

# DÁIMH LE hALBAIN? DEPICTIONS OF SCOTLAND IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY IRISH-LANGUAGE PROSE

Caoimhe Nic Lochlainn

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**Abstract:** This article examines depictions of Scotland in twentieth-century Irish-language prose across a range of genres: fiction, (auto)biography, travel writing, translations, and children's literature. References to Ireland's closest neighbour are diverse: Séamus Ó Grianna's oeuvre frequently referred to Scotland as a place of hard labour; "Beirt Shiubhlóirí" wrote a travelogue in the 1930s of their hiking trip around Scotland; there are unexpected references to the Isle of Skye in Tomás Mac Aodh Bhuí's translation of Enid Blyton's *The Secret Mountain*, which is set in Africa; while the prolific Cathal Ó Sándair had his famous detective, Réics Carló, finally visit Scotland in the 1980s. This essay examines to what extent these texts and authors depict an affinity with the language and culture of Scotland, and how this affinity is portrayed and, in some cases, contended. Where available, editorial advice and attitudes to these depictions of Scotland are also considered, as well as contemporary reviews of the texts.

**Keywords:** Séamus Ó Grianna, Cathal Ó Sándair, Scottish Gaelic, Irish language, biography, travel writing, teen fiction

Donegal writer, Séamus Ó Grianna, gives the following anecdote in his work *Ranna Feirste* (Rannafast, 1943):

Chuaidh Seán Mháire Phroinnsís agus fear eile isteach i siopa fuinteora i bPeebles lá amháin a cheannacht aráin. Ba í an tríú bliadhain do Sheán í agus bhí gearradh maith Béarla aige.

"I want a half-loaf," ar seisean.

Thug an fuinteoir sin dó ar ndóigh.

"Domh-sa ceann eile aca sin," arsa an dara fear.

"I dinna ken what ye're saying'," ars an tAlbanach.

“Givit,” arsa fear Rann na Feirste a’ síneadh a mhéir ionns’ ar bhuilbhín a bhí thall ós a choinne. Agus fuair.

[Seán Mháire Phroinnsís and another man went into a baker’s shop in Peebles one day to buy bread. It was the third year for Seán [in Scotland] and he had a good amount of English.

“I want a half-loaf,” he said.

The baker gave him it of course.

“Another one of those for me,” said the second man [in Irish].

“I dinna ken what ye’re saying’,” said the Scot.

“Givit,” said the Rannafast man pointing towards the loaf that was opposite him. And he got it.]<sup>1</sup>

This story clearly demonstrates the language barrier faced by Irish workers in Scotland who did not speak English. Ó Grianna prefaces this account with the historical context, saying travel to Scotland was common since famine times and that:

Níl seandúine ar bith ar a’ bhaile nár chaith leath a shaoghail i nAlbain, ó tháinig ann dó, go dtí go rabh sé ró-aosta le lá cruaidh oibre a dhéanamh. D’imthigh cuid aca as Rann na Feirste agus gan aon fhocal Béarla aca.

[There isn’t an old person in the place who hasn’t spent half his life in Scotland, since he was grown, until he was too old to do a hard day’s work. Some of them left Rannafast without a word of English.]<sup>2</sup>

Séamus’s brother, Seosamh Mac Grianna, noted a possible family connection with Scotland in his autobiographical *Mo Bhealach Féin* (My Own Way, 1965), as well as the cultural affinity between the two countries:

Bhí dáimh agam le h-Albain. Tír Ghaedhealach í, agus ní thig a sgéal a sgaradh ó sgéal na h-Éireann. Tá trácht ar chuid de laochraidh na h-Alban i mbéal-oideas Thír Chonaill. Agus chonnaic mé i leabhar uair amháin, bíodh sé ceart nó ná bíodh, gur as Albain a tháinig Clann Mhic Grianna, gur de phór Lochlannach iad, agus go dtáinig siad anall i n-aimsir na nGallóglach. Dubhairt mé liom féin go siubhalfainn go h-Albain.

<sup>1</sup> Séamus Ó Grianna, *Rann na Feirste* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Press Náisiúnta, [1943]) 202. Translations throughout are the author’s own unless otherwise credited.

<sup>2</sup> Ó Grianna, *Rann na Feirste* 201.

[I had an affinity with Scotland. It is a Gaelic country, and it is impossible to separate its story from the story of Ireland. Some of the heroes of Scotland are mentioned in Donegal folklore. And I once saw in a book, whether it's right or not, that the Mac Grianna clan came from Scotland, that they were of Viking stock, and that they came over in the days of the Gallowglasses. I said to myself that I'd walk to Scotland.]<sup>3</sup>

These are just two examples from canonical Irish-language authors that refer to the historical and cultural connections between Ireland and Scotland, to the intricacies and challenges of language contact, and to how Irish-language references to Scotland can depict both foreignness and familiarity.

On the other side of the Irish sea, Scottish Gaelic song and poetry, in particular, demonstrate a marked tendency to express a sense of cultural kinship with Ireland in sources from a wide range of genres and time periods.<sup>4</sup> The purpose of the present essay is to examine whether there may be any similar sense of Gaelic kinship in the new Irish-language prose literature, created in a post-independent Ireland. As many scholars have noted, this literature was part of a nation-building project which sought to re-Gaelicise the new state and create a new generation of Irish-language readers;<sup>5</sup> but to what extent was Scotland included in the conception of Gaelicness that this new literature fostered and promoted? How was this affinity to Scotland, as mentioned above by Mac Grianna, represented and, perhaps, resisted in the prose works that did depict connections between Scotland and Ireland?

Texts across various genres of Irish-language prose in the last century will be examined: (auto)biography, fiction, travel-writing, teen fiction and translation for children. Where available, I will be examining archive material that sheds a light on publication and editorial decisions – in particular, the state publisher, An Gúm's,

<sup>3</sup> Seosamh Mac Grianna, *Mo Bhealach Féin agus Dá mBíodh Ruball ar an Éan* (Dublin: Oifig an tSoláthair, 1940) 137. It is worth noting that the folklore database, dúchas.ie, contains many references to Scotland, particularly from the Ulster counties, which is unsurprising given their close proximity to one another.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Wilson McLeod, *Divided Gaels: Gaelic Cultural Identities in Scotland and Ireland c.1200-c.1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Siorcha Nic Lochlainn, "Staidéar Comparáideach ar Ghnéithe d'Amhráin na Gaeilge in Éirinn agus in Albain" (PhD diss., Queen's University Belfast, 2011); Sorley MacLean, *Dàin do Eimhir* (Glasgow: William MacLellan, 1943); Runrig's song "Fuaim a Bhlair," track 4 on *Recovery* (CD, Ridge, 1981).

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Philip O'Leary, *Gaelic Prose in the Irish Free State: 1922-1939* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2004).

correspondence and contemporary reviews of the works. It is also worth noting that An Gúm did make efforts, in 1935, to find material to translate from Scottish Gaelic into Irish, but did not find anything that they regarded as suitable, and this venture was not pursued.<sup>6</sup>

### (Auto)biographical Accounts

The Gaeltacht biographies from Donegal often depict their young protagonists being hired out for the summer season to rich farmers “ar an Lagán” (a geographical area covering Letterkenny, and parts of counties Derry and Tyrone). Here, they were often employed by people they called “Albanaigh” – not Scots in this context, but a term used for Protestants.<sup>7</sup> As they became older teenagers they would go on to pass half the year in Scotland working at various jobs: “tattie-hoking” (picking potatoes), thinning turnips, picking berries for farmers, as well as other manual work – for example, breaking stones, and working at various ironworks. As Ó Grianna noted above, this was a journey that many of them continued to make for much of their lives. The accounts of this labour are mostly grim, describing back-breaking work for very long hours and having to wander around hungry, looking for the next job when the work dried up. The income from this work was, however, an economic necessity, as Niall Ó Domhnaill pointed out: “is í an obair shéasúrach in Albain is mó a chuidigh leis na cinn teaghlaigh greim a choinneáil ar an bhaile.” [It was mostly the seasonal work in Scotland that helped the heads of household keep a hold on their home place.]<sup>8</sup>

Micí Mac Gabhann’s account of his time in Scotland in *Rotha Mór an tSaoil* (The Great Wheel of Life, 1959) highlights the poor working conditions and the scant regard the Scots had for the Irish:

Cha rabh meas ar bith ar na hÉireannaigh in Albain san am, agus le cois gach drochúsáid eile dá dtugtaí dóibh cha rabh siad ag fáil páighe ar bith a bhí inchomórtais leis an obair a níodh siad. Bhí an bia an-olc fosta agus mar a bhí fhios againne go maith, cha rabh an leabaidh féin ag daoine le síneadh uirthi fá shásamh.

[There was no respect for the Irish in Scotland at that time, and as well as every other abuse they were given, they weren’t getting a fair wage for the

<sup>6</sup> Gearóidín Uí Laighléis, *Gallán an Ghúim* (Baile Átha Cliath: Coiscéim, 2017) 35.

<sup>7</sup> See Niall Ó Domhnaill, *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Gúm, 1977).

<sup>8</sup> Niall Ó Domhnaill, *Na Glúnta Rosannacha* (Baile Átha Cliath: Oifig an tSoláthair, 1952) 66.

work that they were doing. The food was dreadful too and as we well knew, even the beds we had to lie on weren't satisfactory.]<sup>9</sup>

This ultimately led Mac Gabhann to go on to seek his fortune in America. Hiúdaí Sheáinín Ó Domhnaill's story (published in 1940) is similarly bleak:

Ach caidé bhí le déanamh i dtír choimhthighigh [sic] nuair nach dtiocfaidhe a dhath 'fhagháil? Chaithfidhe ghabhail isteach agus luighe i gcoillidh ar phutógaí folamha go maidin. Agus, b'fhéidir, ocht nó naoi 'laetha a chathamh ar a' dóigh sin.

[But what could you do in a foreign land when you couldn't get anything? You'd have to go to a forest and lie on an empty stomach till morning. And maybe spend eight or nine days that way.]<sup>10</sup>

He went on to say: "Ní rabh mé ariamh i n-Albain nach mbíodh mo sháith lúthgháire orm ghá fhágáil agus a' tarraingt ar na sean-fhóide." [I was never in Scotland when I wasn't delighted enough to leave and go back to the old sod.]<sup>11</sup> He also included many tales of fighting and drinking of the money they earned when they were there – a frequent theme in Ó Grianna's *oeuvre* too. This, of course, led to the running joke in Myles na gCopaleen's *An Béal Bocht* (The Poor Mouth, 1941) of characters who were "ar an drabhlás in Albain" – carousing in Scotland.<sup>12</sup>

Traditional singer Róise Rua's account of her experience in Scotland (first published in 1988) doesn't shy away from the hardships of the work, but she also notes the positive impact it had on her home place:

De réir mar a thoisigh na daoine a ghabháil go hAlbain a shaothrú tháinig feabhas ar na tithe fríd an tír. Chonaic ár muintir an sórt tithe a bhí acu thall; agus an saothrú a thugadh siad leo, bhí sé ina chuidiú le dóigh a chur ar a gcuid tithe féin sa bhaile.

<sup>9</sup> Míci Mac Gabhann, *Rotha Mór an tSaoil* (Indreabhán: Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 1996) 83.

<sup>10</sup> Eoghan Ó Domhnaill, *Scéal Hiúdaí Sheáinín* (Baile Átha Cliath: Oifig an tSoláthair, 1940) 74. This was Hiúdaí Sheáinín Ó Domhnaill's account of his life as related to his great-nephew, Eoghan Ó Domhnaill.

<sup>11</sup> Ó Domhnaill, *Scéal Hiúdaí Sheáinín* 225.

<sup>12</sup> Myles na gCopaleen, *An Béal Bocht* (Corcaigh: Mercier Press, 1964 [1941]) 55, 56, 59, 60, 62.

[As people started going to Scotland to work, the houses across the country improved. Our people saw the kind of house they had over there, and the earnings they brought back helped them fix up their own houses.]<sup>13</sup>

The recounting of her experience of Scotland is, on the whole, more upbeat than that of Hiúdaí Sheáinín Ó Domhnaill or Míci Mac Gabhann. She mentions the learning of Scottish dances – Gay Gordons, the Highland and the Corn Rigs, and says: “Caithfidh mé a rá go raibh muintir na hAlban riamh iontach maith dúinn agus gur chuidigh siad linn ar dhóigh ar bith a dtiocfadh leo.” [I must say that the Scottish people were always very good to us and helped us in any way that they could.]<sup>14</sup> It is noteworthy that one of the rare biographical accounts of life in Scotland from a woman’s perspective is so positive; and we will be able to compare this with a fictional female protagonist shortly.

### Séamus Ó Grianna

Séamus Ó Grianna also spent three seasons in Scotland, and this proved to be a formative experience for him which furnished him with plenty of material for his fictional work: there are hundreds of references to Scotland across his *oeuvre*. His own account of this time in *Nuair a Bhí mé Óg* (When I Was Young, 1942) gives the same hard labour narrative mentioned by others, as well as pride in being able to send money home to his mother.<sup>15</sup> However, a defining moment in his life comes towards the end of the text when Frainc ‘ac Gairbheath introduces him to Rabbie Burns’ poetry, and he becomes fascinated with it: “Chaith mé deich lá ar shiubhal le Frainc i dtír dhúithche Raibí. [...] Ach sin an tseachtain a b’fhearr a chaith mé riamh. An tseachtain a chuir an dliaíóg mhullaigh ar mo chuid léinn.” [I spent ten days in Rabbie’s native land with Frainc [...] But that was the best week I ever spent. The week that completed my education.]<sup>16</sup> The last chapter in this account tells of the letters he sends from Scotland to his first love, the redhaired Sorcha Dhónaill Óig, his own “Highland Mary” as he called her, in reference to Burns,

<sup>13</sup> Pádraig Ua Cnáimhsí, *Róise Rua* (Baile Átha Cliath: Sáirséal Ó Marcaigh, 1988) 60. An account of Róise Mhic Ghrianna’s (née Ní Cholla) life as told to Pádraig Ua Cnáimhsí.

<sup>14</sup> Ua Cnáimhsí, *Róise Rua* 77.

<sup>15</sup> “D’oibr mé ansin i rith an tsamhraidh agus bhí ceithre phunta agus corradh sgillingeach saothraithe agam i dtús an fhómhair. Chuir mé na ceithre punta go hÉirinn chuig mo mháthair agus bhí bród orm.” [I worked there [in Scotland] during the summer and I had earned four pounds and a few shillings by the beginning of autumn. I sent the four pounds to Ireland to my mother and I was proud.] Séamus Ó Grianna, *Nuair a Bhí mé Óg* (Baile Átha Cliath agus Corcaigh: Cló Mercier, 1979) 184.

<sup>16</sup> Ó Grianna, *Nuair a Bhí mé Óg* 208.

and says “[bhí] ní ba mhó de chuid cainte Bhurns iontu ná a bhí de mo chuid cainte féin.” [There was more of Burns’ talk in them [the letters] than there was of my own.]<sup>17</sup>

This fascination with Burns was to continue throughout his life, something which can clearly be seen in Ó Grianna’s 1966 novel *Bean Ruadh de Dhálach* (A Redhaired O’Donnell Woman), his best work according to Alan Titley,<sup>18</sup> which abounds with references to Scotland, and which in many ways mirrored Ó Grianna’s own experience. The story follows Róise Ní Dhomhnaill, the titular Bean Ruadh de Dhálach, and her love interest, Murchadh Óg. Róise becomes the first woman from Ros na bhFeannóg to spend a season in Scotland, encouraging other women to do the same, and so sets off a series of events that leaves the townland depopulated due to emigration, fulfilling a prophecy that “Bean Ruadh de Dhálach” would lift the curse from Ros na bhFeannóg. This curse, the novel leads us to believe, is the poverty in which they live and the hardship the women endure while the menfolk are earning a living in Scotland. While it is suggested early in the novel that the finding of Armada gold would alleviate their poverty and so lift the curse, emigration is ultimately shown to be the only escape, and Scotland, in particular, is continually depicted as necessary for their survival: “Is maith Albain ann, má tá obair chruaidh féin inntí. Ní bheithidhe beo gan í.” [It is good that Scotland is there, even if there is hard work there. We wouldn’t survive without it.]<sup>19</sup>

An Gúm published this work and Micheál Breathnach was one of the internal readers who reviewed the novel’s suitability for publication. His report reads as follows:

Scéal atá ann faoi’n saol a bhíodh ag daoine i mbaile beag bocht i dTír Chonaill. Tá an t-ábhar sin saothraithe go maith ag an údar cheana féin agus níl mórán nua sa scéal seo. [...] An t-aon locht a bheadh agamsa air go bhfuil an iomarca Rabbie Burns ann – ach sin sean-phort ag an údar seo agus ní dhéanann sé dochar ró-mhór don scéal seo.

[It is a story about the life that people had in a poor small town in Donegal. This subject has been done before by the author and there isn’t much new in this story. [...] The only fault I would find with it is that there is too much Rabbie Burns in it – but that is a favourite topic of this author and it doesn’t do too much harm to the story.]<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Ó Grianna, *Nuair a Bhí mé Óg* 221.

<sup>18</sup> Alan Titley, *An tÚrscéal Gaeilge* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1991) 267.

<sup>19</sup> Séamus Ó Grianna, *Bean Ruadh de Dhálach* (Baile Átha Cliath: Oifig an tSoláthair, 1966) 5.

<sup>20</sup> Report dated 12 January 1960, file N1666, “Bean Ruadh de Dhálach,” An Gúm collection, The National Archives of Ireland.

Tomás Ó hÉighneacháin was the second reader, who also recommended that references to Burns be omitted, and Ó Grianna was subsequently asked to amend the text. He replied saying:

Tá mé toilteanach air sin a dhéanamh. Tá ar ndóighe corr-áit a bhfuil sé sa gground-plan agam agus tuigfear nárbh fhéidir a bhaint amach gan dochar a dhéanamh don sgéal. Acht geallaim go mbainfe mé amach 90% de na quotations agus rudaí eile nach ndéanfaidh dochar ar bith – cuir i gcás “John Anderson, ma jo, John.”

[I am willing to do that. Of course, there is the odd place where it’s in the “ground plan” and it won’t be possible to omit things without harming the story. But I assure you that I will take out 90% of the quotations and other things that won’t harm it – for example, “John Anderson, ma jo, John.”]<sup>21</sup>

The Gúm files contain the handwritten pages of the original manuscript that were later revised by Ó Grianna in preparation for print. These pages contain extracts from Burns’ “Ode to a Mouse,” “John Anderson, ma jo, John,” “The Vision” and “Of a’ the airts the wind can blow.” The references to “Ode to a Mouse” are perhaps the most significant as regards the “ground plan” that Ó Grianna had originally envisaged. In these pages, Róise points out to Murchadh the field in which Burns saw the mouse which led to his famous poem and explains to Murchadh her own affinity to the mouse. The amended version of the text is much truncated and reads as follows in the published edition of the book:

I gcionn tamaill thoisigh sí a chainnte léithe féin i mBéarla.

“Caidé atá tú a rádh?” arsa Murchadh Óg.

“Dán as leabhar a bhí agam nuair a bhí mé i nGlasgó,” arsa Róise. Agus thoisigh sí gur dhubhairt sí an dán dó.

“Ní thuigim a’ treas focal de,” arsa Murchadh Óg.

Mhínigh sí an fhilidheacht dó.

[After a while she started talking to herself in English.

“What are you saying?” asked Murchadh Óg.

“A poem from a book that I had when I was in Glasgow,” said Róise. And she recited the poem for him.

“I don’t understand every third word of it,” said Murchadh Óg.

She explained the poetry to him.]<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> File N1666, An Gúm collection.

<sup>22</sup> Ó Grianna, *Bean Ruadh de Dhálach* 260.



This “corrected” version reads as rather dull and devoid of context given that there is no indication as to what the poem contained, while Ó Grianna’s original text has clear metaphorical resonance for Róise – explaining to Murchadh that it frightens her as a poem: “Is minic a chuireas sé eagla orm. Eagla roimh an tsaoghal. Eagla go n-éireochadh domh féin mar a d’éirigh don luchóg.” [It often frightens me. Frightens me about life. Frightens me that the same thing will happen to me that happened to the mouse.]<sup>23</sup> It is a pivotal moment in the story that foreshadows her ultimate decision to seek freedom in America rather than settling down in Ros na bhFeannóg with Murchadh. Her exposure to Scots poetry plays a significant role in her character development, just as it did for the author himself, and this context is lost in the pared-down version.

While the other references to Burns’s poetry are of lesser significance to the plot of the novel, they are an interesting insight into the author’s exposure to Scottish culture and demonstrate his keenness to include them in the narrative. An Gúm’s readers’ reluctance to include them may point to an ideological stance against having extracts from English-language poetry (even in Scots dialect) in an Irish-language book, although this is not explicitly articulated in the correspondence.

As in the biographical writing above, Scotland is set up in opposition to the home place in *Bean Ruadh de Dhálach*; the protagonists are often keen to return home, but equally, show an understanding that their labour in Scotland supports the home place’s survival and upkeep (something also specifically mentioned by Róise Rua above). It is, perhaps, in *Bean Ruadh de Dhálach* that we see the most positive depiction of this relationship with Scotland, even if Róise ultimately decides to emigrate to America. These texts from Donegal writers don’t often depict a particularly deep cultural engagement or affinity with Scotland, although Ó Grianna did attempt to do so in his original manuscript. The protagonists often remain among Irish people whilst there (Mac Gabhann even perceiving a disdain for the Irish among Scots), and it is also worth noting that the language encounter is with English rather than Gàidhlig in these accounts.<sup>24</sup>

## Travel Writing

In contrast, we also have several accounts of leisure travel in Scotland in this period: one such unusual book published in 1947 was *Cuairt ar Albain* (A Visit to Scotland) by “Beirt Shiubhlóirí,” a pseudonym for Peig Ní Ghoidín and Nuala Ní

<sup>23</sup> File N1666, An Gúm collection.

<sup>24</sup> Of course, this would primarily have been for geographical reasons: i.e., the Irish workers were mainly in English-speaking areas.

Ghríobhtha, which was an account of a hiking trip they took around Scotland in 1935, complete with seven photographs. Women writers of any kind were rather rare at the time, and this seems to be the only book that these particular writers ever undertook.<sup>25</sup>

The manuscript was sent to three internal reviewers for An Gúm, all of whom damned it with faint praise although they did deem it worth publishing. Torna (Tadhg Ó Donnchadha) noted: “Rudaí beaga coitianta ná cuimhneochadh fear ortha go deó, ní dhéinid na mná so dearmad ortha, agus is féidir leo greas maith cainnte do cheapadh ortha!” [Small everyday things that a man would never think of, these women don’t overlook, and they can do a good bit of talking about them!]<sup>26</sup> He noted that while it was by no means an excellent book, he thought its value lay in its suitability for adult learners of Irish and that it might encourage others to write about their “foreign travels.”

Torna also noted that Professor Watson’s “History of Placenames of Scotland” should be consulted for the correct versions of placenames. The Gúm correspondence also shows that the difficulty in finding “correct” versions of Gaelic placenames and people’s names in Scotland had discouraged Seosamh Mac Grianna from translating *The Legend of Montrose* several years earlier.<sup>27</sup> This certainly demonstrates the regard in which the Gaelic names of Scotland were held by Irish speakers, but ultimately led to Mac Grianna translating *Ivanhoe*, which is set in England.

The placenames in *Cuairt ar Albain* were printed in a glossary list at the back of the book with their English equivalent and referenced the source for the Gaelic version. Professor Watson’s work was indeed consulted, as were the Ordnance Survey of Scotland and the newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis*. An Gúm itself is noted as a source and some are merely noted as “lom-aistriú” – a bare translation.

Domhnall Mac Grianna was the second reader for the manuscript and also noted:

Is fíor nach bhfuil rud ar bith mór ná iongantach fá na himtheachta sin ná fá’n gcaoi i n-a innistear iad; ach mar sin féin rud neamh-ghnáthach a macasamhail sa Ghaedhilg, agus ar an adhbhar sin sílim gur fiú a gcur i gcló.

[It is true that there isn’t anything great or extraordinary about the events [in the narrative] or the way in which they’re recounted; but nevertheless

<sup>25</sup> See Riona Nic Congáil and Máirín Nic Eoin, “Writing in Irish, 1900-2013,” in *A History of Modern Irish Women’s Literature*, ed. Heather Ingman and Cliona Ó Gallchoir (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) 334-64.

<sup>26</sup> File N630, “Cuairt ar Albain,” An Gúm collection.

<sup>27</sup> File A124, “Ivanhoe,” An Gúm collection.

they are uncommon in Irish, and for that reason, I think they would be worth printing.]<sup>28</sup>

Fiachra Éilgeach was the third reader who was consulted and sent back a long review detailing the faults he found in the book, chief amongst which was the following: “Is mór an iongnadh liom nár chuireadar eólas ar an bhfocal atá ar KILT sar ar fhágadar Éire ná tar éis casadh abhaile dóibh!” [It is very surprising to me that they didn’t learn the word for KILT before they left Ireland or after they came back!]<sup>29</sup> Presumably, the writers had included the English word in the original manuscript and the published book uses “filleadh beag.” Éilgeach went on to complain of the overuse of adjectives in their descriptions of places and outlines the many faults he found in the Irish. All the same, he concluded that it should be published.

*Cuairt ar Albain* is mostly a descriptive account of Scottish landscapes, how and where the authors travelled, who they met and where they stayed on their two-week hike. The women do encounter a Gàidhlig speaker for the first time in Oban and after much difficulty in understanding each other, they switch to English. It is a short episode, but perhaps surprisingly, given the indignation surrounding the use of “kilt” and the concern regarding placenames, this event was not referred to at all in the correspondence with An Gúm. Any engagement with cultural identity in Scotland is mostly confined to “bonnie” landscapes and the difficulty in finding Catholic mass on Sunday, and the editorial engagement with the text seems to have only been concerned with extrinsic cultural signifiers.

Another example of travel writing in Scotland is a chapter in *Siúlach Scéalach* (A Traveller with Stories, 1968), a book made up of a series of articles that had first been published in the *Irish Independent* by Eibhlín Ní Mhurchú. The first chapter is an account of her honeymoon which was spent in Uidhist a Deas (South Uist) in 1949. It was Calum McLean, brother of poet Sorley and a folklore collector in both Ireland and Scotland, who helped her organise the trip and even booked her accommodation. Ní Mhurchú credited her one phrase in Gàidhlig with preferential treatment during her trip through the Hebrides:

“Bheil Gáilic agad?” arsa mise. “Thá go leor,” ar seisean. Thairis sin n’fhéadfainn dul leis an nGháilic [sic] mar nár thuigeamar féin a chéile. Ach ba leor domhsa an méid sin; thuig sé siúd gur Ghael mé agus go raibh báidh eadrainn. Fuair eas amach uaidh gur de shíol uasal Mhic Dhomhnaill é, go

<sup>28</sup> File N630, An Gúm collection.

<sup>29</sup> File N630, An Gúm collection. Emphasis is Éilgeach’s own.

raibh sé ar scoil fara Cholm Beag agus go raibh na trucaillí fáilte aige roimh Éireannaigh agus go mór mhór roimh Ghaeilgeoirí.

[“Do you speak Gaelic?” I asked. “I do,” he replied. Beyond that we couldn’t go on with Gaelic as we didn’t understand each other. But it was enough for me; he understood that I was a Gael and that we had an affinity to one another. I found out that he was descended from the noble MacDonald clan, that he was at school with Colm Beag and that he was very welcoming to Irish people and particularly to Irish speakers.]<sup>30</sup>

This particular conversation results in Ní Mhurchú getting a bed on the boat which she had previously been told was full and buoyed by her success with “Bheil Gáilic agad?” she goes on to use it on waiting staff in Harris to persuade them to bring them the fish on a Friday that their “Catholic consciences” would let them eat, rather than the meat that was being served.

Of course, the biggest difference between this travel writing and the Donegal experience above is that these writers had the leisure time to engage with the language and culture of Scotland. Perhaps the nature of travel writing is to exoticise the local culture to some degree, no matter how close it might be to the traveller’s own culture. As travel-writing critic Carl Thompson says:

All travel writing must, arguably, engage in an act of othering [...] since every travel account is premised on the assumption that it brings news of people and places that are to some degree unfamiliar and ‘other’ to the audience.<sup>31</sup>

This can be seen to some extent in both these narratives in the mutual incomprehension of the Gaelic language, and perhaps more particularly in Ní Mhurchú’s more extensive interactions with the local people in the Hebrides. We can see a marked “othering” of the inhabitants of the islands: she remarks on their pronunciation of English words, discusses Irish politics with a Miss Shand whose fiancé was killed in Belfast, notes the religious affiliations of the islands and various characters, and also observes that there were only traditional Scottish dances at the céilí.

<sup>30</sup> Éibhlín Ní Mhurchú, *Siúlach Scéalach* (Baile Átha Cliath: Cló Grianréime, 1968) 8.

<sup>31</sup> Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing: The New Critical Idiom* (New York: Routledge, 2011) 133.

## Fiction for Teenagers

It is perhaps surprising that, other than the Donegal writers' experience of working there, the most abundant references to Scotland can be found in teen fiction. Seán Tóibín was a well-known Munster translator whose translations of Neil Munro's work were particularly lauded.<sup>32</sup> His interest in Scotland, particularly in the Scottish Gaeltacht, culminated in his work for teenagers published in 1958 under the title *Oileán an Anró* (The Island of Hardship). It was first submitted to An Gúm in 1943 and had the contemporary backdrop of World War II: four teenage boys from Connacht climb aboard an abandoned ship in a storm (which turns out to have both a dog and an ape aboard, who can do tricks) and are eventually washed ashore on Eilean nan Rón off Oronsay. There they discover a dead Italian soldier, find elusive Spanish gold, encounter an "ollphiast" [monster] with eight legs, as well as pirates who are stealing sheep. At just 143 pages, this short novel is certainly an action-packed page turner. Eilean nan Rón actually turns out not to be uninhabited as they first thought, as they find Alastair living there, a shepherd who speaks Gàidhlig. His nieces Anna and Móróg from Mull also happen to be visiting him to help him since he sprained his foot. Not only that, but it is explained that Móróg had just spent six months on Rathlin Island with an aunt, and so spoke Irish very well which facilitates communication between Alastair and the boys.

One reviewer claimed this was the first Irish-language novel to use the Scottish Gaeltacht as its setting and marvelled at it being a Munsterman who made such an undertaking:

Sé seo an chéad scéal nua-Ghaeilge a bhain úsáid as Gaeltacht na hAlban agus — an ní gur rinne na hAlbannaigh féin faillí ann — níor dhearmad an t-údar so cabhair na teangan dúchasaí: agus is mór an mhaise ar an scéal an fiche éigin abairt simplí de'n Ghaidhlig. Agus féach — thar a bhfacais riamh — is Deasmhuimhneach an t-údar!

[This is the first story in Irish that has used the Scottish Gaeltacht [as a setting] and — something that the Scots have been neglectful in — the author did not overlook using the native language: and the twenty or so sentences in Gàidhlig greatly enhance it. And behold — beyond anything you've ever seen — the author is a South Munsterman!]<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> See Uí Laighléis, *Gallán an Ghúim* 89-131 for a comprehensive account of Tóibín's work for An Gúm.

<sup>33</sup> "Síol Chlann Uisnigh," *Irish Examiner*, 12 June 1958. It is worth noting that Tóibín's translations of Neil Munro's work were also set in the Scottish Gaeltacht. *Iain Áluinn*

In fact, it was the dialect in which it was written that caused problems with the manuscript in An Gúm. The reader, Tomás Ó hÉighneacháin, was not happy with Tóibín's depiction of the teenagers' Connacht dialect and thus was not convinced that his Gàidhlig would be up to scratch either:

Is eol dom cáil a bheith ar Sheán Tóibín mar scríobhnóir i nGaedhilg na Mumhan, ach níl sa "gConnachtas" atá anseo ach manglam mí-chruinn. [...] Maidir le canamhaint na hAlban, ní ughdar mise leis an gcanamhaint sin, ach mara bhfuil eolas níos fearr ag an ughar uirthé ná tá ar "chanamhaint na gConnachtach" ní bheadh mórán muinigne agam as. Tríd is tríd ní mholfainn don Roinn an Ghaedhilg seo a fhoillsiú sa riocht ina bhfuil sí faoi láthair.

[I know that Seán Tóibín is famous as a writer of Munster Irish, but this "Connacht Irish" is an inaccurate hodgepodge [...] As regards the Scottish dialect, I am not an expert on that dialect, but if the author has not more knowledge of it than of the "Connacht dialect" I wouldn't be too confident of it. All in all, I wouldn't recommend that the Department publish this Irish in the state in which it currently is.]<sup>34</sup>

What was not alluded to in the review is that it might be more surprising that Mórág from Mull (Alastair's niece) has picked up some Munsterisms at the other end of the country – in Rathlin, where she supposedly learned her Irish. Intermittent correspondence regarding questions of dialect and spelling continued until 1947, but it was Sáirséal agus Dill who ended up publishing the book in 1958 rather than An Gúm.<sup>35</sup>

An interesting feature of the published book is that Alastair's Gàidhlig is not translated for the most part, but there are some footnotes along the way to help the young reader with unfamiliar phrases and structures. For example, "Tha sin a' còrdadh ris" is footnoted with "Taithníonn sin leis" [He likes that], but the rest of Alastair's speech in this instance is not glossed: "má tha duine ag iarraidh a bhith carthannach ri cú chan eil ni a b'fhearr a dheanadh e na an ceann aige a shlíobadh."

(John Splendid, 1931) also contains some examples of Scottish Gaelic as well as an explanatory appendix.

<sup>34</sup> File N1094, "Oileán na Sceilimise," An Gúm collection.

<sup>35</sup> There is no explicit reason given for not publishing the work in the file. One can surmise that paper shortages during the war may have delayed the publication process to some extent and that Tóibín decided to try his luck elsewhere.

[If a person wants to be kind to a dog there is nothing better to do than stroke his head.]<sup>36</sup> The author, and evidently the publishers in this case, presumed that the young readers would be able to deal with this, and whether they envisaged this as comprehension or simply exposure to a language that was close to their own is unclear.

Another set of teen novels that featured Scotland was Íosóld Ní Dheirg's trilogy,<sup>37</sup> following a young protagonist Eoghan Ó Máilligh, and his exploits in France and Scotland through the Jacobite rising of 1715 and beyond. An Irish-language series for this age group is still a rare occurrence and the publication of the series was not without its challenges: the first novel, *Eachtra an Mháilligh i dTír Laoisigh* (Ó Máilligh's Adventures in France) was published by An Gúm in 1973, but the sequel *Eachtraí an Mháilligh in Albain* (Ó Máilligh's Adventures in Scotland) was rejected by editors on the basis of the language being too difficult.<sup>38</sup> Correspondence regarding the sequel continued intermittently until 1979, when Ní Dheirg requested the manuscript be sent back to her. It was then published by Foilseacháin Náisiúnta Teoranta in 1982, and the final instalment of the story, *Eachtra Róise* (Róise's Adventure), was published by Coiscéim in 1993, twenty years after the first book's appearance.<sup>39</sup> As can be deduced from the titles, the first novel is mostly set in France (Tír Laoisigh) as Ó Máilligh serves in the French army, but in the second novel, he ends up accompanying James Stuart, the Old Pretender, back to Scotland from France.

Ní Dheirg was the librarian for the Linguistic Institute of Ireland (Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann) and was a vocal proponent of having a wider perspective for languages, and increased contact of Irish with other European languages. These novels include some English (including an attempt or two at Scots), as well as French and Latin phrases, none of which are glossed in any way, which again suggests an expectation that her teen readers would understand them. In fact, one of An Gúm's complaints of the second novel was that there was

<sup>36</sup> Seán Tóibín, *Oileán an Anró* (Baile Átha Cliath: Sáirséal agus Dill, 1958) 65.

<sup>37</sup> Íosóld Ní Dheirg was the daughter of Tomás Ó Deirg who served as Minister for Education in 1932-1939 and 1940-1948.

<sup>38</sup> File N1954, "Eachtraí an Mháilligh in Albain," An Gúm collection. "Is é a thuairim go bhfuil stíl ró-sheanaimseartha, ródheacair agus róleadránach ag an údar." [It is [the reviewer's] opinion that the author's style is too old-fashioned, too difficult and too boring.]

<sup>39</sup> It is interesting to note that *Eachtraí an Mháilligh i dTír Laoisigh* and *Eachtra Róise* are both listed in the revised canon of Irish-language novels in a recent critical study, *Úrscéalta na Gaeilge*, while *Eachtraí an Mháilligh in Albain* is not. Ronan Doherty, Brian Ó Conchubhair, and Philip O'Leary, ed., *Úrscéalta na Gaeilge* (An Spidéal: Cló Iar-Chonnacht, 2017) 289-99.

too much Latin in it. It is an odd oversight, however, that she makes no reference to even the existence of Gàidhlig in any of these books. The cast of characters meet Highlanders on their adventures throughout Scotland, so this type of language encounter could easily have been embedded in the narrative. The trilogy is, however, a meticulously researched and informative account of a pivotal period in both Scottish and Irish history.

### Réics Carló in Albain

Another significant series in the Irish-language canon was, of course, Cathal Ó Sándair's most famous creation, Réics Carló, the private detective from Harcourt Street who had been solving cases all over Ireland as well as in Mexico, China, and even on the moon in the 1940s and 50s. After a lull in his prolific output in the 60s and 70s, a press release from Bord na Gaeilge in September 1992 stated that new Réics books were expected "le heachtraí nua [ar] Oileán Mhanann, in Albain, i Sasana agus sa Bhreatain Bheag" [with new adventures on the Isle of Man, in Scotland, in England and in Wales].<sup>40</sup>

At this juncture, *Réics Carló ar Oileán Mhanann* (Réics Carló on the Isle of Man) had actually already been published in 1984, however, the other three books in the series had not. The manuscripts of *Réics Carló i dTír an Dragúin Dheirg* (Réics Carló in the Land of the Red Dragon – set in Wales) and *Réics Carló i dTír Rí Artúir* (Réics Carló in the Land of King Arthur – set in England) can be found in the National Archives,<sup>41</sup> but, while there is a file for *Réics Carló in Albain* (Réics Carló in Scotland) on record, it appears to have been lost. This mini-series of books seems to have as its aim the showcasing of Celtic culture and connections between the neighbouring countries, and particularly the specific Celtic language in each case. *Réics Carló ar Oileán Mhanann* includes Manx, "Réics Carló i dTír an Dragúin Dheirg" has Welsh and "Réics Carló i dTír Rí Artúir" even has Cornish.

In *Réics Carló ar Oileán Mhanann*, Manx proverbs, songs, poetry, and prayers are heavily featured – as well as crime-solving – and interestingly, a Gàidhlig song, "Iain Ghlinn Cuaich," is sung at a music session. Presumably a Scottish song was chosen here to showcase how Gaelic songs travelled across regions, and there is an obvious pride shown in this pan-Celtic identity – broader than the very Irish national patriotism shown in Ó Sándair's earlier works:<sup>42</sup> "Bhí dúil as cuimse aige

<sup>40</sup> File N2050, "Réics Carló i dTír an Dragúin Dheirg," An Gúm collection.

<sup>41</sup> File N2050, "Réics Carló i dTír an Dragúin Dheirg," An Gúm collection.

<sup>42</sup> See Róisín Adams, "Baile Átha Cliath Abú! Cathal Ó Sándair agus an Suíomh Uirbeach i Litríocht Ghaeilge na nÓg," in *Thar an Tairseach: Aistí ar Litríocht agus ar Chultúr na nÓg*,



sa cheol Gaelach. Ach ar ndóigh, ba chuid den oidhreacht Cheilteach é uile – ar nós an cheoil sáralainn a bhí fós ar fáil ar Mhanainn bheag mhín féin.” [He really loved Gaelic music. But, of course, it was all part of the Celtic heritage – like the beautiful music that you could still hear on the exquisite little Isle of Man.]<sup>43</sup>

The manuscript for “Réics Carló in Albain” was eventually tracked down in the Ó Sándair family’s own collection.<sup>44</sup> This story takes place on the Isle of Skye and introduces Réics Carló’s good friend, private detective Ailean Mac Leoid [sic], who is on a mysterious case for the European Community. When his body is found to have been buried alive, foul play is suspected and Réics’s services are called upon, and he travels to Skye along with his assistant Brian Ó Ruairc and his daughter Fionnuala. Réics Carló eventually discovers that Mac Leoid was investigating an illegal whiskey business being operated from the coast.

The manuscript includes many historical interludes, such as the following, which gives the young readers information on the history of the islands:

Thug Ailean in athchuidhne “Fuadach na nGael,” an tráth a raibh ar na mílte móra de dhaoine a mbaile agus a dtír a fhágáil chun ionad a dhéanamh do na caoirigh agus do na fianna. D’imigh daonra iomlán ó na hoileáin agus ón mórthír chuig Talamh an Éisc agus áiteanna eile thar lear.

[Ailean thought again of “The Highland Clearances” when thousands of people had to leave their home and land to make way for the sheep and the deer. A huge population left the islands and the mainland to go to Newfoundland and other places abroad.]<sup>45</sup>

This particular extract is a loaded one, which would have political and cultural significance for an Irish audience, given their own colonised history. The interwoven plot of strange characters taking over Skye for “devil worship” and to celebrate Black Mass also allows for the following informative excerpt:

[D]ódh an chailleach feasa dheireanach in Albain sa bhliain 1822. Bhíodh mná á ndó ó 1563, agus d’fhan an choir, an asarlaíocht, ar na reachtleabhair

ed. Róisín Adams, Claire Dunne, Caoimhe Nic Lochlainn (Baile Átha Cliath: *Leabhair COMHAR*, 2014) 135-56.

<sup>43</sup> Cathal Ó Sándair, *Réics Carló ar Oileán Mhanann* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Gúm, 1984) 116.

<sup>44</sup> I am much indebted to Joe Ó Sándair, Cathal Ó Sándair’s younger son, who searched for and loaned me the manuscript of “Réics Carló in Albain” from his own private collection.

<sup>45</sup> Cathal Ó Sándair, “Réics Carló in Albain,” Ó Sándair family private collection. Further references in the text are to this manuscript.

go dtí 1736. Tá seanfhocal acu anseo faoin ngnó, fiú amháin: “Ged is feairrd a’ chailleach a garadh, cha’n fheairrd i a losgadh” – cé gur maith don chailleach í a théamh, ní maith í a loscadh!<sup>46</sup>

[The last witch burning in Scotland was in 1822. Women were being burned from 1563 and the crime of witchcraft stayed in the law books until 1736. They even have a proverb here about the custom – “The old woman [witch] is the better of being warmed, but not of being burned!” [The proverb is first given in Scottish Gaelic and then translated into Irish.]]

It seems likely that Nicolson’s *Gaelic Proverbs* was used as a source text for the above proverb; indeed, references to Gàidhlig proverbs are plentiful throughout the novel.<sup>47</sup> Another character compares Irish and Scottish proverbs:

Chroith an freastalaí a cheann. “Seanfhocal atá againn ar an Oileán Sciathanach, a dhuine usail: Cha téid fiach air bial dúinte, ’s cha tog balbhan fianuis. Creidim go bhfuil seanfhocal cosúil leis sin agaibh in Éirinn: Is binn béal ina thost.”

[The server shook his head. “A proverb we have on the Isle of Skye, sir: Shut mouth incurs no debt, and dumb men give no evidence. I believe you have a similar proverb in Ireland: A mouth in its silence is sweet.”]

Here Ó Sándair depicts a Gaelic utopia in which everyone understands one another, and even has knowledge of one another’s proverbs. The Irish characters indeed marvel at the similarities between the languages: “B’ionadh leo go raibh Gáidhlig na hAlban chomh gar dá gcanúint féin, agus go háirithe chomh cosúil agus bhí sí don nGaeilge a labhraíonn na hUltaigh.” [They were surprised that Scottish Gaelic was so close to their own dialect, especially how similar it was to the Irish spoken in Ulster.] This is, of course, in direct contrast to the experience of the travellers in the previous section who found that their interactions in Irish with

<sup>46</sup> The discrepancy in the dates in this extract seems to stem from the case of Isabella Hay, “The Ross-shire Witch,” who was imprisoned for witchcraft in 1822 but not actually burned. See Edward J. Cowan and Lizanne Henderson, “The Last of the Witches? The Survival of Scottish Witch Belief,” in *The Scottish Witch-hunt in Context*, ed. Julian Goodare (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002) 214. It is unclear if Ó Sándair was using folk history here or if he had access to other sources.

<sup>47</sup> Translations of proverbs are taken from Alexander Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs* (Edinburgh: MacLachlan and Stewart, 1882).

Scottish Gaelic speakers were mutually incomprehensible. While Ó Sándair highlights the similarities, even the simplest phrases in Gàidhlig are glossed within the text: “Moran taing – go raibh maith agat.” [Thank you.]

Carló is shown to immerse himself completely in Gàidhlig culture on the Isle of Skye, going to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (a centre for language learning) to buy some Gàidhlig books, and listening to “Ráidíó na Gáidhealtachd” [Highland Radio]. He makes liberal references to national poets, Màiri Mhòr nan Òran and Donnchadh Bán, and to Gaelic song such as “Hó Ró Mo Nighean Donn Bhòidheach.” One of the villains even sings “Fear a’ Bhàta” to the unlucky Fionnuala who is kidnapped at one point in the novel (her kidnapping was a regrettably regular occurrence in the Réics Carló canon) and threatened with being thrown over a cliff. The inclusion of these elements in the narrative suggests Ó Sándair’s main impetus in writing this story was to chronicle some of the history and literature of Scotland, and Skye in particular, and to promote an awareness and understanding of Scottish language and culture among the young readership, as well as an appreciation for the cultural links between Ireland and Scotland.

While the 1992 press release mentioned above suggests that An Gúm fully intended to publish the other three books in this mini-series, there is no evidence to explain why they didn’t follow through with the other three novels. It is possible that sales of *Réics Carló ar Oileán Mhanann* were disappointing, and that the downturn in the economy in the 1980s meant that it was more difficult to publish and sell Irish-language material in the subsequent period.

### ***Eachtra san Afraic***

The final text I wish to examine is another unusual one, published in 1994: Tomás Mac Aodh Bhuí’s translation of Enid Blyton’s *The Secret Mountain* (1941), which he entitled *Eachtra san Afraic* (An Adventure in Africa) as it is indeed, mostly set on that continent. This is the third story in Blyton’s “Secret” series although the first two have never been translated into Irish. Peggy, Nora, Jack, and Mike’s parents have gone missing somewhere in “Africa,” but luckily enough their good friend Prince Paul has the resources to help them find them – namely, a private plane and a pilot – and they all set off for Africa. It turns out that their parents have been kidnapped by an African tribe who live in the “Secret Mountain,” and intend to make a human sacrifice to their sun god. Mac Aodh Bhuí domesticates the novel to a large extent: the opening scenes of the story are set in Dublin, and the four English children become three Irish ones, Colm, Deirdre and Nóra.

The unlikely Scottish connection is introduced through the character of Prince Paul. In Blyton’s original, he hails from the mythical Baronia, but in translation,

his father is the king of the Isle of Skye, and his name is, in fact, an Prionsa Eoin. An Prionsa Eoin's father came by his great wealth "ó thánghas ar ola amach ó chósta an Oileán Sciathánaigh" [since they found oil off the coast of the Isle of Skye].<sup>48</sup> Ranni and Pilescu, the prince's men in the original text, become distinctly Scottish: Somhairle (the pilot for the plane that is Paul / Eoin's birthday gift) and Captaen Domhnall: "Ba cheannaire cróga é [an Captaen Domhnall] nuair a bhí tíortha eile ag iarraidh an tOileán Sciathánach a ghabháil de bharr saibhreas ola."<sup>49</sup> [[Captaen Domhnall] was a fearless leader when other countries were trying to seize the Isle of Skye for its oil wealth.] The Irish text is heavily domesticated throughout, to the extent that it could be classed an adaptation of Blyton's original text.<sup>50</sup> The insertion of the references to Skye neutralises to some extent Blyton's foreignised imaginative elements, and grounds the narrative in a real and neighbouring location, something that the original resists.

Domhnall and Somhairle speak to each other "ina dteanga Gàidhlig féin" [in their own Gaelic language] which is incomprehensible to Colm, who asks Eoin to translate for him at one point in the story.<sup>51</sup> Unlike Tóibín's *Oileán an Anró*, there is no depiction of the Gàidhlig itself in the translation and no expectation that the young readers would understand it. In any case, this curious creation on the translator's part, which was clearly part of a strategy to correct a problematic colonial text, ultimately both exoticises the Scottish context and draws it closer to an Irish setting.

## Conclusion

Depictions of Scotland have varied widely in Irish-language writing in the century that first embraced the novel and introduced different genres of writing into the language. Scotland has been portrayed as a place of hardship and toil in biographies and in Ó Grianna's fiction in particular, and as a place of beauty and leisure in early travel writing. It is perhaps the teenage fiction which is the most innovative in its depictions of Scotland's language and culture, encompassing

<sup>48</sup> Enid Blyton, *Eachtra san Afraic*, trans. Tomás Mac Aodh Bhuí (Indreabhán: Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 1994) 10.

<sup>49</sup> Blyton, *Eachtra san Afraic* 17.

<sup>50</sup> See Caoimhe Nic Lochlainn, "Tarts and Treacle, Roast Potatoes and Buttermilk: Domestication in Irish-language Translations of Children's Literature," in *Children's Literature on the Move: Nations, Translations, Migrations*, ed. Nora Maguire and Beth Rodgers (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013) 73-86.

<sup>51</sup> Blyton, *Eachtra san Afraic* 24.

genres such as the detective novel, historical fiction, a contemporary robinsonade, and even an attempt to correct imperial texts of the past.

In the post-independence period, it is perhaps not surprising that Ireland looked inward for the most part to create a national literature, and that literary connections with Scotland in Irish-language prose are perhaps less abundant than might have been expected given the shared language, history, and culture that so many of the texts above mentioned. Partition and religious tensions perhaps also added obstacles to any kind of unified or institutional approach to creating literature in the Gaelic languages of Ireland and Scotland. However, individual efforts to bolster this connection through literature have continued into the twenty-first century, mostly through translations,<sup>52</sup> although some new travel writing also exists, such as *Ceann Tíre / Earraghàidheal: Ár gComharsanaigh Gaelacha* (Kintyre / Argyll: Our Gaelic Neighbours, 2003) by Pádraig Ó Baoighill.

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<sup>52</sup> See the works described by Wilson McLeod in "Foilsíú, Míniú agus Aistriú Gaeilge na hAlban in Éirinn," *COMHARTaighde* 6 (2020), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18669/ct.2020.04>.

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