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"Going to the Land of the Yellow Men": The Representation of Indigenous Americans in Scottish Gaelic Literature

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The perception that the anglophones of England and Lowland Scotland had subjected Scottish Gaeldom to centuries of cultural, linguistic, geographical, and political marginalization was well established in Gaelic consciousness by the time that emigration to North America began in the eighteenth century.[1] John MacInnes has summarized the Gaelic oral tradition's long view of Lowland-Highland relations: "from the Gaelic point of view, we the Gaels are the disinherited, the dispossessed."[2] Contemporary Gaelic sources imply that Highland society was exposed to hostile, alien forces after the defeat of the Battle of Culloden (1746), and into the early nineteenth century at least some Gaelic commentators saw emigration as the culmination of a series of injustices.[3]

Historians have pointed out, on the other hand, that many Highland emigrants who joined the flow of people, material culture, ideologies, and power structures that established themselves in North American colonies enjoyed an upgraded status by virtue of their membership in the British Empire and the emerging ideology of "whiteness."[4] Indeed, some scholars have claimed that despite sharing very similar patterns of dispossession and marginalization, Highland emigrants did not or were not able to extend their empathy to Indigenous Americans.[5] Silke Stroh has gone so far as to assert, "The impression that many Gaelic colonizers did not seem to feel any scruples about displacing indigenous peoples is also borne

out by their literature … Gaelic discourses often reflected an eagerness to embrace the opportunity to rise from the position of intra-British colonized to the status of overseas colonizer – a transition open to them because they were, after all, white Europeans … Significantly, most Scottish declarations of transperipheral solidarity with overseas postcolonial nations and cultures date from the time *after* the British Empire had been lost."[6] Although there are Gaelic texts that demonstrate Highlanders were quite capable of absorbing and regurgitating ideologies of race and empire,[7] these form only part of the corpus documenting Gaelic perceptions of and relations with First Nations. In fact, expressions of compassion and solidarity are visible by the 1820s, well before the decline of the British Empire, alongside antipathetic comments.

The diverse conditions and factors that surround Gaelic imaginings of and encounters with Indigenous Americans cannot be generalized easily; we must instead unpack each case individually. In this chapter I analyze a selection of Gaelic texts representing a range of perceptions and depictions of First Nations, presented in roughly chronological order from participation in the British regiments fighting in the Seven Years' War (1756–63), through the early period of migration and settlement, and up to the settlement of the Prairies (1880s). A close reading of these sources demonstrates that texts mentioning Indigenous Americans were not always intended to be literal and sincere representations of real persons: just as often, these literary representations had more to do with the rhetorical aims of the author than with an attempt to provide realistic portrayals.

SEVEN YEARS' WAR

Scottish Highlanders came to North America in large numbers only after they were enlisted in British regiments during the Seven Years' War. Several surviving song-poems describe the war and the views of soldiers involved in them. A new ethnonym in Gaelic, *Coillteach* (pl. *Coilltich*), was coined for Indigenous Americans in this period (besides the common transliteration *Innseanach*). It appears to be a translation of English "savage" – from Old French *sauvage* (wild), from Latin *silvaticus* (of the woods) – and thus was likely created by a literate, bilingual Gael, probably a minister or regimental chaplain.

The earliest surviving example of its use comes from a poem composed by the Reverend James MacLagan upon the Black Watch's

initial departure for North America in 1756. MacLagan himself did not go to North America until the War of Independence, when he became regimental chaplain. His descriptions of Indigenous Americans may thus rely on his imagination and written sources in English. A relevant excerpt reads,

Leoghnaibh garga de'n fhuil Albannaich	Fierce lions of Scottish descent
Leanaibh ri'r n-airm 's ri'r n-éideadh;	Be loyal to your arms and to your uniform;
Faighibh targaid eutrom bhall-bhuidh'	Get your nimble, brightly decorated shields
Ghabhas dearg' thuagh Choillteach;	That will absorb the blows of the axes of Forest-folk;
'S cuilbheir earr-bhuidh' n làimh gach sealgair,	A bright-ended musket in every huntsman's hand,
Seòid a' marbhadh chaol-damh:	Gallant youths killing slim stags:
O 's mithich dh'Albannaich dol a shealg	O, it is time for the Scots to go hunting
Air Frangaich chealgach 's Coilltich.	After treacherous Frenchmen and Forest-folk.[8]

The song could be classified as a *brosnachadh* (war incitement) in Gaelic literature: its function is to depict the theatre of war they are about to enter, to explain the nature of the threat posed by enemies, and to depict them as a focus for their aggression. One could hardly expect a sympathetic portrayal of First Nations in this context, but it says little of substance about them specifically.[9] Furthermore, Gaels were still using the motif of the tree in their panegyric literature about themselves at the time (and even down to the present day). Associating First Nations with forests does not, therefore, constitute some kind of strategy for essentialist or racialist distancing.

The ethnonym *Coillteach* reappears in a song celebrating the return of Highland soldiers at the conclusion of the war. Although the song is anonymous, the internal evidence of the text suggests that the author did not actually participate in combat but remained resident in the Highlands. Again, then, this seems to be an imaginative representation of what he had heard about the conflict, magnifying the threat of the enemy to make victory seem all the more impressive:

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Bha Frangaich is Coilltich air gach taobh is mu'r coinneimh	The French and Forest-folk were in front of you and on all sides
Mar dhuilleagan foghair 'gam froiseadh le gaoith …	Like autumn leaves strewn by the wind …[10]

Highlanders believed that they conspicuously demonstrated their mettle and their loyalty to the Crown by their efforts in the Seven Years' War, not least on the Plains of Abraham. These contributions are strongly emphasized in Gaelic verse commemorating the conflict, indicating that the victory in Quebec convinced many "to embrace the triumphalist discourse of imperial hegemony."[11] Although Indigenous Americans were also players in these conflicts, they do not feature prominently in (surviving) Gaelic verse because they were secondary to the authors' aims of demonstrating loyalty to Britain and distancing themselves from their Jacobite past and previous associations with the French.

Warfare against particular First Nations did not produce alienation from Indigenous Americans in general (as demonstrated, for example, by cooperation during the American Revolutionary War). One of the most striking Gaelic statements of solidarity is made in a well-known lullaby commonly referred to by its first line, "Dèan Cadalan Sàmhach" (Sleep Quietly). I have argued previously that it was composed in a North American colony by a woman from Argyllshire, possibly as early as the Seven Years' War.[12] The earliest variant of this song was collected by the Reverend Donald MacNicol no later than 1802. In one stanza, the author implies, with a note of regret, that Highland soldiers were used to combat Indigenous Americans who opposed the Crown's forces:

Gum bheil sibh 'nur n-Innseanaich cinnteach gu leòr	You are Indians sure enough
A-mach 's a' choille ùdlaidh, gun sùgradh, gun cheòl	Out in the dark forests, without mirth or music
'S nan sgrìobhadh iad fìrinn a-sìos mar bu chòir	If they would only write down what is true, as they ought to
Cha tigeadh na Gàidheil gu bràth air an tòir.	The Gaels would never have to go chasing after them.[13]

By the 1860s, at least one oral variant was circulating around Kintail in which the Gaels identified with the plight of First Nations,

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essentially switching roles with them in the verse: the first line of the excerpt above became "Tha sinn 'nar n-Innseanaich cinnteach gu leòr" (We are Indians sure enough). Since the aforementioned publications appeared, Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhairt of Edinburgh University has provided me with a transcript from the Benjamin Urquhurt manuscripts demonstrating that this imaginative leap of empathy had already happened by 1820.[14]

ON THE BOAT TO AMERICA

Ailean mac Alasdair Ruaidh Domhnallach, of the Sliochd an Taighe MacDonalds of Keppoch, was one of the most important Gaelic tradition-bearers and poets to settle in Nova Scotia. He emigrated from Lochaber in 1816 at the age of twenty-two, and the song that he composed on board the emigrant vessel records his thoughts and expectations about the journey and destination.[15] The following is the text up to the point where he describes in rather unflattering terms the people of colour he expects to inhabit America:

Mi an toiseach na luinge	I am in the prow of the boat
'S neo-shocrach mo shuidhe	My position is unsettled
'S mi coimhead nan sruth tha tighinn oirnn;	As I watch the waters coming over us;
Chì mi thallad fo m' shùilean	I see over yonder, before my eyes
A' mhuc-mhara 's i brùchdail	The whale as it erupts
Sruithean geala 'gan spùtadh bho sròin.	White streams bursting from its nose.
Mi air barr nan tonn fiadhaich	I am on the crest of the wild waves
Falbh le luing air a fiaradh	Travelling on a rambling ship
'S caithream gaoithe bho'n iar 's i 'na sròin.	With bursts of wind from the west in her prow.
I ri acain 's ri dìosgail	She [the boat] is sighing and creaking
Sreap a-suas ris gach fiadh-bheann	Climbing up each wild [sea] mountain
B'fhearr nach fhaca mi riamh i fo seòl.	I wish I had never seen her sailing.
Gura truagh leam a càradh	Sad to me is her situation
Dol a-suas ris na màmaibh	Going up the summits

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Cur nan cuartagan gàbhaidh fo tòin.	Sending beneath her each dangerous eddy.
Dol do thìr nam fear buidhe	Going to the land of the "yellow" men
'S nan nìgearan dubha	And of the black niggers
'S ann leam fhéin nach bu shùgach an glòir.	Their speech is not pleasant to me.[16]

This is not a flattering portrayal of Indigenous Americans or Afro-Canadians but is best understood in relation to ethnic relations in Scotland and the rhetoric of Gaelic clan panegyric. We need, in particular, to refer to the seventeenth-century text on which this song was modelled, "Cha taobh mi na srathan," by Domhnall Donn Bhoth-Fhionntainn.[17] As in other song traditions, Gaelic authors frequently recycle song airs, metres, and choruses; earlier songs form an implicit background to the newer song, whose meaning is enhanced by intertextual allusions that echo or contrast the statements or images of previous texts. The song "Cha taobh mi na srathan" begins very similarly, with the poet seated but unsettled; he is looking down at the stream of a glen and names several mountains he can see. The reason for Domhnall Donn's anxious state is soon revealed: he is an outlaw who has been raiding cattle, especially in the Lowlands. He seeks help from a love interest but is afraid she may turn against him, as have many of the people in his home district.[18]

This song by Ailean the Ridge is the only song of emigration that I know of composed in *iorram*, a metre primarily used for clan panegyric and the celebration of heroic exploit. Reading the emigration song against the earlier song on which it was modelled allows us to see more clearly how Ailean is valorizing the voyage to America. Like his predecessor Domhnall Donn, Ailean is seated (at the prow of a boat) but unsettled, facing the waters of a perilous journey (the ocean); instead of mountains, he must cross the sea waves; instead of the cattle of the earlier poem, he and the other passengers are in awe of the enormous whales; like the older outlaw, Ailean and his family are fleeing from their homes, hoping to find refuge in a new land.[19]

Why does Ailean characterize North America by the people who are, from his point of view, its most exotic inhabitants? Perhaps this reflects his anxiety in encountering the people most alien to him and about whom he must have heard tales and rumours. I surmise that these rhetorical figures play an oppositional role in his heroic

narrative that parallels the role of the Lowlander in Domhnall Donn's song. Warriors prove their prowess by defending their interests and conquering enemies. An essentialized opposition between Gael and non-Gael (*Gall*) is an old one in Highland tradition, Lowlanders commonly being cast in the role of the Other by the sixteenth century.[20] This precedent informed Gaelic perceptions of other non-Gaels in North America, especially in Gaelic literature; the term *Gall* is used for all manner of "foreigners" in the immigrant context.[21] In fact, the deprecatory phrase "glòir nan Gall" (speech of the non-Gael) echoed in this song is used in a similarly derisive tone in reference to Lowlanders in a popular song from late-sixteenth-century Lochaber.[22]

Ailean seems to characterize alien peoples in North America by their skin colours. The colour *buidhe* is probably used here to describe Indigenous Americans. The only other example of which I am aware is a song-poem from the late eighteenth century in praise of the Black Watch that depicts among their enemies in North America "fir bhuidhe le'n tuaghaibh" (yellow-men with their axes).[23] The translation of Gaelic colour terminology into English is problematic not only because Gaelic divides the colour spectrum differently from English but also because of the semantic associations of colour terms. The term *buidhe* is used for a range of colours from light yellow to grey, but it also has associations with luck and thankfulness; the descriptor in this case may be a pun or may draw on both implications. This example illustrates some of the pitfalls of using English translations without considering Gaelic semantics.

This song demonstrates a common cultural and psychological desire to turn the shame of dispossession into a narrative of self-determination and triumph. As is visible in other sources, Gaels considered Lowlanders to be inferior to themselves, and their domination by them in the post-Culloden period was a cause of humiliation. Rather than allowing this exile to demoralize him, Ailean frames migration in heroic terms by using the model offered by Domhnall Donn. The rhetorical purpose of the appearance of foreign peoples here merely seems to be to depict the potential dangers to the migrants in the alien land to which they are headed and thus to make their bravery and achievement all the greater.

It is surely significant that Ailean projects the negative characteristics of the *Gall* upon people of colour rather than traditional rivals such as Lowlanders and Englishmen. This song was composed on

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the boat and does not reflect any actual experience in Nova Scotia. It is indicative, however, of the racial divisions that emerged in North America and foretokens the efforts of numerous immigrant groups later in the nineteenth century to improve their social status and access to privilege by distancing themselves from people of colour and affirming their inclusion in the white, "Anglo-Saxon" status quo.

SETTLEMENT AND INTERCOMMUNITY RELATIONS

I have recently examined Scottish Gaelic oral narratives about first encounters in Nova Scotia (c. 1770s–c. 1820s), concluding that these tales reveal the Gael's desire to explain their settlement of territories previously inhabited by First Nations in such a way as to minimize cognitive dissonance over the deprivation of Indigenous Americans.[24] Although these tales often acknowledge conflict, they represent the two peoples encountering each other on equal terms and do not reflect the ideology of racialism. They also subtly acknowledge common experiences of subjugation and the Gaels' sense of guilt about occupying Native territory.[25] The earliest of the tales in my previous analysis dates from 1926, but I have since located other, earlier variants recorded between 1908 and the 1920s. This material also demonstrates that not all Gaels revelled in the declined fortune of their Indigenous neighbours, as implied by statements such as Stoh's above; at least some were conscious of and regretful about their part in this marginalization.

One of few ethnographic descriptions of Indigenous Americans (in the sense that they have no obvious agenda beyond depicting a person or cultural practice) that I have found is in the form of a song-poem. Only two stanzas survive, transcribed from tradition-bearer Alasdair MacGilleBhàin of Port Hawksbury, who did not expect anyone else to remember it. The author was a MacLeòid of Margaree Harbour who had been dead forty years. It was believed to have been composed approximately fifty or sixty years before 1920 (i.e., between 1860 and 1870).

An àm dìreadh na bruthaich	When it was time to climb the bank
Cha bhi uireasbhuidh airm air;	He was not lacking in weapons;
Ged nach fhaiceadh tu 'aodann	Although you wouldn't see his face

'S math a dh'fhaodadh tu
aithneachadh:
Còta fada mu chaol-druim
'S e sgaoilte 's an earball;
'S briogais chumhang mu'n
chruachan
Air a fuaigheal mu'n chalpa
Mo rùn geal òg.
Nuair a thigeadh an oidhche
A rìgh! b' oillteill gàirich!
Le'm bàtaichean béilleig
Agus blaze air barr handspike;

Le'n gràpaichean iarainn
Ag iarraidh na làthaich
'S iad ag éigheach ri chéile
"Mada-wé magwa gàdach!"
Mo rùn geal òg.

You could recognize him easily
enough:
A long coat around his waist
Split at the back;
Tight trousers around the hips

Well sewn around his calves,
My fair young love.
When the night would come,
God! What frightening shouts!
With their bark canoes
And a blaze at the end of a
handspike;
With their iron hooks
Searching through the sediment
As they yelled to each other
"Mada-wé magwa gàdach!"
My fair young love.[26]

Alasdair MacGilleBhàin understood the Mi'kmaw phrase at the end to mean that eels were scarce. Intertextual allusion to the Gaelic corpus is important in analyzing this text. It is based on the lament "Mo Rùn Geal Òg," composed by Christina Ferguson for her husband, a Jacobite soldier killed at Culloden.[27] As is common in laments, the original song amplifies the pathos by enumerating the subject's many virtues and merits, praising his fair form and close-fitting clothing, and depicts him as a hunter and fisher (among other roles).

The surviving two stanzas of this Cape Breton song preserve the choral refrain of the original song, "Mo rùn geal òg" (My fair young love), and reflect the style of traditional Gaelic panegyric. Like the Jacobite song, the subject is depicted heroically as a hunter whose shapely form is easily recognized, especially by the cut of his clothing. The way that the Mi'kmaw are depicted fishing for eels, with a torch and spike, bears an obvious similarity to traditional spearfishing practices in the Highlands (mainly aimed at salmon and eels).[28] The insertion of a phrase in Mi'kmaw indicates a familiarity with the Native language.

Without the rest of the song, it is difficult to offer a definitive interpretation, but the author appears to depict his Indigenous American subject in a favourable light, namely by casting him in the traditional

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mould of a Highland warrior. Given that the song is modelled on a lament for a Jacobite soldier killed at Culloden, it may suggest concern for an endangered people or way of life. This implied affinity suggests empathy and the opposite of racial distancing.

EMIGRATION TO THE PRAIRIES

The large-scale settlement of the Canadian Prairies by European immigrants was made possible by the genocidal wars perpetrated on First Nations in the 1860s and 1870s on the US side of the border and by the defeats of the Red River Rebellion of 1869–70 and of the North-West Rebellion of 1885 on the Canadian side. These events demolished the already desperate Native population. In Scotland, on the other hand, the Land Agitation of the 1880s, in which crofters asserted themselves politically in a concerted manner for the first time, fuelled increased resistance to emigration schemes.

Indigenous Americans are mentioned in a few Gaelic song-poems about migration to and settlement in Manitoba. The most negative of these was composed by Eachann N(iall?) MacGilleathain and appeared in 1897 in *Mac-Talla*,[29] an all-Gaelic newspaper that was printed in Cape Breton with subscribers all across North America and Scotland. The author's origin and location, and the year when the song was composed, are not stated, but from its content it is likely to have been composed in the 1880s. The title of the piece is "Bean Bhochd am Manitòba" (A Poor Woman in Manitoba); the poet assumes a female persona, which may serve to heighten the pathos and sense of vulnerability. Without further information, it is not possible to say whether the poet is imagining what it would be like to be a poor woman forced to emigrate to Manitoba or whether he is recounting the experience of an actual woman he knows or has been told about. The first four stanzas begin a relentless list of complaints that are followed through in the next seven (although the final verse praises the company of a fellow Gael):

Is mise th' air mo leònadh	I have been pained
An dùthaich Mhanitòba	In the land of Manitoba
'Gam chiùrradh leis an lòinidh	Being inflicted with arthritis
Is deud mo bheòil air fuasgladh.	As the teeth of my mouth fall out.

Th' am fuachd cho mór 's an dùthaich seo	The cold is so great in this land
'S nach d'fhàg e neart no lùths annam	That is has left no strength or energy in me
Oir ged tha 'n fhiarag dùbailte	For even if my head-wrapping is doubled
Gun d' reòthadh cùl mo chluasan.	The backs of my ears are frozen off.
Tha madaidh-allaidh gharga	The fierce wolves
Mar ghainneamh tràigh na fairge	Are as numerous as the grains of a sandy beach
A' donnalaich 's an an-moch	Howling in the evening
'Cur farbhas oirnn is uamhas.	Causing us terror and loathing.
Tha Innseanaich ro-iargalt'	There are wild Indians
Gach oidhch' is là cur fiamh oirnn	Who make us afraid, day and night,
Cho dubh ri sùith th' am bian ac'	As black as soot is their hide
'S cha chuir an siabann snuadh air.	And soap will not improve their appearance.

This seems to be a callous portrayal of the Natives but not one that was necessarily meant to be realistic. The song is a warning to people contemplating settlement in the Prairies that they were not as perfect as portrayed in the idyllic propaganda used by emigration agents; it resembles the grievances voiced in other contemporary Gaelic texts.[30] The rhetorical purpose of this image of Indigenous Americans is to augment the hazards and risks to be met by Europeans in Manitoba. It is impossible to say whether this song was composed from personal experience in Canada or from the imagination of someone in Scotland rallying fellow crofters just as anti-emigration movements were gathering steam, but it would be unwise to use it to generalize Gaelic perceptions of First Nations.

Iain MacGilleathain, a native of Baile Phuill on the Island of Tiree, emigrated to Manitoba in 1877 along with all of his brothers save one.[31] His song "Òran Mhanitòba" was composed within two years of his arrival. Although the beginning of the song expresses nostalgia for the old homeland and anxiety about current conditions, the last three stanzas are more optimistic:

Am fearann a th'againn, 's ann
ainneamh tha 'shamhl':
Gun mhaide, gun chlach a
bhacas an crann;
Cho fad 's a bhios sinne mar
Thirisdich ann
'Se "Cnoc MhicGilleathain"
bhios aige mar ainm.
Chan fhaic thu ach
Innseanaich, mìltean gu leòr,
Cneapan mar sgathan 'nam
fàinn' air am meòir;
A' phlaid' air a filleadh mu
shlinnean 'na cleòc
'S a' bhriogais tha fodha gun
ghobhal gun tòn.
Ged tha sinn an-dràsd' fad o'r
càirdean gu léir
Ma bhios iad an làthair, thig
càch le'n toil fhéin
'S nuair gheibh sinn an t-àite gu
barr is gu feum
Cha bhi cuimhn' air na làithean
a dh'fhàg sinn 'nar déidh.

The land that we have hardly
has any equal:
Lacking sticks or stones that
can impede the plough;
As long as we are living here as
Tiree-folk
It will be known as "MacLean
Hill."
All you see are Indians,
thousands of them,
Wearing mirror-like beads as
rings on their fingers;
Wearing a pleated plaid over
their shoulders as a cloak
And trousers without a seat in
them.
Although we are far away from
all of our relations
If they survive, the rest will
come of their own volition
When we improve the place to
profitability
We won't remember the days
we left behind.[32]

The poet tells us in the first stanza of this excerpt that his new home will be given a Gaelic name to commemorate the provenance of the Highlanders who settled there and that the use of this place name will be directly related to the survival of their identity as Tiree people. The existence of this name, then, is the symbol of both the existence of the community and its members' memory of their origins.

The poet tells us in his final stanza that he expects he will eventually succeed on his newfound land to the point where he will thrive economically and where a chain of migration will bring all of his kinsfolk to him. With this prosperity, they will forget the hardship they had to endure in the past; indeed, a selective editing of poverty out of communal memory has been noted elsewhere in Gaelic Scotland and North America.[33]

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The position of the stanza depicting Indigenous Americans, sandwiched in between the two stanzas about remembering and forgetting, seems significant to me: it is noticeably similar to earlier descriptions of Highlanders and their clothing and decorative habits. This was an era when Gaelic norms, values, and self-image were in rapid transition, and Gaels often saw a resemblance between their own recent past and the present conditions of First Nations.[34]

This song, then, seems to mark a moment of self-consciousness in which Gaels are fluctuating between remembering and expunging the past; the desperate plight of the Indigenous Americans around them could potentially remind them of the painful memories of their own poverty and oppression in Scotland. Gaels were deciding whether they would remember this past, and thus keep open a potential imaginative bridge to First Nations, or forget the shame of this past, which would make assimilation into the anglophone mainstream easier but empathy with other subalterns more difficult.

CONCLUSIONS

The marginalization of Gaelic culture in Scotland in the medieval period and the more recent cultural subjugation subsequent to the defeat at Culloden were formative experiences that remained key points of reference in Highland cultural memory during the era of emigration. Many scholars have acknowledged the role of cultural imagination in the ways that history is constructed,[35] but to date inadequate attention has been paid to Gaelic sources, to the linguistic and literary precedents that have conditioned the Gaelic worldview and its perceptions, and to the influence of these factors on the cultural expressions of the Gaelic immigrant community. We simply cannot afford to ignore these issues if we want to understand how Scottish Gaels felt and thought about their experiences, communicated them to their community, and participated in the ongoing process of making sense of their world and their lives.

This chapter has analyzed examples of how Gaels made creative and selective use of tradition to express their perceptions of Indigenous Americans and, sometimes, their actual experiences of them. These depictions cover a range of sentiments, from hostility to empathy, all expressed in the native language of the emigrants, and exploit a range of literary devices, styles, and motifs from oral

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tradition, which was the community's common heritage and primary means of expression. Indeed, it is not possible to glean the full meaning and implications of individual texts without reading them against the larger corpus of verbal artistry to which they make implicit and explicit reference.

I have demonstrated that the figure of the Indigenous American in Gaelic literature is not always a literal depiction of an actual person but often a rhetorical device used to communicate a specific claim or idea to the poet's audience. Particular care must be taken in considering each piece – the author, his or her background and agenda, the context, and so on – before assuming that the piece says anything substantive about Gaelic perceptions of and relations with First Nations. Although some of these texts contain negative and derogatory statements reiterating colonial ideology, these statements represent only one end of the spectrum: statements of empathy with First Nations also appear in texts composed by and for Gaelic communities well before the decline of the British Empire.

NOTES

1 Newton, *We're Indians*, 42–7; Newton, *Warriors*, 44–79.
2 MacInnes, *Dùthchas*, 46.
3 MacDonell, ed., *Emigrant Experience*, 4–7; Newton, *We're Indians*, 43–7, 52–6, 77–8, 91–2, 114–16; Newton, *Warriors*, 35–6, 71–3, 353–6.
4 Hunter, *Dance Called America*, 227–43.
5 There is considerable disagreement and debate about which ethnonym is most appropriate to designate the peoples indigenous to the Americas not only by members of the political apparatus of modern nation-states of Canada and the United States but also in and between local communities themselves. I have chosen, for the purposes of this chapter, to use "Indigenous Americans" to refer to individuals (despite my reservation that indigeneity is a dimension of culture not specific to any continent or ethnic group) and "First Nations" to refer to communities.
6 Stroh, "Transperipheral Translations?" 259, 263, emphasis in original. See also Stroh, *Uneasy Subjects*, 194–200.
7 Newton, *We're Indians*, 231–5; MacInnes, *Dùthchas*, 360–4.
8 Newton, *We're Indians*, 122. The earliest source, the Gillies Collection of 1786, does not name the author. MacLagan is named as the author in the MacPhàrlain collection of 1813 and in the papers of the Reverend Duncan

MacFarlane of Drymen; see Glasgow University Library 1090, item 1090(84).9.

9 I disagree with the assertion in Strohe, *Uneasy Subjects*, 159–60, that the poem contains "a colonial preoccupation with race and an image of non-white men as a sexual threat to white women." Not only are the enemies – First Nations and French – lumped together, but this is too early a period for non-elite Gaels in Scotland (the audience of this song) to understand the implications of racialism.

10 Newton, *We're Indians*, 140.

11 Dziennik, "'Cutting Heads,'" 243.

12 Newton, *We're Indians*, 175–8, 239; Newton, "In Their Own Words," 18–20.

13 Newton, *We're Indians*, 178.

14 I will return to the development of this song and the legends surrounding its supposed author in a future publication.

15 Rankin, ed., *Às a' Bhràighe*, 17–18, 158–9.

16 Ibid., 74, my translation.

17 Sinclair, ed., *Gaelic Bards*, 116–18. Sinclair says that he was given this song by an unnamed informant who may well have been Alasdair the Ridge (son of Ailean). About Domhnall Donn, and the reliance of Sinclair upon Ridge sources, see Mac Gill-eain, *Ris a' Bhruthaich*, 211–34.

18 For discussion of Domhnall Donn in the context of seventeenth-century Gaelic outlaws and their poetry, see Stiùbhairt, "Highland Rogues."

19 Rankin, ed., *Às a' Bhràighe*, 11–16.

20 MacInnes, *Dùthchas*, 34–47; Newton, *Warriors*, 52–79; Stroh, *Uneasy Subjects*, 52–7.

21 Newton, "Scotland's Two Solitudes," 220–4.

22 Watson, ed., *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig*, line 6810.

23 Newton, *We're Indians*, 110. The song was composed by Iain MacGriogair.

24 For the case of a community within Cape Breton, see Bittermann, "Hierarchy of the Soil," 42–4. For more general coverage, see Calloway, *White People*, 201–29.

25 Newton, "Macs Meet the 'Micmacs.'"

26 Published in the Gaelic column of the *Sydney Post-Record* (Cape Breton), 13 November 1920, my translation.

27 Black, ed., *An Lasair*, 174–9.

28 Grant, *Highland Folk Ways*, 342.

29 *Mac-Talla*, vol. 5, no. 32 (13 February 1897), my translation. It may have been submitted by a contributor from Manitoba (MacDhomhnaill Bhreabadair) whose letter appears on the first page of the issue.

30 For example, see MacDonell, ed., *Emigrant Experience*, 149–55.
31 Cregeen, *Recollections*, 204–5.
32 Camshron, ed., *Na Baird Thirisdeach*, 228, my translation.
33 Cregeen, *Recollections*, 112, 240, 249.
34 Newton, "Celtic Cousins."
35 Cowan, "Scots Imagining."

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