Chapter Eight

A Scots 'Ennius' amongst the Gaels: Gaelic geography, ethnography and language in the *Grameid*

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James Philp of Almerieclose (c.1654–c.1714) is the author of a strange and largely unknown text that was composed in the aftermath of the Jacobite-Williamite war of 1689–90 in Scotland: the *Grameid*. He took part in the war on the Stuart side (indeed he was the standard bearer for his kinsman and leader of the rising John Graham, Viscount Dundee) and his poem is a fanciful retelling in neo-classical Latin of the people he encountered and the events that he witnessed. This conflict was grounded in concerns and contexts related to the religio-political civil wars of the mid-century. In Scotland an ethnic element further complicated the splits in the body-politic. The Gàidhealtachd, as it was only ever partially assimilated to the early modern Scottish state, was also only patchily penetrated by the Scottish Reformation. James Philp's career demonstrates however, how religious and political identities could cut across ethnic divides.

As a Lowland Scot he approached the Gàidhealtachd as a cultural outsider, but as an Episcopalian Jacobite he had much in common with the bulwark of the Jacobite clansmen.[1] Whilst Wilson McLeod has pointed out that it first appears in Scottish literature at just this historical moment, we must bear in mind that the traditional Gàidhealtachd/Galldachd split in Scottish cultural geography has always been to a certain extent imaginary, with permeations, cross-overs, and intersections at local and national levels (1999: 5). This is not to state that significant differences did not pertain. Even in the moment of 1689 the political aim of restoring the throne to the House

[1] Philp shows no evidence of possessing any knowledge of the Gaelic language beyond the most basic understanding of Gaelic patronymics. However, he does prove to be a keen observer of customs and culture.

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of Stuart, which was common to all the Jacobites, found support with Gaels and Lowland Scots for different reasons as both groups had developed different expectations of the crown, the kingdom of Scotland, and indeed the triple monarchy of the archipelago.[2] Philp's poem is, in a large part, a navigation of these sets of barriers and of the connections he felt between himself and the Gaels who made up the bulk of the Jacobite army. The choice to write in neo-Classical Latin, and in the epic mode, raises interesting questions about linguistic distance and translation that make Philp a vexed author and interpreter of what he saw and what he described. Written in ambitious Latin hexameters, the *Grameid* has been called the '[t]he first great work of Jacobite literature' (Kidd 1991: 133) and 'the last major attempt at a Latin epic written in the British Isles' (Pittock 2004). Both these claims may be open to challenges with the recent rediscovery and publication of the anonymous *Poema de Hibernia, a Jacobite Latin epic on the Williamite wars* – a text with fascinating parallels to Philp's in both context and content – but Philp's poem certainly remains the most important and unique text to emerge from early Jacobite Scotland.[3] Yet despite this it has received severely limited critical attention or acknowledgement.[4] The purpose of this current chapter is to begin to explore Philp's presentation of the Gaels, and the linguistic and cultural choices he had to make in doing so. This chapter will first analyse Philp's depiction of the Highland landscape, and then discuss his treatment of the Gaels' physical appearance, historiography, and language.

Philp's account of his journey towards the Gaels and the travails of that expedition reveal a great deal about his perceptions of both the physical and cultural geography of Scotland. The narrative of the *Grameid* follows John Graham from the Convention of Estates in Edinburgh on his journeys to Dundee, Inverness, and Lochaber, and his final approach towards Killiecrankie where the text abruptly cuts off – unfinished. His travels on behalf of the James VII take him to the heart of mainland Gaeldom:

[2] In this article *Gaels* refers to Gaelic speakers and the terms *Scots* or *Lowland Scots* are used to denote Scots speakers. In the early modern period it is clear that Gaels and Lowland Scots often had significantly different cultural and social experiences, and the extent to which they both identified with a Scottish nation or state is a matter of ongoing research and debate.

[3] For a description of the efforts to publish this poem and for a digest of its contents see Keith Sidwell (2012: 250-67). Lenihan and Sidwell (2018) date this poem to between 1691-1693, which overlaps with the earliest possible dates for Philp's composition.

[4] It found an early admirer in Drummond of Balhaddy, who had access to it when writing the corresponding narrative of his *Memoirs of Lochiell*, and attempted some translations in heroic couplets (1842: 235-250). Philp's only editor, the Episcopalian Rev. Alexander D. Murdoch, traces the discernible manuscript history of the poem through various Episcopalian ecclesiastics, antiquaries, and the Scottish Advocates Library (Philp 1888: xxvii-xxxiv).

O Fergusiadum semper domus ardua regum
Abria, magnorumque altrix animosa virum gens

O lofty Lochaber, always a home for the Kings of Fergus' line, already the bold nurse of great men

(Philp 1888: 3.448–449)[5]

The journeys of the great royalist general, accompanied by his poet – *Sic medio bellorum in turbine fortem / Scipiadem ipse pater stipaverat Ennius olim* 'Thus did Father Ennius amid the storms of war, follow the heroic Scipio' (Philp 1888: 2.149–150) – become a poetic penetration into the Highlands by men describing in wonder (admixed with horror) entirely new experiences and sights. Just as Ennius – the most significant early poet of Ancient Rome – accompanied Scipio – one the of the greatest heroes of that republic, so Philp envisages himself as the epic chronicler of the glorious exploits of the Jacobites. This sense of an exulted and authoritative position and perspective can be seen throughout the entire poem, and to match this Philp elevates and magnifies his subject matter. Dundee and his march to Inverness is described in vaulting tones:

Alipedum jam Marte ferox rapit agmen equorum,
Et petit aerios, Grampi trans culmina, montes
Ad boream, aeternis horrentiaque arva pruinis,
Martia Grampiacos ut mittat in arma colonos
Legitimi quibus est nomen venerabile Regis.

Now roused to war, he carries his troop of wing-footed horse over the Grampians, through regions of perpetual frost. He seeks those lands that he may send forth the sons of the hills in martial enterprise. In them was a reverence for the name of the lawful King.

(Philp 1888: 2.161–165)

[5] Alexander Murdoch's translation of the *Grameid* is largely serviceable (indeed, I am particularly indebted to him for his painstaking identification of place and personal names which are not always immediately obvious from the Latin), however his translation is often more of a paraphrase than a full translation and frequently compresses or occludes the elaborate descriptive elements of Philp's verse. I have opted to retain Murdoch's readings by and large, but wherever I judge his rendering is erroneous, or if it obscures or overly compresses the original, I have supplied my own. All translations provided are those of the cited editions unless stated otherwise.

In Philp's poetic imagination the Grampians (which stand in for all the mountain ranges of north and west Scotland) form a permanent boundary of ice and cold. This sense of a discrete and bounded zone is enforced a few lines further in the description of the movements of the opposing general, Hugh MacKay of Scourie: *Interea arctois M'Kaius appulit oris, / Jussus ad extremos boreae penetrare recussus* 'Meanwhile MacKay advances towards the North, with orders to penetrate to its utmost bounds' (Philp 1888: 2.173–4). This is juxtaposed with the tilled lands of the Scottish east coast that Dundee passes by: *Ad Bacchi Cererisque insignem munere Ketham* 'We come to Keith, famous for the gifts of Bacchus and Ceres', and *Tandem inter dulces Forressae insedimus agros, / Monstrat frugiferas ubi laeta Moravia messes* 'At length we rest mid the sweet fields of Forres, where gladsome Moray is wont to show her rich harvests' (Philp 1888: 2.247; 2.253–254)). The contrast between the ice-bound north and the tilled, ordered and bountiful Lowlands is stark.

Yet the emphasis of this distinction is not a simple dichotomy of good and bad, civil and barbarous – although there are elements of this – but rather a nuanced, and highly original, poetic imagining of the spaces of Scottishness takes place. The journey to Lochaber and the description of its environs is the highpoint of this poetic conception. On the exposed Rannoch Moor, the scene is one of otherworldly desolation, which though certainly hyperbolic, contains a sentiment psychologically credible for a comfortably settled member of the landed gentry of Arbroath. Led on by the indomitable Dundee the loyal band enter a new zone of experience:

Verna licet patulos vestiret gloria campos,
Tyndaridumque polo sidus praefulserit alto,
Membra pruinosis convellimus algida stratis;
Incompti glacie horrentes riguere capilli,
Diraque ab intonsis pendebat stiria barbis.

Although the spring-time glory adorned the wide sweeping plains, and the constellation of the Tyndaridae may have shone forth in the lofty heavens, we wrench our cold limbs from their frosty coverlets, our dishevelled hair is standing on end and grown stiff with ice, and cruel icicles hung down from our beards.

(Philp 1888: 2.698–702 [my translation])

The march across the Highlands takes Dundee's band past the realms of normal human experience and requires the superhuman dedication of their leader:

Jamque viam carpit, scopulosaeque ardua rupis,
Excelsoque apices scandit, praeruptaque saxa,
Perpetuo damnata gelu, loca nullius ante
Trita pede, et nullis equitum calcata catervis.
Tristiaque aeternum spirantes frigora montes
Tranat, et exesis juga cautibus invia transit.
Rupibus imposuitque jugum, caeloque minantes
Submisit scopulos, et ferrea claustra reclusit
Naturae, celsos et saxa aequantia nimbos
Transiit aereis volucrum vix pervia pennis.

And now he follows the path and clambers up the heights of rocky cliffs and of lofty summits, and scales broken precipices. Regions damned to perpetual snow, and never before trodden by the foot of man or horse. He sails across mountains eternally exhaling gloomy winter, and crosses inaccessible ridges. Summits of rock, threatening to heaven, submitted to him, and he opens the iron bolts of nature. He crossed over rocky places reaching as high as the lofty clouds, hardly traversed by the airy wings of birds.

(Philp 1888: 2.703–712 [my translation])

These lines demonstrate the efforts Philp went to describe and magnify the experience of a Lowland band caught up in the Highlands. Against this desolate landscape Philp begins to paint a negative picture of the mundane farmlands of the Lowlands. We are told that Dundee

Posthabitis patuli trepidis cultoribus agri,
Ignavum bello genus, et mercedibus emptum;
Turbamque imbellem, molles et spernit agrestes

despised the Lowland race, slow to war and ready for a bribe – the cowardly herd of easy-going rustics, the faithless inhabitants of the well-tilled lands.

(Philp 1888*:* 3.206–208)

In this epic the normal delights of the pastoral are juxtaposed with the sublimity of a savage and untamed landscape. This inversion of classical spatial poetics goes hand in hand with Philp's unique characterisation of the

Gaels themselves, which goes beyond normal tropes of barbarity, and who occupy an uneasy and ambiguous space within the Scottish body politic. In tandem with this inversion is Philp's extravagance of scale and of the enormity of places people and events. As Luke Houghton notes 'the sheer scale of the arena in which the action of *Grameid* is played out dwarfs even the most gargantuan expeditions known to the ancient world, or conceived by the literary imagination' (2012: 201). We are told that *Hannibal haud tanto contrivit saxa labore / Cum flamma aereas et aceto rumperet Alpes* 'Hannibal, with less labour, clave his way, by vinegar and flame across the lofty Alps' (Philp 1888: 2.713–714). Unlike Hannibal, who crossed the Alps as a would-be conqueror, Dundee's arrival in Lochaber to raise a Jacobite army is pictured as a return to a right pattern and right relationship with the land: *Abria jam gremio Gramum accipit ardua laeto* 'Gladly Lochaber receives the Graham into her bosom' (Philp 1888: 2.729). Once in Lochaber Dundee's party look on the almost blasphemous mass of Ben Nevis:

Vel qua Balnavius ingens
Emicat, et salebris, durique crepidine saxi
Arduus, et magno attollens fastigia mole
Exsurgentem apicem stellanti immittit Olympo;

Here noble and steep Ben Nevis springs from the rutted ground, and, from her foundations of cruel rock, a swelling mass of slopes and exalting peaks she hurls into starry Olympus.

(Philp 1888: 3.16–3.19 [my translation])

Like his description of Ben Nevis itself, his hexameters attempt to soar up and up into peaks of rhetorical excess. Nevertheless, Philp participates in the creation of an aesthetic of the sublime which would become a driving force in British letters in the next century. By going beyond classical tropes of pastoral space, and moving into an ambiguous area of wildness, Philp's use of space and place is a new phenomenon in Scottish letters. It certainly predates – and possibly anticipates – the use of landscape and place by the likes of Allan Ramsay or James Thomson.[6]

The sight of Ben Nevis draws two related exclamations from the Lowland travellers:

[6] See Louisa Gairn (2015: 133-135). See also James S. McIntyre (2008: 1-35), his discussion of the '*locus amoenus*' and the '*locus horridus*' in Classical epic provides a salutary overview of Latin and Greek treatments of topography and especially of the pastoral space.

meta est certe ultima longe
Abria terrarum, quascunque liquentibus ulnis
Astrorum nutrix amplectitur Amphitrite.

Lochaber, surely, is the extremity of that earth, which Amphitrite, nurse of the stars, holds in her watery bosom.

(Philp 1888: 3.43–45)

And this is then extended:

Jam certe extremis terrarum insedimus oris,
Obris et arctoi fines, spatia ultima mundi
Emensi, terras longinqua sede repostas
Oceani, penitusque alio sub sidere gentes
Vidimus indomitas, toto et procul orbe revulsas
Hebridas, et populos incinctos cernimus usque
Montibus aëreis, gelidoque sub axe jacentes.

We have surely come to the limits of the North, and to those islands where indomitable races of men have settled under another sky, the Hebrides – torn off from the rest of the world. We see around us people enclosed by lofty mountains, under a bitter climate.

(Philp 1888: 3.50–56)

The extremity of this position at the edge of the map is linked directly to the type of people that can dwell there. Philp's *Grampigenae* 'children of the Grampians' are given a distinct genealogy and appearance, linking them to their surroundings in a unique way. Philp talks about their *Gorgonei* 'Gorgon' eyes, he describes them as *picta croco, glastoque infecta* 'painted with yellow and woad' [my translation] – a description which could refer to clothing or tattooing or both – and compares them to *gigantes* 'giants', *immanes Scythas* 'immense Scythians' [my translation] and the *pictos Agathyrsos* 'painted Agathyrsi' (Philp 1888: 3.69, 3.72–74).[7] These descriptions blend together various classical descriptions of barbarism, as well as contemporary

[7] The last a direct quotation from Virgil, see *Aeneid* (1999: 4.146). *Picta* is surely deliberately reminiscent of the Picts.

ethongraphic discourses on the Celtic peoples.[8] They are *nudi humeris, nudique pedes* 'naked as to feet and shoulders' (Philp 1888: 3.75) and much of their vast, painted bodies and monstrous faces are fully revealed to the onlooker. Though the barbarism of the grotesque body is perhaps slightly softened by the classical martial nudity of the Gael, this description ties them into the immense strangeness of their habitat, and makes them unmistakably other and different from the poet and his audience.

The Gaels' place in early modern Scotland, regardless of the political intricacies of Jacobitism, or even the religious splits of the clans, was a vexed one. Philp's emphasis on the geographical place of the Gaels makes this clear. Their cultural integration into the Scottish polity is difficult to fully assess. Certainly a general loyalty to the Scottish crown can be identified, and after the Statutes of Iona (1609) perhaps a greater engagement with Lowland culture, but as Cairns Craig has opined 'it is questionable the extent to which […] the two cultures constituting that of Scotland were bilingual and bicultural and how far they constituted two parallel, but separate, cultures and languages inhabiting one political space' (Craig 2007: 21). Philp's presentation of the Gaels and the Gàidhealtachd is underpinned by the sort of weight of classical allusions and references that we might expect in a neo-Latin epic (Murdoch 1888: xxxv–xxxvi; Houghton 2012: 190; Pittock 1994: 40). However, the Matter of Scotland, the vexed and compromised historiographical exposition of Scotland's ethnic and political past by the likes of Hector Boece and George Buchanan, forms another key framework for Philp to understand and represent the place of the Gaels in early modern Scotland. This historiographical tradition located the foundation of the Scottish kingdom in the mythical arrival of Fergus MacFerchard from Ireland and his establishment of a line of kings. This narrative was seen to contradict and oppose the Galfridian mythology, espoused in much English historiography, of the Trojan, Bruttian establishment of an original pan-Britannic imperium.[9]

The irony that Philp, a Lowlander, brings this interpretive framework to bear on the Gaels is that it originated with native Gaelic historiography but, as McLeod has pointed out, had 'continued in Lowland Scotland throughout

[8] See Philp (1888: 83n) for discussion of seventeenth century linking of the ancient Picts and the modern Gaels. See also Kidd (1999) for discussion of the various early modern genealogies of the Gaels that struggled to place them into recognised classical and biblical ethnic groups and family trees.

[9] For the two most influential Scottish narratives of Fergus's arrival in Scotland see: Boethius (1571: 1.19-21) and Buchanan (1582: 2.18). The *locus classicus* for the Bruttian narrative is Geoffrey of Monmouth (1973: 53-74).

the late medieval period, but largely disappear[ed] from the Gàidhealtachd – and, evidently, from the bardic schools – almost as if the enterprise had been appropriated by outsiders' (2004: 125). Early modern Gaelic sources such as the MacMhuirich histories of Clanranald still dutifully maintained the narrative that Fergus came from Ireland and established the Scottish kingdom, but in both vernacular and classical Gaelic poetry of the time, the emphasis on pedigree and genealogy had a clan focus, and often led back to foundational Irish or Norse heroes (Cameron, MacBain, Kennedy 1894, vol. II: 150). Thus the great Mac Dhòmhnaill poet, Iain Lom of Keppoch (c.1624–c.1707), refers to Clann Caimbeul as *Sliochd Dhiarmaid* 'descendants of Diarmaid' or his kinsmen in Clann Dòmhnaill as being descended from *Fuil uasal Chuinn Cheudaich* 'noble blood of Conn of the Hundred Battles' (Iain Lom 1964: 486, 1285). The starkest illustration of these different approaches to Gaelic genealogy come when Iain Lom and Philp depict the same event – Dundee addressing a speech to the assembled Gaels. In the *Grameid* Dundee hails them as the *magni Fergusi clara propago* 'bright sons of mighty Fergus', whereas Iain Lom has Dundee address them as *A chlanna nan Gàidheal* 'Sons of the Gael' (Philp 1888: 3.405; Iain Lom 1964: 2371). It is worth noting that any speech Dundee would have made would have been in neither Latin nor Gaelic, but Scots. This is in stark contrast to the Williamite general, Hugh MacKay, for whom Gaelic was his mother tongue, a fact Philp acknowledges: *Scaurius, extremae prope natus ad aequora Thulae, / Atque eadem patriae retinens commercia lingua* 'He of Scourie, born near the waters of Thule, and speaking the native tongue' (Philp 1888: 3.378–379). We have then the prospect of a mainly Gaelic force being led by a Lowland Scot, and a mainly Lowland force being led by a Gael.

Philp's terms for the inhabitants of Scotland, though varied, seem indifferent; there is little to differentiate between: *Scotigenam* 'the Scottish race', *Caledonii* 'Caledonians', *Scotis* 'Scots' (Philp 1888: 1.508; 1.536; 1.509). A more exact nomenclature develops around the Fergusian myth itself. There is an emphatic clustering of terms establishing a link between the *Fergusiadae* 'sons of Fergus', the *Grampigenae*, and the *Monticolae* 'Highlanders' (Philp 1888: 4.471; 3.344; 2.188). These names derive either from the house of Fergus itself or the from the mountainous landscape of the Highlands. Directly related to this cluster of terms is the treatment given to the Stuart dynasty itself which is almost unvaryingly referred to as the House of Fergus. Through his terminology Philp explicitly depicts within Scotland an authentic Fergusian residuum which is specifically associated with both the contemporary Gaels and the House of Stuart. Any reference to the glory

of the Scots more generally is located in the past and is indeed deliberately contrasted with the present:

Sed nunc degeneres animi nil praeter inanes
Gloriolae fumos, et inertem nominis umbram.

But now we, degenerate men, possess nothing but the empty vapour of glory, the dim shadow of a name.

(Philp 1888: 1.522–523)

The irony of this position is neatly encapsulated by Colin Kidd who argues that Gaeldom 'which in practice constituted the periphery of the Scottish nation, and was treated accordingly in the public policy of an anti-pluralist centre, continued – as its recognised aboriginal heartland – to define Scotland's identity and the historical legitimacy of its institutions' (Kidd 1999: 127). Whilst this is true in the main for seventeenth century Scotland, the reuse of Fergusian history largely became a Jacobite endeavour after the 1688 revolution. The advantage for Philp in identifying the Gaels and the House of Stuart as related descendants of Fergus was no doubt the ballast of antiquity and legitimacy in comparison to the opposing Williamite monarchy. The loss for Philp in this act of identification is that the Lowland Scots take a secondary place in the Scottish kingdom, and are accorded less prestige and importance than the Gaels.

Philp's solution to this tension is, in part, to develop his own genealogy and myth-history for the Scottish Gaels within the overarching Fergus narrative. Philp recounts a narrative (otherwise unattested) about the establishment of King Fergus and about the origins of the Gaels themselves.

Olim siderea cum nondum sede potitus
Jupiter, aut patrio pulsus Saturnus Olympo,
Fama refert vacuos sine tecto errasse per agros
Semiferum genus hoc hominum, et si credere dignum,
Gens erat illa prior Luna, et radiantibus astris,
Quae nata e ramis, et duri robore trunci
Sponte sua ad terram, Zephyro motante cadebat.

The story goes, that before Jupiter possessed the throne, or Saturn was driven from Olympus, this semi-barbarous race was already wandering naked in these desolate regions, and (if it may be believed) that it existed before the moon and the light-

giving stars, and that it sprang spontaneous from the branches and trunk of the oak, and by the movement of the zephyrs was shaken to the ground.

(Philp 1888: 3.85–91)

There are two things to note about this description: the Gaels are said to be *semiferum* 'semi-barbarous', and are a pre-Saturnian race originating before the Hesiodic or Ovidian Ages of Man; and falling outside of all normative origins they are in essence an emanation of their own *vacuos agros* 'desolate regions'. Their generation is likened to the *hyperboreis anser silvester* 'wild goose of the North', i.e. the barnacle geese which in medieval and early modern bestiaries were said to originate from barnacles hanging from rotten wood – *Sic fere Grampiadum stirps edita frondibus, altis/ Ut ramis delapsa solum simul attigit, artus, / Induit humanos, vitalesque hauserat auras* 'So – it is said – did the fierce races of the Grampians spring from the leaves, and falling from the branches, assumed human form and life on touching the soil' (Philp 1888: 3.92; 3.102–104). This race is described as *Monstrum, informe, ingens, seu cruda Libistidis ursae / Progenies* 'monstrous, mis-shapen, immense, as the rough progeny of the Libyan bear', and were *nulla arte politum* 'polished by no art' (Philp 1888: 3.105–106). The natural, original shape and state of the Gaels is pre-human, beastly, and uncivilised. Their closeness to nature is emphasised to signal their unnatural state.

This history is all of Philp's own imagining; no other comparable myths come down from the Lowlands and certainly not from the Gaels themselves, but Philp then welds his rough beasts into the Fergusian narrative:

Tandem decursi post longa volumina sêcli,
Primus ab aequorea veniens Fergusus Ierna
Prisca Caledonii posuit fundamina Regni

At length, after the long lapse of ages, Fergus the First, coming from sea-girt Ireland, laid the foundation of the Caledonian Kingdom.

(Philp 1888: 3. 121–123)

Fergus's landing is the transformational moment that clothes the *Grampigenae* with human dignity. At first we are told that

Et sibi belligeras late victricibus armis
Addiderat gentes, terrasque in fronte Britannae
Dorides imperio, et magna ditione tenebat.

Martius at juveni postquam deferbuit ardor,
Jam meliora sequens, et rebus pace sequestra
Compositis, placidas sese convertit ad artes.

Under his sway he brought the warlike races of the [British] sea-board, and when martial ardour had cooled, he guided his people into the peaceful arts.

(Philp 1888: 3.124–129)

Amongst the British peoples, Fergus is figured as a benign conqueror administering *Jura aequa* 'just laws' to the subjugated peoples (Philp 1888: 3.130). However, there is a more sinister side to this colonisation and civilising of barbarity. On *Audierat gentem indomitam per secula celsis / Insedisse jugis* 'hearing that [in Lochaber] an indomitable race had been established for ages' Fergus was *subito inflammatus amore / Augendi imperii fines* 'suddenly inflamed with desire to increase the bounds of empire' (Philp 1888: 3.134–135 [my translation]). The Abrians/Abraich are treated as *saevas* 'wild beasts' and are surrounded on Ben Nevis where:

Implicuitque plagis laqueisque ingentibus, illi
Clamores tollunt horrendos, unde profundae.
Insonuere umbrae, crebrisque ululatibus ingens
Silva gemit, resonantque cavis e vallibus antra.

He hemmed them in a mighty web and snare from whence they raise an awful wailing. The shadows discharge clamours and the mighty wood groans with constant shrieking till the caves and valleys echo.

(Philp 1888: 3.153–156 [my translation])

The poet here indirectly describes the gruesome sounds of the massacre, but disdains to depict Fergus as bloody or brutal, indeed the very next line lauds Fergus in stentorian tones as *Pater arctoae domitor carissimus orae / Fergusus* 'Father of the North, the illustrious lord of the coast' (Philp 1888: 3.157–158). In this narrative the *Grampigenae* are treated as a distinct race from the other Britons conquered by Fergus, a race requiring much more brutal modes of pacification.

The *Grampigenae*, so often referred to as the sons of Fergus, are Fergusian only by dint of brutal subjugation and domestication. Fergus who trains them in *institique modum vitae melioris, et artes / Tradidit ingenuas, legesque et foedera rerum / Edidit* 'a better mode of life, the liberal arts and laws', and from whom

Et pecori cultum, Cererique impendere curam
Edocuit, curvique usum monstravit aratri;
Venatu assiduo jejunia longa domare,
Et tolerare famem male gratam, et frigora et aestus
Erudiit, mentem et docilem simul imbuit almis
Praeceptis, monitisque et religione Deorum.

They learn the care of flocks, and the use of the plough, and skill in hunting, and he imbues their docile minds with the benign precepts of religion.

(Philp 1888: 3.169–174)

In this way the primacy of Fergus and his royal descendants is asserted over the Gaels whom he rules as imperial subjects, whilst his introduction of culture is credited as the origin of their love for their kings. Indeed their historical royalism is figured as an innate inheritance of gratitude to Fergus:

Hinc et hyperborei magnum Jovis incrementum
Ad natos natorum aeterno foedere surgit,
Et facti decus, et soboli jam rebus egenis
Inconcussa fides manet, aeternumque manebit,
Quam nec longa dies, dubii aut discrimina fati,
Solvere nec possunt violenti fulmina belli,
Ambitiove levis, nec duro mota tumultu
Seditio, aut dubiis anceps fortuna procellis.

Hence, too, this great and never-failing Highland contingent appears to up-hold the throne, one generation succeeding another, in glorious deeds and un-contaminated fidelity, and will for ever be steadfast through hardship, changes of fortune, fierce war, and the tumults of sedition.

(Philp, 1888: 3.180–187)

As Murray Pittock observes, this passage demonstrates that the glorification of the Highland patriot was not 'a creation of the sham Celtification of nineteenth-century Scotland' (1994: 41). On the other hand, this is a fascinating volte-face in normal depictions of the Gaels, which usually emphasised (not without some legitimacy) their disobedience to the crown and their

disruptive interjections into Scottish civil life.[10] In Philp however the Highlander becomes an icon of loyalty to the monarchy:

Sed temeratus honos, et Regum laesa potestas,
Et civile nefas, vetitique licentia ferri,
Et struere arte dolos, fraudemque innectere Regi
Irritatque animum, et generosas provocat iras.
Gloria quin Regum mentes accendit honestas,
Et decor infandos impulsat adire labores,
Pro quibus egregiam haud dubitant per vulnera mortem
Oppetere, et certae caput objectare ruinae.
Namque ab avis, et avorum atavis ab origine prima
Fida leonigeros venerata est Abria Reges.

The defaming of their King, the attack on his power, civil treachery, the purchased desertion of his soldiery, all enrage their minds and provoke a generous wrath. The glory of their King fires their noble minds, and his honour impels to desperate labours, to wounds and death. From their first ancestors, from the origin of the race, they derive their veneration for the lion-bearing kings.

(Philp 1888: 3.188–197)

Philp's depiction of the Gaels is vexed and contentious to say the least. His sublime imagining of the geography of the Highlands and Islands is matched by the scale and strangeness of the people he describes as a direct emanation from that landscape. His willingness to use, but also to subvert, the Fergus narrative perhaps provides an attempt at a mythic aetiology for the contemporary loyalty of the Gaels to the *leonigeros Reges*, the King of Scots. Vital to all of his project is his clear sense of difference and partial alienation from what he saw and experienced. This sense of distance is rendered more stark by the language he uses. To use the learned language of Latin rather than one of Scotland's vernaculars was a conscious choice made by many Scottish writers of the early modern period. Philp's obviously dexterous and free use of Latin in his verses demonstrates an intellect that found like many other Scottish writers a 'home from home' in the Latin language (Kidd 1991: 113).

[10] For example William Drummond castigates the clans for lack of integration into the Scottish polity and emphasises their socially disruptive nature: 'The God, Prince, Law which they obey are their barbarous Chieftains, amongst which he is thought best who doth most transcend in Villainy' (1655: 12).

Despite this comfortable and – in Scottish terms – well precedented position, of writing about Scotland in Latin, Philp's text embeds the very tensions this position elicited; the Latinisation of the Gaels is at once a Fergusian advent of civilisation, but also a recognition and repetition of otherness and barbarity. The grandiose depiction of the Highland landscape and the Gaels themselves is coupled with a patriotic insistence that that these peoples and this geography have maintained their purity and sovereignty throughout the many alarums of history. For Philp, Scotland, and Scottish independence, have been maintained by force against the might of Rome, Saxons, and the English, yet his poetic journey into the Gàidhealtachd represents a final penetration of Rome into the heartland of Scotland (Philp 1888: 1.486–496; 1.486–496). The contact of the Latin language with Gaelic causes him notable discomfort.[11] Whilst listing the different clans assembling under the Jacobite standard, Philp takes a brief moment to mourn the uncouth Gaelic names his Latin pen is forced to domesticate: *quorum / Horrescunt Latiae tam barbara nomina Musae* 'barbarous names at which the Latin Muse shudders' (Philp 1888: 4.211–214). This brief foregrounding of Philp's process and difficulties of translation should alert to us the overdetermined and problematic nature of his Latinity and his Latinising of the Gael. His decision to write in Latin – no matter how competent with the language he was – necessitated a translation of his experiences and ideas into a language loaded with specific social and cultural expectations. Kidd has spoken about the privileging of Latin letters by Scottish Jacobitism and Scottish Episcopalianism more generally, but James Philp's foray into the 1689 rising breaks new representational ground and encounters serious challenges. By avoiding writing in Scots or English, Philp sidesteps the long histories of denigrating the Gaelic and Irish other by both cultures, but his encounter with the Gael is perplexing and clearly difficult to poeticise without ambiguities bordering contradictions. The repeated emphasis, both narratorial and from Gaelic characters themselves, on the purity of Gaelic history from outside invasion is vexed by the narrator's own admission that not only did the Gaels originate as proto-human monsters, but their contemporary language and customs also smack of barbarism (Philp 1888: 3.448–459). The smooth polish of his Latin hexameters only emphasises this almost comic juxtaposition to Philp and perhaps also to his intended readers who shared his cultural respect for the Latin tongue. Latinising the Gael, even if the intention is to glorify them, always runs the risk of rendering them either comic rustics or threatening

[11] He was clearly unaware of the long history of Latin literacy in Gaelic culture.

savages. Philp's often ingenious representation of Gaelic names and places involves a literary domestication; his verse emphasises their contradictory roles as heroic warriors and inhuman barbarians and yet their appearance in their alien linguistic garb is simultaneously emasculating. Their shackling to a history that they themselves had long learned to treat with caution, and indeed the embellishment of that history with an exotic grotesquery, actually minimises their agency and renders them little more than a latent force inherent to the Highland landscape.

It is clear that Philp does new things with his Gaelic characters and landscapes. His celebration (always, however, teetering on the brink of abomination) of an awesome landscape is unprecedented in Scottish depictions of place, and indeed in Latin verse more generally. His reshaping of Scottish and Gaelic history both reinscribes the Gaels at the heart of Scottish identity, and simultaneously undermines their status – casting them as conquered aboriginals who are less than fully consanguine with Scottishness. Whilst Philp echoes the first Latin writer on Scotland and puts a Calgacan defence of Scottish liberty into Gaelic mouths, this ventriloquism is much the same as Tacitus's – a use of the other to articulate and voice the anxieties of the self (in Tacitus's case the degeneration of Roman virtues, in Philp's the corrosive splits in the Scottish body politic).[12] The tension Philp maintains throughout this Janus-headed depiction of the Gaels complicates any easy reading of his own mapping of the cultural geography of Scotland. His vision for Scotland as a whole is easier to interpret, he boldly claims that it is the:

Gloria Scotorum
[…]
Imperiis nunquam externi parere tyranni
Nec tolerare jugum, aut dominis servire superbis
Sueta, nec injecto servilia vincula collo
Passa, nec hostiles errare impune maniplos,
Scotia plebeios nec gesserat inclyta fasces,
Substitit hic domito Romana potentia mundo;
Atque triumphatis utroque a cardine terris
Scotia limes erat, Romanaque repulit arma.

[12] For the Caledonian warlord's speech before the battle of Mons Graupius, see Tacitus (1970: 30-32). For identification of other Tacitean moments in Philp see Pittock (1994: 41).

The Glory of the Scots
[…]
Never to yield to the empires of foreign tyrants, nor to bear the yoke, or accustomed to be slaves to arrogant lords, nor to suffer the servile chain around their necks, nor had renowned Scotland born plebeian fasces, nor had she come under the harsh laws of an enemy; here halted Roman sovereignty over a beaten world, Roman arms were here repelled, and the border of Scotland was a limit to their triumphs.

(Philp 1888: 1.486–496 [my translation])

Philp's poem is then is as much a presentation of a patriotic and unifying vision of Scotland and its history, as it is a description of the Gaels or the Lowlanders. Indeed, with its ambiguous and sometimes outright contradictory sentiments, perhaps it is wrong to look for a consistent depiction of either the Gaels or the Scots in the *Grameid*. Latin may have seemed like a neutral medium for such a poem, however, the loaded associations of learned gravity that come with Latin epic render it a far from straightforward mode of representation for Philp's complex navigation of Scottish identities. The linguistic, confessional, and political divisions within Scotland are ultimately a source of pain for Philp, and his elegant Latin poem is as much imbued with mourning for the riven body politic as it is propagandistic bombast for his own party's fortunes.

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