophthongisation of /oi/ in *this word* broadly to some time during the thirteenth or possibly fourteenth century, in eastern Scotland at least. It should be noted that the development /oi/ > /o:/ or /ɔ:/ occurs only sporadically in ScG (cf. *caoineadh* > *còineadh* for another instance before a palatal consonant, and see also O’Rahilly 1988 [1932]: 35). Gillies’s article is, however, more concerned with the *derach* element to which we now turn our attention.

Representations of the *derach* element may be crudely classified into various binary groupings, such as: *-der-* vs. *-dor-*, *-de/or* vs. *-de/orV(C)-*, although exceptional forms involving *-dir-*, *-dar-* occur very rarely. Gillies refutes Skene’s claim that *-dor-* and *-der-* spellings reflect different historical etymons and different functions in different geographical areas. Before offering us his derivation, the most plausible derivation to have been suggested to date, i.e. *deòradh* (with the original meaning of ‘person excluded from *rath*’) is discussed. While *deòradh* accounts for the Manx form *toshiagh-joarey*, for a number of *-eo-* spellings in Lochaber, Knapdale and Kintyre sources, and possibly also some of the *-dor-* forms, this derivation is ultimately rejected on the grounds that it does not sit well with the *-der-* forms or with the endings *-ay*, *-ach*, etc., where a clear /a/ seems to be implied in the final unstressed syllable. He does allow, however, that *deòradh* may have later influenced the original form, especially in areas where Gaelic was still spoken in the fifteenth century. Gillies puts forward a derivation which plausibly accounts for the varied vocalism — mainly *e*, *o*, *i* — and also the wide number of nominal endings which are attested. He suggests that all forms are to be derived from the attested Early Irish noun phrase *dóer-rath* (‘base clientship’; see Binchy 1979 [1970]: 96–8, s.v. *gíallnae*), and in this he seems to be supported by a lemma contained in a legal text contained in the TCD MS H.3.17. An underlying *óe* would certainly account for most of the vocalic alternation which is encountered, including *oi* which may or may not represent a diphthong.

The geographical distribution of *e* and *o* forms *vis-à-vis* the synchronic reflexes of Old Irish /oi/ in modern ScG dialects is perhaps not given the weight which it deserves. Indeed, it could be said that Professor Gillies is perhaps being overly cautious when he says that ‘it would be rash in the present state of knowledge to attempt to explain the various spellings in terms of dialect areas’ — despite going on to say that ‘in due course it is evidence like these forms which may help to determine the dialect areas themselves’ (p. 141, fn. 22). Leaving aside one example of *o* from Strathavon (Banffshire) and two from Ardtalnaig (Perthshire), it cannot be without relevance or significance that the areas where *o* forms occur predominantly (i.e. Argyllshire and Kintyre) coincide precisely with those areas where reflexes of earlier /oi/ are frequently mid rounded vowels of the type /ø:/: see Holmer (1938; 2001 [1957]; 1981 [1962]) and *SGDS*: 147 *caol*, 459 *gaoth*, 738 *saoghal*, etc. On the other hand *e* spellings seem to represent mid front unround vowels, although it cannot be discounted that such spellings may be Scots or English approximations of mid central to back unround vowels in the range of [ɤ:]. In any case the geographical distribution of *o* and *e* forms does seem to correspond very neatly with the synchronic geographical distribution of reflexes of /oi/, namely /ø:/ and /ɤ:/ ~ /u:/ respectively. It is unclear whether *i* and *i(o)* spellings represent ScG diphthongs or the high back unround monophthong /u:/. This paper is important, not just in establishing a methodology within which Gaelic fossil words in non-Gaelic sources may be studied and understood, but also as a further contribution in the tradition of Craigie (1897), Watson (1993 [1926]) and O’Rahilly (1930), where non-Gaelic sources are tackled as important sources of evidence for the diachronic study of the Gaelic languages. It is also important in that it encourages Scottish historians to think once again about the office, and moreover the functions, of the *toschederach* in earlier Scottish society.

Howells provides a cursory glance (one-and-a-half pages) at Gaelic irregular verbs ‘in an Indo-European context’. He divides irregularities in such verbs into two classes: (a) true suppletives where two different verbal roots are used for present and past tense, and (b) verbs where one root has been generalised but different stem formants are employed to distinguish between the present and past systems.

Schmidt — whose name does not appear at the end of his article — offers some thoughts on the historical evaluation of linguistic features in Insular Celtic. He suggests three possible models for the analysis of the Celtic languages: (a) a reconstruction model which allows both for the preservation of archaic features and certain innovations shared with non-Celtic Indo-European languages; (b) a separation model, which distinguishes between archaic and non-archaic languages; referring to an earlier article of his (*Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 41 (1986) 235), Schmidt notes that ‘Archaic Celtic fits in with the generally accepted definition of *marginal languages*, which branched off from the

main group before the development of innovations in the latter'; (c) a geographical model which differentiates between Continental Celtic and Insular Celtic, whereby the common features of the Insular Celtic languages must be explained 'either as common inheritance or as a convergent development of *languages in contact*' — the possibility of substrate influence is not discussed here; instead, readers are referred to another article by the same author. Readers should be aware of Kim McCone's rejection, in *Studia Celtica Japonica* 4 (1991) 37–69, of Schmidt's criteria for determining inter-Celtic linguistic relationships.

Williams discusses literary and linguistic evidence that the Celtic *bardi* 'chanted or declaimed his utterances'. He illustrates how the Goedelic and Brythonic evidence indicates that the bard functioned variously as panegyrist, satirist, magician, caster of spells, prophet, or as a combination of these.

Pálsson, basing himself mainly on the evidence of One-Inch Ordnance Survey Maps, discusses a number of the Norse elements which are to be found in the toponymy of the Hebridean islands of Lewis and Harris. His object is 'to explore the origins and meanings of the words involved' and also 'to use the onomastic evidence for the purpose of throwing light on the human condition in the Hebrides during the Norse speaking period'. The discussion is divided between place-name elements which denote water — such as rivers, burns, lochs and natural harbours — hills and mountains, islands and skerries, barren soil and scorched earth. He also sheds light on a number of descriptors which occur with the generics, drawing parallels where appropriate from Norse place-names. Pálsson's characteristically lucid and erudite contribution leaves Gaelicists and toponomists alike in his debt.

Nicolaisen takes up once again a topic on which he has published a number of articles, the earliest of which appeared in 1986, and the most recent of which appeared in 1993 (*Names* 41, 306–13). Although the latter article was presumably written after the present one, the delayed publication of *Scottish Gaelic Studies* (*SGS*) meant that the later article was placed in the public domain before the one reviewed here. The main difference between both articles is that more detail is presented in the *SGS* article, and the arguments are fleshed out in a fuller manner. The topic in question concerns place-names with final unstressed *-ach*; when these names are borrowed into Scots, the *-ach* becomes *-o*. Nicolaisen adheres to his long-held claim that this change is 'an exclusively onomastic feature not shared by its lexical morphological counterpart' (279). Early historical spellings of such place-names may be classified into four groups: (a) *-ach*, (b) *-och*, (c) *-o(c)k*, (d) *-o(w)*. Nicolaisen makes the following generalisations with respect to the chronological ordering of these spellings: (a) *-ach*: 12th–14th centuries;

(b) *-och*: 15th–17th centuries; (c) *-o(c)k*: 12th–16th centuries;⁹ (d) *-o*: 15th/16th centuries and beyond. While the last holds for the majority of his examples of *-o*, it should be noted that early examples occur in the names: *Cambo* FIF (*Camehou* 1294), *Cambo* MLO (*Cambo* 1296), *Fetteresso* KCD (*Fetheressau* 1204–11), *Kirkintilloch* DNB (*Kirkintillo* 1287), *Stracathro* ANG (*Strathatnow* 1394), *Strathmiglo* FIF (*Strahmyglo* 1394). The geographical distribution of each of these spellings is important and significant, although less emphasis is placed on this in the *SGS* article than earlier articles. The situation may be summarised as follows. Spellings with *-ach* and *-och* are attested in the historical sources for most if not all areas discussed by Nicolaisen. However, *-ach* spellings survive in current usage mostly in areas where Gaelic is still spoken or was still spoken until relatively recently. On the other hand, *-och* spellings survive as the current forms ‘in areas which remained Gaelic-speaking much longer and in which Scottish English, rather than Scots, frequently replaced Gaelic’. The third spelling *-o(c)k* occurs mostly in southern parts of Scotland. Such forms are attested historically in Angus, Perthshire, Dumbartonshire, Stirlingshire, Fife, MidLothian, Peebleshire and Ayrshire, but apparently not in northern areas such as Morayshire, Aberdeenshire or Kincardineshire. The fourth spelling, namely *-o*, is attested historically in all areas considered by Nicolaisen, i.e. it occurs ‘mostly in the east of Scotland’ (1986: 142). By way of summary, Nicolaisen writes of *-o* forms that they

occur mostly, though not exclusively,¹⁰ between the Firth of Forth and the Moray Firth where Gaelic had begun to succeed Pictish in the ninth century and was itself put under pressure by Northern English from the twelfth century onwards and threatened with obsolescence three or four hundred years later: Fife, Angus, Eastern Perthshire, Kincardineshire, eastern Aberdeenshire. This is therefore the heartland of the development of *-och* > *-o*.

The change *-ach* > *-och* is seen as a prerequisite for the ‘further change to *-o* [o:] ... which may have occurred as early as the twelfth [century]’ (p. 288), and also for the change *-ach* > *-o(c)k*, which occurs as early as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Though an intermediate stage *-ach* > *-och* is feasible, it should be said that the changes *-ach* > *-o(c)k*, *-o* could represent direct changes without the intermediate stage *-och*, in

⁹Nicolaisen says that *-o(c)k* is ‘rare or non-existent in most names but early and common in *Cambo* FIF, *Cammo* MLO and *Elcho* PER, especially in the last of these three, while appearing in some of the early forms of *Romanno* PEB and *Strathmiglo* FIF.’ (p. 287) However, *-o(c)k* occurs more frequently than Nicolaisen implies here. It also occurs in *Cumnock* AYR (*Cumnok* 1287), *Crago* ANG (*Cragoc* 1366–7), *Kirkintilloch* DNB (*Kirkyntulloch* 1485), and in sixteenth-century forms of *Balerno* MLO, *Balmullo* FIF, *Pitcullo* FIF, *Inchcailleach* STL.

¹⁰There are some rare instances attested in Dumbartonshire, Stirlingshire, Ayrshire, MidLothian and Peebleshire.

the borrowing of Gaelic *-ach* into Scots or English, on which see further below.

Nicolaisen introduces a further intermediate stage in the development of *-och* [ɔx] to *-o* [o:], namely the lengthening of [ɔ] to [o:] before the velar fricative [x]. He claims that 'it is necessary to postulate the third stage [o:χ] in order to reach the final destination [o:], for there is no evidence to suggest that the voiceless velar fricative [χ] was ever lost after short [ɔ]' (p. 289).¹¹ Nicolaisen's hypothesis may be objected to for a number of reasons. Firstly, so far as I am aware, there is no evidence to suggest that [ɔ], or any other vowel for that matter, was lengthened before the velar fricative [x] in final unstressed position in Scots or Scottish English. Secondly, the evidence which he adduces in support of his hypothesis consists entirely of 'English' place-names (*Fogo* BWK, *Kelso* ROX, *Minto* ROX, *Stobo* PEB), all of which contain the Old English generic *hōh* ('a projecting ridge of land'), the spelling history of which indicates that 'the final spirant appears to have been lost as early as the thirteenth or, in some instances, even the twelfth century' (p. 289). Furthermore, if the lengthening of [ɔ] to [o:] had occurred, then we might expect to find [o:k] pronunciations as realisations of *-o(c)k* forms in some instances; such realisations do not occur. Nicolaisen guards himself against this by stating that 'such *-o(c)k* spellings and pronunciations represent a stage before [ɔ] was lengthened to [o:]' (p. 290). Historically, however, *-o* and *-o(c)k* forms in particular instances seem to be contemporaneous; indeed in some cases *-o* forms occur before *-o(c)k* forms, e.g. *Balerno* MLO (*Baleirnock* 1546, *Ballerno* 1461), *Balmullo* FIF (*Ballmullock* 1512, *Ballmullo* 1492), *Cammo* MLO (*Cambok* 1296, *Cambo* 1296).

Because the majority of *-o* spellings occurs in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Nicolaisen concludes that the change *-och* > *-o* (i.e. [ɔx] > [o:x] > [o:]) 'is a phonological development mainly triggered in the 16th century' (p. 290). Such a late date for the development *-ach* > *-o* ignores *-o* spellings from as early as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and also the 'delaying factor' to which Nicolaisen himself draws attention, namely that 'it is more than probable that changes in pronunciation had occurred already some time before they were reflected in the spellings' (p. 287).

It is also claimed that the change *-ach* > *-o* is an 'exclusively onomastic feature not shared by its lexical morphological counterpart' (p. 279). There is, however, some evidence to suggest that this change occurred in the lexicon also: see Ó Maolalaigh (1997) where some of the evidence for the admittedly rare development *-ach* > *-o* in the lexicon is presented (e.g. *blatho* < *blàthach*, *kyloe* < *Gàidhealach*, etc.). A different explanation of the onomastic and lexical evidence is provided in

¹¹Nicolaisen's use of [χ] to represent a velar fricative is confusing since, in the IPA system, this symbol signifies a uvular fricative.

Ó Maolalaigh (1997: 27–33) where it is argued that the change *-ach* > *o* is not a phonological change within Scots (or Scottish English), but rather due to borrowing from one phonological system to another. The phonologies of Scots (and Scottish English) did not normally allow the velar fricative /x/ in final unstressed position. Indeed, final unstressed *-h* [x] appears to have been lost early in most Germanic languages; cf. English *hóh* above. In such a scenario, the borrowing of ScG words with final *-ach* would have resulted naturally in the adoption of such words with final *-o* or *-o(c)k*, where the original velar element, transformed in the process of borrowing, resulted in the roundness of the final vowel in *-o*, or in the homorganic stop /k/. Such a development argues for the direct developments *-ach* > *-o*, *-o(c)k* without a necessary intermediate development of *-ach* > *-och*. As contact between ScG and non-ScG speakers increased, it is conceivable that final [x] may have been reintroduced into the phonology of Scots and Scottish English. Indeed, it can be no coincidence that the majority of words — if not all of them — in modern Scots with final unstressed *-ch* are Gaelic in origin. This hypothesis implies that the developments *-ach* > *-o*, *o(c)k* occurred early and accords well with the available evidence. It is worth noting that evidence for both of these developments (i.e. *-ach* > *-o*, *o(c)k*) comes mostly from those areas where contact between Gaelic and Scots first occurred, namely in the east, beginning in and around the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It is entirely natural that onomastic items were among the earliest borrowings from Gaelic into Scots and Scottish English.

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ROIBEARD Ó MAOLALAIGH

Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies