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Julieta Abella (Universidad de Buenos Aires)

“He confined his reading to books attired in green covers”: Celtic re-telling in *At Swim-Two-Birds* by Flann O’Brien

Flann O’Brien, properly referred as Brian Ó Nualláin, is well known for his writing as a “mocking miachstúir of English-Irish or English speilt as Irish” (O’Neill, 2003:3). From his pseudonyms to his titles, his narrative and his theatre, every bit of writing contains, in itself, the troubling relationship with Irish past, present and future. *At Swim-Two-Birds*, O’ Nolan’s first novel, furthers this matter and confronts the use of Celtic tradition within modern Irish narrative.

As the beginning of *At Swim-Two-Birds* suggests, “a good book may have three opening entirely dissimilar and inter-related only in the prescience of the author, or for that matter one hundred times as many endings” (2001:9). With this opening, three plot lines are suggested and, most importantly, two of them contain Celtic and Old Irish references: the first opening with “The Pooka MacPhellimey”, a reference of Celtic folklore, and the third opening with “Finn Mac Cool”, legendary hero of old Ireland. The narrative of *At Swim-Two-Birds* suggests parallel story lines, which, simultaneously, reference and perform traditional Celtic and Irish tales and themes. And, consequently, this is echoed in the characters’ storytelling and voice: “making sense of oral traditions within a modern society defined by literacy” (Coulouma, 2015:27).

Thus, *At Swim-Two-Birds* introduces divergent storylines that refer and portray Celtic and Irish narratives within the fragmented and diverse plot of the novel. This assortment of narratives and traditions result in the portrayal of distinctive voices that embody the troubles of Irish tradition.

Gruffudd Antur (Prifysgol Bangor/Bangor University)

**“I mewn hen ysgrifen gron”: Lewys Glyn Cothi a’i lawysgrifau’
(Cymraeg/Cuimris/Welsh)**

Mae Lewys Glyn Cothi yn gymeriad unigryw ymhlith beirdd y bymthegfed ganrif. Ef yw’r bardd canoloesol Cymraeg y goroesodd y nifer fwyaf o’i gerddi o gryn dipyn, ac mae’r mwyafrif llethol ohonynt wedi eu diogelu mewn copïau yn llaw’r bardd ei hun neu mewn copïau y gellir dangos yn bur hyderus eu bod yn gopïau uniongyrchol o lawysgrifau holograff Lewys. Fe berthyn iddo hefyd rai mympwyon, fel ei ddefnydd o’r ‘ddraenen’ i gyfleu dd, y ffaith na oroesodd unrhyw dystiolaeth iddo ymrysona â beirdd eraill a’r ffaith na wyddys odid ddim am ei gefndir. Yn ogystal â’i lawysgrifau holograff, gellir dangos iddo weld ac ychwanegu at rai o lawysgrifau pwysicaf Cymru, gan gynnwys Llyfr Coch Hergest a Llyfr Taliesin. Bydd y papur hwn yn trafod darganfyddiadau cyffrous diweddar, sef nifer o lawysgrifau eraill lle y digwydd llaw Lewys, ac yn archwilio goblygiadau’r darganfyddiadau hynny ar ein dealltwriaeth o’r berthynas gymhleth rhwng y traddodiad llyfr a’r traddodiad llafar yn y Gymru ganoloesol, gan fwrw peth goleuni ar ddysg a llythrennedd beirdd yr hyn a alwyd gan Saunders Lewis yn *Ganrif Fawr* y traddodiad barddol.

Dhanya Baird (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)

‘Aife’s Presence in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*’

The warrior woman Aífe, mother of the hero Cú Chulainn’s son, is only ever mentioned in the background in the Book of Leinster tale *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. However, these few mentions can provide an important perspective on Cú Chulainn’s actions during the *Táin*. Cú Chulainn kills many people, but among those killed, there are only two victims of his wrath against whom Cú Chulainn uses his special weapon – the *ga bulga*. In this paper I will suggest that mentions of Aífe, which occur before both of the instances in which Cú Chulainn uses the *ga bulga*, are deliberately employed to create a narrative space in which Cú Chulainn’s actions and motivations can be questioned. Through the presence of Aífe, whose only son Cú Chulainn slew, near instances of *ga bulga* violence, the text raises questions as to whether Cú Chulainn’s use of the weapon is justified. I will posit that in this sense, Aífe stands in as a grieving mother figure in place of the unmentioned mothers of those Cú Chulainn kills.

Michal Baran (University of Szczecin)
‘The fortis-lenis distinction of Welsh consonants’

The aim of this paper is to describe Welsh consonants in order to reassess the common voiced/voiceless distinction applied to them. In view of certain minimal pairs or the vowel-consonant interplay it may be claimed that explaining Welsh consonants along the fortis/lenis divide is more appropriate. Such a distinction would also link Welsh phonetics clearly to Welsh grammar which features a fully developed morpheme-initial consonant mutation system used for morphological, syntactical and semantic marking. In a broader linguistic context, Welsh would also offer evidence that the fortis-lenis and voiceless-voiced distinctions of consonants must be kept apart.

In order to achieve the aforementioned aim, the author presents a phonological argumentation based on the phonetic analysis of latest fieldwork research. The latter will reveal phonetic features characteristic of the phonological fortis-lenis divide. This investigation constitutes a part of an international research project aimed at describing the Welsh consonant system. It is believed that a more accurate description of the language and its various systems contributes directly to ensuring its continuity.

Emily-Louise Beech (Prifysgol Aberystwyth/Aberystwyth University)
‘Celtic Connections’

This work is an attempt to analyse the unique historical circumstances and present-day situation of each Celtic language. Then to put forth proposals as to what can be done to recreate a use of the Celtic language at each of the six Celtic countries, to increase the numbers within each society being bilingual. I aim to discuss the six countries’ different languages providing the reader with an overview, looking both similarities and differences that can be found in the grammar, phrases and alphabet structure of each of the languages. There are deep rooted connections spanning the Celtic nations that still run in existence. The difference being the actual use of the languages within the Celtic countries. Is it possible for some of the Celtic nations to bring back their lost language in line with the other Celtic speaking nations such as the Welsh?

Dylan Bryans (Coláiste na hOllscoile, Baile Átha Cliath/University College Dublin)
‘Modern Irish relative forms ending in “s”; history, contemporary usage and “derelativisation”.’

Relative forms ending in ‘s’ are regarded as a dialectal feature associated with the Irish of Connacht and the Irish of Ulster. This paper will seek to explore this relative ‘s’ form from past to present. Firstly, it will examine the form’s origins in Old Irish. This will establish a base understanding of the form which will give context to the second part of this paper, i.e. to examine the contemporary use of this form in Gaeltacht areas. This will include its usage in Connacht and Ulster Irish, about which many scholars interested in Irish dialects have previously made note. However, it will also examine the form’s decline in Munster Irish, a topic less often studied. Having given both the historical origins and contemporary usage amongst native speakers, the paper will then explore the form’s usage and ‘derelativisation’ amongst some non-native speakers.

Nina Cnockaert-Guillou (Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh/University College Cork)
‘Mabon and Owein in Erec et Enide and Gereint uab Erbin’

This paper means to study Chrétien de Troyes' Erec et Enide and its Welsh counterpart, Gereint uab Erbin. It will focus on the ending, 'La Joie de la Cort,' in which Erec/Gereint is welcomed to a town by king Evrain/earl Owein, and has to fight a knight, Mabonagrain, who is guarding a magical orchard in which he is kept prisoner.

I will endeavour to link the French and Welsh versions by studying the connections between Mabonagrain and Evrain/Owein. Mabonagrain is a figure which occurs in several other sources under variants of the name Mabon, who is in Welsh tradition the divine son of Modron, < Matrona, the divine mother. Owein, Yvain in French stories, becomes the lover of the Countess of the Fountain in the eponymous Welsh tale, in an episode which reminds one of the 'Joie de la Cort.'

I will first draw attention to the known parentage of both figures, which seems to be connected. I will then mention characters identified as Owein and Mabon in episodes containing the same motif of the knight both guardian of a magical place and prisoner of it. I will conclude on hypotheses concerning Mabon and Owein's link to, and by, this motif.

Adam Dahmer (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)

‘Gaelicising the Beltane Fire Festival: Reversing language shift, or casting pearls before incorrigible anglophones?’

Although co-founded by Scottish ethnologists on the basis of centuries-old Gaelic cultural practices, the festivals of the organisation known today as the Beltane Fire Society have, for most of the organisation’s some thirty-year history, largely excluded the Gaelic language. This exclusion has stemmed not from antipathy so much as apathy and incapacity; Gaelic-speakers make up a vanishingly small percentage of festival participants, and so most society members have tended to feel either unconcerned about Gaelic’s absence from society events, or unable to include the language in a way surpassing the merely tokenistic. This relative paucity of Gaelic within the BFS has proved self-perpetuating, in that it discourages the participation of Edinburgh Gaelic speakers who might otherwise participate.

For the past two years, however, substantial efforts have been made at the greater inclusion of Gaelic at BFS events. A Gaelic song group has begun performing regularly in the festivals, with the stated aim of promoting the Gaelic language. Using participant-observation and ethnographic-interview data gathered from among BFS members and members of the Edinburgh Gaelic-speaking community, this paper seeks to determine what effect, if any, the presence of the Gaelic-language performance group has had thus far on perceptions of Gaelic within the BFS, and on perceptions of the BFS among Gaelic speakers in Edinburgh.

Seumas Dómhnaillach (Oilthigh Obar Dheathain/University of Aberdeen)

‘Speaking Our Language 2019: A Diachronic Glance at Rhotics in the Scottish Gaelic of the Isle of Lewis’

There have been few studies into the phonetics of the current generation of native speakers of Scottish Gaelic compared to the number of studies from the latter half of 20th century investigating dialectology of Scottish Gaelic language varieties, with the notable exception of the work of Claire Nance, who has published on the transmission of pitch accent to young native speakers from the Isle of Lewis and young learner speakers from Glasgow.

The aim of my investigation was to expand the phonetic studies of modern Scottish Gaelic in some small way, by comparing the results of the Scottish Gaelic Dialect Survey from the 1950’s to young modern-day Island Gaelic speakers, by means of phonetic analysis of certain features such as rhotics in the accents of fluent, native Gaelic speakers between the ages 18-30 living and working in Gaelic-speaking environments. Additionally this investigation was a comparison between those different young speakers with reference to the context in which they have acquired and used Gaelic. The presentation will focus on the results of the dissertation and the fieldwork methods employed in data gathering.

Danielle Fatzinger (Oilthigh Ghlaschu/University of Glasgow)

‘“I am much teased with the Irish”’: Eoghan Mac Ghilleoin, Lachlan Campbell, and Gaelic Manuscript Production in Kintyre c. 1690-1710’

At the end of the seventeenth century, Eoghan Mac Ghilleoin, schoolmaster at Kilchenzie in Kintyre, Argyll, compiled four manuscripts. Of these, two were for Colin Campbell of the Campbells of Kilberry, Knapdale, and one for Rev Lachlan Campbell, minister of the Irish Congregation of Campbeltown beginning 1703. The production of Gaelic manuscripts for Clan Campbell patrons speaks to the cultural identity or consumption of some branches of the Clan Campbell at a time when the Campbells are sometimes characterised as a Highland lineage at pains to turn their backs on Gaelic culture. Based upon preliminary results of my ongoing research into the intersection between the lives of Mac Ghilleoin's patrons and the contents of their manuscripts, this paper will focus upon Lachlan Campbell and the manuscript written for him in 1698 alongside later letters Lachlan wrote to Robert Wodrow and Edward Lhuyd. It will consider Lachlan's relationship to Gaelic, his wider intellectual network and interests, and his role within the wider religious and political world, primarily through the Synod of Argyll, to add nuance to our understanding of how clergy and some educated elite in Argyll and in Clan Campbell related to Gaelic culture.

Hailey Fulwider (University of Notre Dame)
‘Shamrocks, Tricolors, and Leprechauns at the University of Notre Dame’

The University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Indiana, United States, is known equally for its prestigious academics and its unique mascot--the Fighting Irish Leprechaun. Its embrace of Irish Catholic culture extends to its usage of other seemingly Irish symbols on campus, including the shamrock and the Irish Tricolor. As a student at the University and a member of the Irish Literature and Language Department, I have had privileged insight into the specific ways in which these emblems are used in the architecture, student life, and sports culture, as well as the historical usages in Ireland. This essay explores the divergence between the utilization of these images on campus and in Ireland, and the ways in which there seems to be a lack of true understanding by the University and its students about the historical significances of these symbols. For example, the Irish Tricolor is often touted by students as a mere symbol of Irishness without thought of its roots in Irish revolution. In addition, the conversation surrounding the Fighting Irish mascot as a racist symbol is analyzed and ultimately dismantled. These conclusions can be expanded to aid in the national debate regarding racist mascots in American sports culture.

Johnnie Gallacher (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)
‘Red Clydeside no Clutha Dearg: Gallacher, Maclean and Gaelic’

Struggles a century syne achieved social justice enjoyed to this day. As today, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, much of Glasgow’s working class had roots the Gaeltacht of Scotland and Ireland. With that in mind, this paper will investigate, with specific examples, the extent to which Gaelic language and culture was a part of the labour movement’s campaigns, culture and politics. Using sources including the memoirs of the movement’s leadership, the historical memory of characters including John Maclean and William Gallacher will be compared and contrasted.

Johnnie Gallacher (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)
‘Celtic Origins: Archaeologically Speaking’

This poster will present and evaluate numerous competing hypotheses about the archaeological manifestations of the origins and subsequent spread of Indo-European language into Europe, and the origins of Celtic language. The Indo-European-ist debate between the Anatolian and Steppe hypotheses is considered one of the biggest disagreements in scholarly understandings of Celtic origins (Cunliffe, 2013), and important progress has been made in that debate with a middle-way seeming favourable. This debate is relevant and important because Celtic is an Indo-European subfamily, and because different hypotheses for Celtic origins are compatible with different hypotheses for Indo-European origins. Using a novel, evidence-based, theoretically-conscious, multi-disciplinary approach, I advocate a move away from the long-established, but flawed ‘La Tene’ paradigm for Celtic Origins, and a move towards unconventional ‘Celtic from the West’ models. Similarities are drawn between the 20th century ‘language death’ of Maraichean Gaelic in Sutherland (Dorian, 1981) and the domination of European prehistory by Indo-European speakers.

Margaret Gallagher (Ollscoil Uladh/Ulster University)

‘Paidreacha Traidisiúnta agus Dánta Diaga: Léargas ar Shaol ár Sinsear’

[Traditional Prayers and Religious Poetry: An Insight into the Lives of our Ancestors.]

(Gaeilge/Gáidhlig na h-Éireann/Irish)

Chun léargas a fháil ar mheon spioradálta na gCaitliceach in Éirinn idir an 17ú-20ú aois, thiomsaíodh corpas de phaidreacha traidisiúnta agus de dhánta diaga. Tugann siad seo deis dúinn léargas a fháil ar chreideamh agus ar mheon spioradálta an phobail i dtréimhse nach raibh fáil ar mhorán dialanna pearsanta nó a léithid. Is féidir anailís a dhéanamh ar na príomh théamaí agus ar na teachtaireachtaí atá le fáil sna paidreacha agus sna dánta diaga seo ag cur comhthéacs sóisialta agus polítiúil na comhaimsire san áireamh. Cuireann an taighde seo eolas cuimsitheach ar fáil, ar shaol agus ar chreideamh na gCaitliceach agus na nithe a dhaingnigh an creideamh sin a bhí acu.

In order to gain an insight into the spiritual mindset of the Irish Catholic Populace between the 17th and 20th Century, a corpus of traditional prayers has been collated. At a time when personal diaries were almost non-existent these prayers and religious poems allow us to understand the spiritual mindset of the people and their beliefs. The central themes and issues which occur in these prayers and poems can be analysed in the light of the contemporary social and political settings of the time. A comprehensive profile of and an insight into the beliefs of the Catholic community and the elements that fostered those beliefs in them, can be uncovered as a result of this research.

Clément Guillanton (Skol-Veur Roazhon 2)

‘Ar brederouriezh e brezhoneg: Kelenn ar brederouriezh’

[Philosophy in Breton: The Teaching of Philosophy]

(Brezhoneg/Breton)

Studial a ran ar brederouriezh e brezhoneg : ar c’helenn hag al lennegezh. Divizet ‘m eus studial arver ar gerioù er brederouiezh. Daoust hag ez eus ezhomm gerioù arbennik evit ober prederouriezh e brezhoneg ? Setu va gudennadur.

Keñveriet ’m eus arver geriaoueg ar brederouriezh gant sikour div listenn gerioù arveret gant kelennerion prederouriezh Diwan evit o c’hentelioù : unan arveret bremañ c’hoazh, hag unan bet arveret e-pad 3 bloavezh kentañ ar brederouriezh el lise Diwan. Studiaden ar gerioù hag o arver el lennegezh pe er c’helenn a ziskouez penaos e vez graet gant ar brezhoneg hervez ar mare.

Bridget Hager (University of Toronto)

‘John O’Neill and Frank Gallagher in the Fenian Brotherhood, 1866-1870’

Buffalo, New York, was one of many cities in the United States which had an active circle of the Fenian Brotherhood during the 1860s. The Fenian Brotherhood was an American Irish nationalist organization, dedicated to the overthrow of British rule in Ireland through violent means. A border city with a large population of Irish Catholics, Buffalo served as an armory and crossing-point for the Fenians’ 1866 invasion of Canada West. Francis B. Gallagher, an Irish-born Buffalo contractor, was among the approximately one-thousand Fenians who participated in the ensuing battles of Ridgeway and Fort Erie against Canadian forces. On his way into battle, Gallagher met the army’s commander John O’Neill, who later would become President of the Brotherhood. The men stayed in contact following the raid, with Gallagher becoming one of O’Neill’s closest allies. They were often in agreement as to what course of action the Brotherhood should take, and shared a culturally nationalist Irish identity. However, their relationship broke down in 1870 as O’Neill fell out with the Fenian Senate. This paper examines the letters which Gallagher received from O’Neill between 1866 and early 1870, attempting to give an account of the men’s relationship and their shared Irish nationalist identity.

**Cathleen Houlihan (University of Notre Dame)
'Irish Travel Writings of the Nineteenth Century'**

Irish travel writings of the nineteenth century invite readers into Irish life and all that Ireland has to offer through a visitor's perspective. Early travel logs describe Ireland as having agricultural potential but note that Ireland's Catholic identity played a significant role in the country's misfortune. Even though these initial accounts were mostly personal sentiments infused with English ideals and a strong anti-Catholic lens, the transformation to the census focused on the more strategic dimension of these written accounts.

Ordnance surveys, popularized in the early nineteenth century, give readers insight into the culture and religion in both geographical and anthropological contexts. Despite their somewhat short-lived life, ordnance surveys illustrated how the original purpose of Irish travel accounts was shifting to include more detail on the people, the language, and the landscape of Ireland. Their relevance and success are evident because these surveys are still used today as a look inside the past lives of Irish people.

The creation of collective memories in travel writing throughout a dynamic century in Irish history helps visitors understand both the past and present position of Ireland – beautiful landscape, rich culture, and an ever-changing relationship with Britain.

**Non Mererid Jones (Prifysgol Bangor/Bangor University)
“Ydych chi wedi colli rhywbeth – dan yr eira?": T. James Jones a'i ymgyrch i adfer Cymreictod Dylan Thomas.'**
(Cymraeg/Cuimris/Welsh)

Yn y papur hwn byddir yn craffu ar ddylanwad Dylan Thomas, yr enfant terrible o Abertawe sy'n gyfuniad o fwgan ac eicon yng Nghymru, ar yrfa farddol T. James Jones, y Prifardd o Gastellnewydd Emlyn. Y mae Dylan Thomas, yn anad neb, wedi bod yn ddylanwad mawr ar T. James Jones ers y 1950au. Dangosir yn y papur hwn ei fod yn cynnal deialogau â Thomas ar hyd yr yrfa. Ar ôl ennill ei Goron gyntaf yn 1957, aeth Jones ati yn ystod y 1960au i drosi *Under Milk Wood* i'r Gymraeg. Cyhoeddwyd ei drosiad, *Dan y Wenallt*, yn 1968 ac, yn gam neu'n gymwys, fe'i canmolir gan nifer o Gymry hyd heddiw fel 'y cyfieithiad gwell na'r gwreiddiol'. Yn ddiweddarach yn ei yrfa, aeth Jones rhagddo hefyd i drosi barddoniaeth a rhyddiaith enwocaf Thomas. Byddir yn dadlau yn y papur hwn mai ei brif nod wrth gyfieithu gwaith Thomas i'r Gymraeg yw amlygu'r elfennau Cymreig, os nad Cymraeg, yn ei waith. Fel y daw'n amlwg yn y papur, y mae fersiynau Cymraeg T. James Jones o waith Dylan Thomas wedi cael eu dylanwadu gan ei agenda fel cyfieithydd, sef 'adfer' Cymreictod y bardd hwn a throi 'Dillon' yn 'Dylan'.

This paper aims to explore Dylan Thomas's influence on T. James Jones's literary career. T. James Jones, a celebrated poet in his own right, has stated that he considers Thomas, the enfant terrible from Swansea, as his creative muse who inspired him to start writing. Following his eisteddfodic success in 1957, Jones started translating *Under Milk Wood* into Welsh. His Welsh version, *Dan y Wenallt*, was published in 1968, and, rightly or wrongly, his translation has been hailed by many in Wales as 'better than the original'. Jones has also translated some of Dylan Thomas's most famous, and arguably, most Welsh, prose and poetry. This paper will argue that Jones's main objective in translating Thomas's works into Welsh is to investigate and highlight the poet's Welshness. Jones's Welsh versions of Thomas's prose and poetry have undoubtedly been influenced by his agenda as a translator, which is to 'recover' or 'restore' the poet's Welshness and transform the Anglo-Welsh 'Dillon' into the Welsh 'Dylan'.

Samuel Jones (Prifysgol Bangor/Bangor University)

“‘Â Llygaidd Estron’”: Cenedlaetholdeb, Ewropeaeth a Chyfieithiadau T. Hudson-Williams’

(Cymraeg/Cuimris/Welsh)

Ar ôl y Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf, ceisiodd nifer o ysgolheigion Cymraeg dynhau'r rhwymau diwylliannol rhwng Cymru ac Ewrop. Yn y cyfnod hwn, cyhoeddwyd dwy gyfres Ewropeaidd ddylanwadol yn Gymraeg: Y Brifysgol a'r Werin a Cyfres y Werin. Mae'r gyfres gyntaf a nodwyd yn cynnwys astudiaethau amrywiol o ddiwylliannau Ewropeaidd, ac mae'r ail gyfres a nodwyd yn gyfres o gyfieithiadau Cymraeg o destunau llenyddol Ewropeaidd. Tyfodd yr ysbryd Ewropeaidd hwn yn ystod y 1920au ar y cyd â'r weledigaeth genedlaetholgar a ddatblygodd yn yr un cyfnod – fe gofiwn mai yn 1925 y sefydlwyd Plaid Cymru – a chaiff pwysigrwydd y berthynas hon rhwng ymwybyddiaeth y Cymry o'u hunaniaeth genedlaethol yn ogystal â'u hunaniaeth Ewropeaidd ei grisialu mewn dyfyniad cryno a grymus a ddywedodd T. Hudson-Williams yn 1924: ‘Nid rhan o Loegr ydyw Cymru; ond cofier ei bod yn rhan o Ewrob.’

Yn y papur hwn, byddir yn archwilio perthynas T. Hudson-Williams (1873-1961) â chyfandir Ewrop. Cyfeiriwyd at T. Hudson-Williams fel ‘un o gewri'n llenyddiaeth gyfoes ni’, a hynny am iddo gyfieithu nifer o destunau llenyddol Ewropeaidd i'r Gymraeg ar ôl y Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf. Byddir yn dadlau i'w gyfnod fel myfyriwr yn yr Almaen, wrth draed yr Athro Heinrich Zimmer, ymestyn ei orwelion deallusol y tu hwnt i ffiniau'r bydolgwg Seisnig y gorfodwyd arno yng Nghymru, a byddir yn archwilio sut y cafodd y cyfnod ffurfiannol hwn ddylanwad ar ei waith fel cyfieithydd.

Jeff Justice (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)

‘Reflections in Democratic Mirrors: The Plight of the Celtic Languages in Parliaments’

Whilst some would argue that democratically-elected parliaments are not truly representative of the people, I argue that they can provide some reflections of the societies they purport to represent. Specifically in the case of the Celtic languages, they reflect the relative strength of those languages within society and within sections of those societies. In this paper, I will compare the use of Welsh, Irish, and Scottish Gaelic in the National Assembly for Wales, the Houses of the Oireachtas, and the Scottish Parliament through how often those languages are used in debate and by whom, plus the use of those languages throughout the parliamentary environments.

Peter Kao (CCU)

‘Gaelic Revival in James Macpherson's “Fragments of Ancient Poetry”’

Ossian the narrator is the legendary mythological figure of the common Irish and Scottish Gaelic culture. This paper mainly scrutinizes James Macpherson as the first Scot who introduced the oral tradition concerning Scottish Highland landscape. And his 'Fragments of Ancient Poetry' is seen as literary piece that shares the collective cultural memory of Gaelic revival in a historical and cultural context. Fragments also conjures up the common Scottish Highland experiences that had been shaped by predecessors of the place and uninterrupted moment of the time. Macpherson's intentional collections of poetry and folklores indicates both his knowing and his contributing to Gaelic revival and his restoring what might be missing the essence of Highland. Collecting and translating local poetry and folklores became a symbolic enactment building the present on the past and channeling the past into the present. The author argues that the identity in the community of Highland Gaelic culture is construed on the oral tradition, which is interacted, mediated and negotiated. The style of Highland Gaelic oral tradition is melodious and self-contained; yet, it is open to readers' interpretation to oral paradigms and linguistic repertoire experienced by not only the poet but also the people of the day in the common ground of the same community. The making of the common into something sublime for Macpherson is authentic and apolitical. The making of the common is not detached. And the antiquity of making of the common is juxtaposed so well in a nostalgic sense of the present to the past. The author hopes that this paper will shed a light on how the making of the common is construed and mediated through the image of collective Gaelic Highland culture.

Christopher Lewin (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)
‘Làmh-sgrìobhaidhean a’ Bhìobaill Mhanainnich: feartan cànanach agus roghainnean deasachaidh’
[Manuscripts of the Manx Bible: linguistic features and editorial choices]
(Gàidhlig na h-Alba/Scottish Gaelic)

Bheir am pàipear seo sùil air mar a thàinig eadar-theangachadh a’ Bhìobaill gu Gàidhlig Mhanainn gu bith, agus thèid measadh a dhèanamh air dè cho faisg ’s a tha na teagsaichean seo air cleachdadh agus caochlaideachd nàdarra a’ chànain anns an ochdamh linn deug.

Chlò-bhuaileadh an earrann as tràithe den Bhioball Mhanainneach (soisgeul Mhata) ann an 1748 agus nochd a’ phàirt mu dheireadh den t-Seann Tiomnadh ann an 1772 (grunn bhliadhnaichean mus do chuireadh crìoch air an eadar-theangachadh gu Gàidhlig na h-Alba). Chaidh obair an eadar-theangachaidh a roinn air a’ chuid as fheàrr de shagartan Anglacanach an eilein, aig an robh Gàidhlig Mhanainn bho thùs mar bu trice aig an àm. Bha buidheann deasachaidh a’ cumail sùil air a’ phròiseact agus a’ feuchainn ri litreachadh agus briathrachas a chunbhalachadh, ach cha do rinneadh sin chun na h-aon ìre le gràmar agus cruthan nam facal, mas fhior.

Tha pàirtean susbainteach de dhreachdan an eadar-theangachaidh a’ mairsinn ann an làmh-sgrìobhainnean ann an leabharlann Taigh-tasgaidh Mhanainn. Bheirear sùil air sampall den chorpas seo de làmh-sgrìobhainnean, agus sinn a’ beachdachadh air na h atharrachaidhean a rinneadh leis an luchd-deasachaidh a-rèir ceithir slatan-tomhais: glèidhteachas gràmarach, faisge air a’ bhun-teagsa Bheurla, snas cainnte, agus lionmhorachd fhaclan.

This paper will examine how the Manx Gaelic translation of the Bible came into being, and will assess how close these texts are to the natural variation of the vernacular language in the eighteenth century.

The earliest portion of the Manx Bible (the gospel of Matthew) was printed in 1748, and the final part of the Old Testament was published in 1772 (a number of years before the Scottish Gaelic translation was completed). The work of translation was divided among most of the island’s Anglican clergy, who generally were native Manx speakers at the time. An editorial team oversaw the project and sought to regularize spelling and terminology (e.g. technical terminology relating to Jewish sacrificial rituals), but this was not done to the same extent with grammar and morphology, it would seem.

Substantial sections of the translators’ drafts survive in manuscript in the archive of the Manx Museum. A sample of this corpus will be examined, assessing the emendations made by the editors on four dimensions: grammatical conservatism, closeness to the English text (AV), idiomaticity, and verbosity (wordiness).

Philip Mac a' Ghoill (Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath/Trinity College Dublin)
'Filíocht na mBard: Traidisiún Litearatha na hÉireann, 1200–1650.'
[Bardic Poetry: Irish Literary Tradition, 1200–1650.]
(Gaeilge/Gàidhlig na h-Éireann/Irish)

Úsáidtear an téarma “Filíocht na mBard” go neamhchruinn go minic nuair a dhéantar tagairt do sheanchineál filíochta in Éirinn agus in Albain, ach céard is brí leis? Céard é an traidisiún filíochta seo, agus cén áit a bhíodh aige i stair na hÉireann? Bhí traidisiún fhilíocht Chlasaiceach na hÉireann, ar a dtugtar “Filíocht na Scol” (nó “Filíocht na mBard”, go neamhchruinn) faoi bhláth sa tréimhse idir 1200 agus an dara leath den seachtú haois déag. Le linn na tréimhse seo, ba ó scoileanna na bhfilí a tháinig an príomhshaothar litríocht chruthaitheach in Éirinn. Chumadh an file proifisiúnta, mar oifigeach d'oireacht an tiarna, dánta foirmeálta adhmholta agus marbhnaí fá choinne na n-uaisle, chomh maith le dánta diaga agus aortha clúmhillteacha, a d'aithrisíodh go poiblí go minic ag féastaí agus ócáidí speisialta. Maireann beagnach 2,000 dán sna céadta lámhscríbhinní éagsúla ar fáil dúinn sa lá atá inniu ann, ar foinse luachmhar eolais iad do stairí chultúr na nGael agus do scoláirí Gaeilge na hÉireann.

The term “Bardic” is often used vaguely when referring to an older type of poetry in Ireland and Scotland, but what exactly is it? What did this tradition of poetry entail, and what place did it have in Ireland’s history? The tradition of Classical poetry in Ireland, known as “Bardic Poetry”, flourished during the period between 1200 and the second half of the seventeenth century. During this time, the main body of creative literary works in Ireland was coming from the poets of the bardic schools. The professional poet, as a member of the lord’s assembly, composed formal poems of praise and elegy, as well as religious poems and slanderous satires, which were often publicly recited during gatherings and special occasions. Nearly 2,000 individual poems in hundreds of manuscripts survive and are available to us today, which constitutes an invaluable source of information for historians of Irish culture and for scholars of the Irish language.

Seosamh Mac Cárthaigh
'An Díle Gaelach i litríocht Angla-Shacsanach'
(Gaeilge/Gàidhlig na h-Éireann/Irish)

Tá fhios againn gur tháinig cléirigh Sasanacha go hÉireann i ré luath na meánaoise chun tabhairt fé oideachas creidimh. In ainneoin sin, níl mórán scríofa ar tionchar smaointeoireachta Gaelach ar litríocht Angla-Shacsanach. In Éirinn agus Sasana úsáideadh an Leabhar Geinisis chun stair na dtíortha a chur isteach i stair uilíoch. Tugann scríbhneoireachta ar Gheinisis léargas ar conas a thuig scríobhaithe na rudaí a thit amach le linn a saol chomh maith lena stair, agus tá an léargas so le feiscint sna Litreacha Domhnaí. Pléitear an Díle sna leganacha Sean-Bhéarla desna Litreacha Domhnaí E agus F, ach tá an cuntas ionta ana-dhifriúil ósna cinn a scríobhadh rompu. Níl an béim ar athnuachan, mar atá sé i saothar Bede, ach ar fíis apacailipteach, is dócha de dheasca teacht na Lochlannaigh. Is fiú a rá gur luadh Niall, deagánach Éireannach sna Litreacha E agus F agus deirtear iontu go mbaineann siad úsáid as a thuairimí. Cruthaíonn Epistil Ísu, téacs Sean-Ghaeilge, nasc soléir idir na Litreacha Domhnaí Éireann. Bead ag fiosrú Litreacha E agus F, ag féachaint ar tionchar smaointeoireachta Gaelach orthu. Úsáidfidh mé na téacsanna so chun soléiriú an nasc intleachtúil idir Éire agus Sasana sna meánaoise agus na slite ina úsáideadh an Leabhar Geinisis chun stair uilíoch a chruthú sa dá tír.

Madeline Manning (University of Toronto)
‘The Folklorisation of Aimsir na Gárleanúna’

Stories about the penal times permeate throughout the National Folklore Collection, coming from across the country with varying degrees of fictionalisation. The Schools Collection contains over two-thousand entries associated with the time period in both English and Irish. Based within a historical setting, these tales of priest-hunters, red-coats, and heroic priests are bound to a well-documented period, as well as to recognisable and local geography. Despite their realistic and specific settings, they are told in narrative form, often featuring fantastic elements, like speaking anvils and horses, and psychologically simple, archetypal characters. Their structure makes their historical setting seem superfluous, especially considering that they are not grounded within a broader historical context or timeline. They were told, not to record historical fact, but to entertain, bolster identity, and establish societal morals. This paper will seek to investigate the transmission and development of the historical period of the Penal Laws into folk memory, in the form of stories possessing repeated motifs and narrative structures. Looking at the content and structure of what was maintained within the collective memory, it will attempt to achieve greater insight into the motive and method of the transmission of oral history.

Christopher M. Oates (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)
‘Gaelic in Glasgow, but not from Glasgow’

Glasgow has a reputation as being “a Gaelic city”, known traditionally as *Baile Mòr nan Gàidheal*, and more recently christened ‘The Heart of Gaelic Scotland’ for the 2019 Glasgow Mòd. While many Gaelic speakers have lived and worked in Glasgow, this paper observes that comparatively few seem to have been born there. The evidence for this phenomenon, in both history and the present day, shall be examined, and the implications for the Gaelic language in Glasgow discussed.

Fódhla Ní Chéileachair (Coláiste na hOllscoile, Baile Átha Cliath/University College Dublin)
‘Foghlaimoirí- Cainteoirí- Mic Léinn Faoi Cheilt: Easpa Labhairt na Gaeilge i measc Mhic Léinn dátheangacha.’

[Learners, speakers, hidden students: Lack of spoken Irish among bilingual university students.]
(Gaeilge/Gàidhlig na h-Èireann/Irish)

In ainneoin go dtagann líofacht sa Ghaeilge ón dtumoideachas in Éirinn, ní labhraíonn ach 73,803 go laethúil í lasmuigh den chóras oideachais (Census, 2016). Dhírigh an tionscnamh seo ar chonstaicí a chuireann isteach ar labhairt na Gaeilge i measc mhic léinn le Gaeilge líofa ó thaobh na teanga de, ó chúlra gaeiloideachais nó ón ngnáthoideachas trí Bhéarla, (N= 44). Thug anailís ábhair le fios go raibh tionchar suntasach ag constaicí sóisialta, ag deacrachtaí teanga an chainteora agus ag teorannú na Gaeilge laistigh de shuíomhanna áirithe acadúla ar labhairt na Gaeilge shóisialta. Déantar plé ar theorannú na Gaeilge laistigh de shuíomhanna acadúla amháin agus ar an dtábhacht a bhaineann le moladh agus scaipeadh na teanga i measc phobal an tríú léibhéil; nasc rithábhachtach maidir le pobail teanga a bhúnú.

Deirdre Ní Mhathúna (Sabhal Mòr Ostaig)

‘Feadh Garbh Thonn: Càs Iasgairean nan Gàidheal an aghaidh “Breatamach” agus mac-talla an sinnsearan bho na 1780’an.’

[Over Cruel Seas: The Predicament Gàidhealtachd fishermen face with Brexit and echoes from their people’s fate in the 1780’s.]

(Gàidhlig na h-Alba/Scottish Gaelic)

Bho mapaichean is aithisgean mionaideach an ochdamh ceud deug gu rannsachadh na mara an-diugh, tha ùidh ann am muir na Gàidhealtachd air a bhith anabarrach làidir bho luchd-leasachaidh an taobh a-muigh. An-diugh ’s ann air feadh costa an iar a tha saoghal grunn na mara cho beartach is luachmhor gu saidheansail, à rèir Cùisean Mara na h-Alba. Gheibhear Ionadan Dion-Mara (MPA’an) timcheall nan Eilean Siar, costa an iar na Gàidhealtachd agus fad a-mach sa Chuan Atlantaig cuideachd. ’S e airson amasan so-seasmhachd, a’ leantainn stiùireadh riaghaltas na h-Alba, a chruthachadh na MPA’an. Ach a thaobh dreuchd is teachd an tìr nan iasgairean, chan fhaicear aire don eagal aig luchd nan eilean fèin ann an aithisgean nam MPA’an.

Dà cheud deug air ais, b’ e mu phailteas nan trosg agus nan sgadan a sgrìobhadh aithisgean is chruthachadh mapaichean, ’s iad a’ moladh mòr-dhealbh nam bailtean iasgachd mar fhreagairt do chroitearan gun croit agus Gàidheal gun dùthchas. A bheil sinn faisg air an aon cunnart a-rithist? Togaidh mi nan ceistean, ciamar a bhuaileas poileasaidhean Cùisean Mara na h-Alba air na Gàidheal, ge b’ iad iasgairean no nach bi? Dè mu amasan nan Ionadan Dion-Mara a fhreagras iomagain is eagal nan eileanach? Agus mu dheireadh, bho thaobh chànan is cultar nan daoine, am faodar dhearbhadh gum bi na h-Ionadan Dion-Mara ag aontachadh ri na h-Amasan Leasachaidh So-sheasmhaich (SDG’s) a tha cho riatanach ann an laghan Pàrlamaid na h-Alba? Cho math ri freumhan acadaimigeach, bidh mi a’ togail a-steach fianais an fhilm ghoirid, “Muir ar n-Athraichean” (Course, 2018) mar chùl-taic don argamaid.

From detailed maps of the eighteenth century to marine research today, interest from developers in the seas around the Gàidhealtachd has been consistently strong. According to Marine Scotland, the seabed all around the west coast is of particular scientific value. Scotland’s Marine Protected Areas (MPA’s) are to be found throughout the Outer Hebrides, the Gaelic west coast and far out into the Atlantic Ocean. These MPA’s have been designated for reasons of sustainability, following Scottish Government guidelines. But the risk to local inshore fishermen’s occupation and income has attracted little attention, it would appear, in MPA research and reports.

Over two hundred years ago, detailed reports and maps of land and sea were compiled promoting the exploitation of a seemingly endless supply of cod and herring. Fishing villages were designed in London and built all over the coast of Scotland - as an answer to crofters without crofts and Gaels now disconnected from dùthchas. Are we close to a similar danger today? In this work-in-progress, I will ask how the policies of Marine Scotland affect the Gaelic people, fisherfolk or otherwise? What within the aims of the MPA’s answers the anxiety and fears of islanders? And finally from the perspective of the language and culture of the people, can it be shown that the MPA’s are responsive to Sustainable Development Goals, which crucially underpin the laws of the Scottish Parliament? To support my argument I will incorporate evidence from the short film, “Muir ar n-Athraichean” (Course, 2018) as well as calling on academic and archive sources.

Niamh Nic Leoid (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)

“Gaeilge bhriste nó Gaeilge chliste”: Analysing the codeswitching practices of young native Irish speakers’

[Gaeilge bhriste nó Gaeilge chliste: Anailís ar chleachtais chódmheascadh chainteoirí óga dhúchasacha Gaeilge as an gceantar Gaeltachta, Ceantar na nOileán]

(Beurla/English)

‘Séard a thuigeann muid leis an téarma códmheascadh ná an cleachtadh a bheith ag úsáid níos mó ná teanga amháin le linn comhrá amháin, cleachtadh atá fíor choitianta i measc cainteoirí Ghaeilge ar fud na hÉireann. Tá sé mar aidhm ag an staidéar dochtúireachta atá mé i mbun faoi láthair anailís ghéar a dhéanamh ar chleachtais chódmheascadh chainteoirí óga dhúchasacha Gaeilge as an gceantar Gaeltachta, Ceantar na nOileán. Tá suim faoi leith agam fiosrú má thagann athrú ar chleachtais chódmheascadh na rannpháirtithe i suíomhanna cumarsáide éagsúla agus anailís a dhéanamh ar na cúinsí go dtarlaíonn nó nach dtarlaíonn sé seo. Mar pháirt den staidéar seo, beidh cuairt á thabhairt ar bhunscoileanna i gCeantar na nOileán i nGaeltacht Chonamara sna míonna amach romhainn chun agallaimh agus scrúdú gearr a dhéanamh le daltaí sna hard-ranganna. Cé nach bhfuil aon torthaí bailithe go fóil, déanfaidh an chaint seo plé ar chúlra an staidéir, na príomh aidhmeanna atá ag an staidéar, chomh maith leis na céimeanna modheolaíochta a bheas á nglacadh agus roinnt torthaí a bheinn ag súil leis.

Stíofán Ó Briain (Coláiste na hOllscoile, Baile Átha Cliath/University College Dublin)

“Aicíd Nua-Aoiseach an Fhir Eorpaigh”: An Fireannachas Nimhneach in *Beatha Dhónaill Dhuibh* le Séamus Barra Ó Súilleabháin’

(Gaeilge/Gáidhlig na h-Éireann/Irish)

Le blianta beaga anuas, tá athmhacnamh á dhéanamh sa léann agus sa chultúr coiteann ar chreidiúntí agus chleachtais shochoaíocha a shamhláití iad a bheith bunúsach leis na cianta. Tá coincheap na hinscne tagtha faoi scóp an athbhreithnithe seo agus tá dúshlán á thabhairt ar thuiscintí traidisiúnta i dtaobh ról agus stádas na mban. Imríonn na hathruithe cultúrtha seo tionchar ar fhir agus, dá réir sin, tá claochlú mór tagtha ar an bhfireannachas.

Pléifidh an páipéar seo an fireannachas nimhneach, nó ‘toxic masculinity’, i gnuasach filíochta Shéamus Barra Uí Shúilleabháin, *Beatha Dhónaill Dhuibh*, mar atá sé á léiriú sa charachtar, Dónall Dubh. Riarfar tréithe an fhireannachais nimhnigh i bpearsa Dhónaill Dhuibh i ndánta an chnuasaigh agus cuirfear an neach dorcha seo i gcomhthéacs dhioscúrsa an fhireannachais agus na hinscne i gcultúr na linne seo.

Féachfar ar nimhneas Dhónaill Dhuibh mar airí de choimhthíú an duine aonair; coimhthíú a eascraíonn as imreas an chlaohlaithe chultúrtha, agus pléifear an fireannachas nimhneach mar spréachadh, nó iarracht spréachta, in aghaidh choimhthíú an fhir óig sa ré nua-aoiseach.

Déanfaidh an páipéar seo scrúdú ar fhreagra an reacaire ar an bhfireannachas nimhneach trína chaidreamh le Dónall Dubh agus áiteofar go n-eascraítear as forbairt an chaidrimh seo dóchas agus diúltú don nimhneas.

Ben Ó Ceallaigh (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)
‘Language revitalisation policies in Ireland and Scotland: ten years after the 2008 economic crash’
(Gàidhlig na h-Alba/Scottish Gaelic)

The dramatic social and political consequences of the economic crisis which began in 2008 have been widely discussed by public policy academics over the last ten years. In spite of this breadth of analysis, the implications of the austerity measures implemented since the international crash began for the more specialised area of language policy have remained largely unaddressed during this time.

This paper will take some tentative steps towards rectifying this deficit by examining how state bodies in Ireland and Scotland reformed their revitalisation-oriented language policies during this period. Drawing on interview data gathered as part of my PhD about the effects of the economic crisis on the Irish Gaeltacht, I will initially discuss the differential treatment of Irish-language institutions – which have been hit much harder by austerity measures than comparable institutions which operate through English. It will be argued that this treatment is a product of the neoliberal opposition to “culturalist” endeavours such as language revitalisation.

I will then compare the extent of the cuts to Irish language provision to those experienced by Scottish Gaelic promotion bodies, and also discuss other relevant policy reforms implemented in recent years.

Referring to literature on both language revitalisation and public policy studies, I will argue that the way in which austerity has impacted both macro-level language policies and the wider social vitality of Gaelic-speaking regions highlights some of the key structural challenges that neoliberal “competition states” provide for language revitalisation in an era in which the Gaelic languages are dependent on state support to ensure their continued survival.

Lauren O’Neill (Ollscoil Uladh/Ulster University)
“The Barde and Harper melloidie”: Exploring bardic harp practices in early Irish narratives.’

The early Irish harp’s significance in Ireland is undoubtedly long and well established in history, as evident not only in the wealth of music collected by Edward Bunting from several harpers in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, but also in its earlier extensive popularity in Gaelic society. The performance of Gaelic bardic poetry and accompanying harp music was a popular form of entertainment amongst the aristocracy in both Ireland and Scotland between the 13th and the 17th centuries. The harper played a significant role throughout this period in providing musical accompaniments to the recitation of Gaelic bardic poetry – a complex form of syllabic poetry governed under strict rules of composition. Historical literature frequently alludes to this as a shared performance practice between the file (poet), reacaire (reciter) and cruitire (harper).

The scarcity of harp music manuscripts dating from within the bardic era unquestionably complicates our understanding of this early, Gaelic performance practice. This paper seeks to explore early written literature and music from various manuscripts, which may improve our understanding of bardic poetry and harp practices, and illuminate possible ways in which the harper may have accompanied Gaelic bardic poetry in Ireland prior to the eighteenth century.

Andrei Ovidiu (Oilthigh Ghlaschu/University of Glasgow)
‘Pagan and Christian Rites in Royal Inauguration’

Images of the Celtic kingship are varying from an extremely archaic sacral form to another based on warlordism. The rites of inauguration reflect the syncretic characteristic of the Celtic society, where old, pagan elements are combined with the newer Christian ones, rather than replace them. The paper looks at the similarities in the inauguration rites of the High King of Ireland and the King of Alba and notes the importance the Lia Fáil and the Stone of Scone carry, together with older legends and important elements such as the Sovereignty Goddesses. An important innovation is shown in Ireland during this time, where Saint Adomnán might be anointing the first kings, over a century before the Visigoths, whom are traditionally seen as being the original creators of that rite. The paper will analyse both the pagan and Christian elements of the royal inauguration presenting the syncretic aspects which have developed during the Early Middle Ages in Goidelic kingship.

Feena Tóibín (Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh/University College Cork)

‘Dubhghlas de hÍde mar bhailitheoir béaloidis’

(Gaeilge/Gàidhlig na h-Éireann/Irish)

Baineann an chaint seo le Dubhghlas de hÍde, Éireannach a bhfuil cáil air os rud é gurbh é bunaitheoir Chonradh na Gaeilge é, agus gan amhras, céad uachtarán na hÉireann. Cuimhnítear air leis, mar scríbhneoir agus scoláire.

Rugadh é i 1860 agus is é an t-abhar spéise atá agamsa ná an luaththréimhse sin ina shaol a chlúdaítear ina dhialanna, a bhí á scríobh aige ó bhí sé 14 agus atá ar coimeád i Leabharlann Náisiúnta na hÉireann. Thosaigh sé á scríobh ar an 21 Feabhra 1874, i mBéarla ar dtús, ach thosaigh sé ag scríobh i nGaeilge, go foghrúil, tamall ina dhiaidh sin. Is é aidhm na cainte seo inniu ná súil a chaitheamh ar a spéis sa bhéaloideas a thosaigh an t-am san, agus é sna déaga. Léirítear é seo ina chuid iontrálacha mar a bhreac sé síos cuntais ar bheith ag bailiú ábhair agus é i mbun an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim ar a chluais, as a stuaim féin.

Niall Tracey (Sgoil Ealain Ghlaschu/Glasgow School of Art)

‘Cànanachas corpais san fhìor-shaoghal: media didseatach a cho-thaobhadh le CEFR gu fèin-obrachail aig LearnGaelic’

(Gàidhlig na h-Alba/Scottish Gaelic)

LearnGaelic.scot, a self-access website for learners of Scottish Gaelic, is currently in the early stages of an ambitious site transformation. One component of this is to align current resources with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). However, with a media catalogue of over 3,000 items totalling approximately 250 hours of made-for-broadcast audio and video, assessment of language content and difficulty by a human expert would be time-consuming and expensive.

This paper describes a student internship project currently underway at LearnGaelic.scot that applies a number of techniques from the field of corpus linguistics in order to automatically assess the difficulty of the contents of the media archive. Using the Gaelic part-of-speech tagger developed by the University of Edinburgh and in-house data informed by the University of Glasgow’s CEFR project, CLAG, we will be able to automatically extract grammatical and vocabulary items that correspond to specific levels of the CEFR. Other measures and indicators of difficulty are calculated – e.g. speech rate, lexical diversity and density– that contribute to a finer-grained scale of difficulties, which will enable individual users of the site to discover content appropriate to their level with ease. The talk will discuss these measures, how they are applied, and what assumptions have been made in the process.

Ailbe van der Heide (Coláiste na hOllscoile, Baile Átha Cliath/University College Dublin)

‘Bhí mise faoi gheasa an uair sin’: “The Wounded Seal” in Irish oral tradition’

Drawing on sources collected by the Irish Folklore Commission throughout the 20th century, this paper will explore various narratives concerning the seal in Irish oral tradition, and will focus primarily on one narrative-type called ‘The Wounded Seal’.

‘The Wounded Seal’ presents us with an interaction between a man and a seal which he has injured, and reveals the seal as a supernatural creature. Through this, the narrative-type questions and complicates the roles of ‘threat’ and ‘victim’. In analysing these roles, this paper will investigate how and where power is allocated within the narrative.

Considering this power dynamic, as well as the concept of retribution, various morals, social norms and beliefs will be examined in relation to the particular context in which the narrative would have been told.

Kieran Walker (Ollscoil na hÉireann Mhá Nuad/NUI Maynooth)
‘Hobbyist Learners vs. Roots Learners: An Anthropological Investigation of Language’

This paper examines the learning motivations of 6 students of the Irish Language, of which 5 are named in the paper, enrolled in an introductory Irish Language University course in Canada, through the use of ethnographic interviews. This research draws on ideas of intrinsic and extrinsic factors of language learning in order to examine on a deeper level the reasons that each of these students has decided to take up the Irish Language. In addition to this, by examining these different subcategories of motivation, there were two rough categories that I found these language learners to fall into, based on how much they were either intrinsically or extrinsically motivated; I have termed these learners Roots and Hobbyists respectfully. These two categories are shown to exist on a spectrum as it relates to these motivations, and this difference and how it is a very uncertain and personal aspect of language learning is something that this paper intends to demonstrate with ideas of linguistic authenticity and to a lesser extent identity.

Edit Wenelius (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)
‘Relative clause constructions in Scottish Gaelic: variation and motivation.’

Prepositional relatives in Scottish Gaelic can be produced by either the pied-piping strategy, *an duine ris an robh mi a’ bruidhinn* (‘the man to whom I was speaking’) or the resumptive strategy, *an duine a bha mi a’ bruidhinn ris* (‘the man who I was speaking to [him]’). Preposition stranding **an duine a bha mi a’ bruidhinn ri* (‘the man who I was speaking to’) also occurs but is generally considered ungrammatical. In my paper, which will be a summary of my doctoral research so far, I will discuss the frequency of both strategies and the possible factors that influence the choice of either strategy. These include medium of communication (spoken/written language), the nature of the prepositional construction (compound/simple preposition and whether it is an English calque), information structure, and speaker characteristics such as age, gender and acquisitional and dialectal background. The data that I will discuss have so far been collected from the Gaelic text corpus *Corpas na Gàidhlig* and programming on Gaelic-language radio station *Radio nan Gàidheal*.

Charles Wilson (Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann/University of Edinburgh)
“As recent Norse-speakers...”: Perceptions of Lewis as ‘other’ in Gaeldom’

Perceptual dialectology can help us understand: (1) a speech community’s sociocultural values; (2) linguistic features that vary or are undergoing change; and (3) linguistic features that affect comprehension of different varieties. In this paper, I will discuss the opinions of traditional speakers of Gaelic on Lewis Gaelic. Having interviewed 41 speakers for my doctoral research, I also asked speakers for their value judgments on different varieties of Gaelic. The overarching theme of speakers’ judgments was that Lewis was a distinctive regional variety that was sometimes difficult to understand or considered less ‘pure’ than other varieties. Despite some negative judgments of Lewis Gaelic, the majority of speakers had positive attitudes towards Lewis speakers and their character. I will discuss some of the implications for this in sociolinguistics, when judgments of linguistic varieties are often considered to index the traits or activities that are iconic representations of the speakers (cf. Irvine and Gal 2000: 37).

Livy Wren (University of Toronto)
'Understanding Perceptions: the 1916 Rising'

My objective in the essay, that I propose to present at your conference, is to represent, through a social history study, how the presented history of the 1916 Rising has changed over time and geographical space in Ireland over the past century. I used findings from a study I conducted that investigated the ways in which individuals, in Ireland, remember being taught about the 1916 Rising in school, from their family, and society. This study sought to determine how memory can provide a deeper understanding of history. In order to conduct this study, thirty-two interviews were conducted with participants ranging in age and living across the country. It was believed that these factors would affect the content of the learning. By organising the participants into three age groupings, it was possible to determine that the passage of time did affect the discussion of the 1916 Rising. When looking at the results from the perspective of where the participants lived, it was determined that both families and community participants were much less likely to have been exposed to this topic near the Northern Ireland border. The study also explored how media and biases were preserved and influenced the individuals' perspectives on the topic. This paper ultimately relays individuals' memories in order to grasp a general understanding of the perceptions of the 1916 Rising and changes to them.