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Celtic Cousins or White Settlers?
Scottish Highlanders and First Nations

The interaction between Scottish Highlanders and First Nations tends to be oversimplified both in popular and academic discourse. On the one hand, the facile assumption is sometimes made that as "tribal" people who had been displaced and subjugated by an anglophone empire, they made natural allies and can be lumped together in the same category. On the other hand, others lump all "Britons" together as though they were homogenous English-speaking White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (a convenient assumption for the majority of scholars who are unable to read or contextualize Gaelic, Irish, Manx, and Welsh texts).

It would not be prudent to make simplistic and sweeping generalizations about the many encounters that happened between the First Nations of North America and immigrant Scottish Gaels in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. For one, First Nations were highly distinctive groups of different peoples; even Gaels themselves tended to belong to discrete groups ("clans") with specific identities, traditions and traits. Furthermore, the elites of all these sets of peoples had been exposed to institutions of mercantilism, colonization, and acculturation by this time. Finally, all of these sets of peoples were subject to rapid and fundamental acculturation during this period as subalterns subsumed within the British Empire.[1]

Encounters between First Nations and Scottish Gaels occurred in many different places by people who had been conditioned by specific experiences and who had particular agendas of their own. It made a great difference whether the Highlanders involved were disbanded soldiers who had fought in the Seven Years' War settling on land-grants given by the King as reward for their service, fur traders working on behalf of a multi-national

corporation such as the Hudson's Bay Company, or poor, landless peasants who were deported to North America.

The perceptions that Scottish Gaels had of Native Americans should be analyzed by considering them within the framework of mutually connected perceptions between Gaels, anglophones, and First Nations and the distortions inherent in them, just as we might look at a set of increasingly warped images in a hall of mirrors. We can look for traces of perceptions of race and identity, and processes of cultural syncretism, in texts produced in the asymmetrical dialogue happening between these poles, with the caveat that these peoples are all in transition, not static "essences." In a thorough examination of mutually interacting perceptions and relationships, we could pose a set of questions on our sources that would include the following:

1. What were the anglophone notions of civility and civilization and how were notions of the non-civilized Other projected in order to justify empire?

2. How were these projections moulded to depict Gaels and First Nations? How did these two colonial projections inform each other?

3. What did Native Americans think of the anglophone world and the anglophone projections upon them?

4. What did Native Americans think of Scottish Gaels in terms of actual human interaction as well as anglophone projections in literature?

5. What did Scottish Gaels think of themselves before and in response to and participation in colonization?

6. How did Scottish Gaels absorb anglocentric projections, through what channels and in what contexts?

7. How did these projections, and participation in colonization, affect Gaelic perceptions of Native Americans?

And so on...

Once we start to pose questions about Gaelic perceptions (i.e., 5, 6, and 7), especially amongst the non-elite, it is crucial that we attempt to answer them by reference to texts composed in the language that the vast majority of the non-elite spoke at this time: Scottish Gaelic. The range of texts now available for analysis is limited by the fact that few Highlanders were literate in their own language and most Gaelic-speaking communities lost their language and oral traditions before they could be recorded accurately by folklorists or historians. This makes those that do survive—mostly from Nova Scotia and Glengarry, Ontario—very valuable relics indeed.

It is my aim in this short contribution to offer some observations and propose a tentative framework for a line of scholarship which is yet in its

infancy in Celtic Studies but which will complement parallel lines of en-quiry about the complex unfolding relationships between European and First Nation peoples in North America.

Ideologies of Subordination

The marginalization and Othering of the Gael has a long history in Scotland. During the middle ages, the institutions of the Scottish nation went out of the control of Gaelic speakers and into (primarily) the hands of anglophones. Divisions—linguistic, cultural and perceptual—emerged between Highlands and Lowlands at this time; anglophone Lowlanders saw themselves as more civilised and refined than the "Old Scots" of the Highlands.

King James VI of Scotland, who became King James I of England in 1603, assumed an aggressive stance against the Gaels. In 1597 the Scottish Parliament passed an act to create outposts of the central government in Kintyre, Lochaber, and Lewis which would act as outposts of "civilitie and polecie." This plan was elaborated explicitly in King James's book of 1599 in which he expressed his disdain for the Gaels of the western isles in particular, where he wanted to create "colonies among them of answerable inland subjects, that within short time may reform and civilize the best inclined among them: rooting out or transporting the barbarous and stubborn sort, and planting civility in their rooms." The institutions of the state became increasingly hostile towards Gaelic linguistic and cultural norms and Highlanders were increasingly self-conscious of the pressures of assimilation.[2]

Beginning in the later 18th century, culturally-defined stages of civilization and savagery became increasingly subsumed under the idea of race. Racialism was a product of the imperial experience which was used to justify domination of various sorts. While the Enlightenment recognized the abilities of societies to progress (as well as regress), this paradigm of cultural fluidity came in increasing competition with the more rigid notion of race during the course of the 19th century and often lost out to it. Race was understood as an index of a people's capacity for self-government, amongst other things, and even into the 20th century many texts dismiss the possibility that Highlanders had such capacities.

Anglophones made frequent comparisons between the Highlanders of Scotland and First Nations based on presumptions of barbarism and inferiority.[3] Unsurprisingly, anglophones from both England and Scotland brought their pre-existing prejudices with them to North America and these continued to stigmatize Gaelic in the immigrant context.[4] Having already been exposed for several generations to cultural and linguistic oppression in Scotland was bound to have an effect on Highland immigrants in North America, who generally found themselves once again in an anglo-centric environment hostile to their language and culture.

One account from early 19th-century Canada illustrates the ambiguous status of Gaels as they were perceived by anglophones. This particular author suggests that immigrant Gaels were even lower on the scale of civility than native peoples because of their supposed failure, as Europeans, to advance beyond barbarism. According to this depiction, the Gaels do not speak but merely "mutter" and seem incapable of engaging in higher cognitive functions. Not having the linguistic skills to query the Gaels or the "Indians," the author projects contemporary assumptions upon them:

> I entered the outer apartment, and found a mixed assemblage of persons seated round the fire. On one side sat several Scotch Highlanders smoking tobacco, muttering Gaelic, and surveying with suspicious scrutiny the rest of the company; opposite them were three Indians in full hunting costume; and a couple of New England Americans, with some children belonging to the house, completed the group. The New Englanders talked volubly about politics, recounted many incredible stories of their own prowess, and intermingled the whole with oaths and impious expressions. The Scotch eyed them with a scowl of vacant curiosity, often shrugging their shoulders and sullenly shaking their heads. The attention of the Indians was directed to a miniature wind-mill, which a child attempted to turn by the blasts of an old pair of bellows. I now had an opportunity at once of contemplating three different descriptions of human beings, and of estimating what had been their influence of circumstances upon their respective characters. The Scotch peasants had been degraded by a life of poverty, servitude, and ignorance. Their ambitious propensities had never been developed, nor had their ideas ever strayed beyond the circumscribed limits of their homes. They knew nothing of the world; but their natural cunning, stupidity, and selfishness, formed the impregnable guardian of their own interests. The New Englanders, on the other hand, unaccustomed to subordination, stood much higher in their own estimation. They had ventured to think independently upon most subjects, and assumed the character of men of the world. They were not fettered by vulgar associations like the Scotch, but were shrewd in proportion; but in consequence of their want of education, and they being independent of the enlightened part of society, they were destitute of any sort of principle either moral or religious. The Indians possessed a sort of negative superiority over both parties, having no absolute views, and being exalted by those virtues that generally belong to the savage. Though untutored, they were not in a state of debasement, and they seemed more entitled to respect than either the Scotch or Americans.[5]

The portrayal of Scottish Gaels and their ranking on the hierarchy of civility and race varied greatly, according to context, but unfavourable es-

timations continued to appear into the 20th century in both Scotland and North America.

The two most obvious responses of immigrant Scottish Gaels in North America to these ideologies of subordination were (1) to align themselves with the historical experience and contemporary interests of First Nations, or (2) to distance themselves from them by emphasizing commonalities with other "white" Britons (which is what the Scottish Lowland elites had been doing since the 16th century). I will be examining evidence related to these first two responses in forthcoming articles.[6] There was also a third option, which was to claim that since they too had once been barbaric but had become civilized, they would make ideal mediators for First Nations in achieving the same goals. I will examine some of the evidence for this "middle ground" in the remainder of this article.

Models of Progress

It is particularly when Gaels use themselves as successful models of the civilizing process that we should infer that they really believed to have distanced themselves from the culture of their ancestors and from the company of other "savages." One striking example comes from Glengarry, Ontario, which was a solidly Highland community into the early 20th century. A line of reasoning in a debate in the Canadian Parliament in 1885 allowing First Nations peoples to vote was supported by the example of the Scottish Gaels:

> In a speech, a few days ago, in support of granting the franchise to certain civilized Indians possessing the necessary property qualification, Mr. MacMaster, M.P. for Glengarry, in the Dominion Parliament referred to the progress in civilization of the whole human race, and in particular instanced the wonderful improvement which during the last one hundred and fifty years had taken place among his own native Highlanders in Scotland (of whom he is so justly proud) through the abolition of the tribal system, and other legal restrictions. His argument was this— boldly, not only justly, deal similarly with these Indians and like effects will follow.[7]

In other words, the harsh measures imposed on the Highlanders after Culloden were, according to MacMaster, for their own good, and equivalent measures should be imposed on First Nations, regardless of their protests, because it would be for their own good as well. MacMaster's detractors argued that his comments offended Highlanders in that he was insulting their ancestors:

> They allege that in thus referring to the state of the Highlanders one hundred and fifty years ago, and in proudly and boastingly pointing out the fact that the Highland race wherever found throughout the world was now in the van of civilization, competing for and carrying

off the prizes open for the highest culture and enlightenment—that, forsooth, in doing this, Mr. MacMaster had slandered his own ancestors and the Highlanders of Scotland.

The interpretation of his statements must have been a sensitive issue to his constituents, for he became very unpopular. He finished his term in 1887 and resettled in England in 1910.

Scottish Gaels made public declamations elsewhere about the improvement of their people. At a meeting of the Gaelic Society of Inverness in 1892, for example, Bailie Stuart extolled the achievements of Highland settlers in Canada:

> He thought the intellectual gifts of the Highland race had lost nothing by transplantation to another soil, but had rather become strengthened and sharpened by the assimilation of new ideas and the pressure of unaccustomed social conditions. After giving several amusing instances of the prestige with which the Indians regard the possession of Highland names, Mr. Stuart briefly referred to the crofter settlements in Canada.[8]

It is significant in the present discussion that the progress of Gaels in terms of "civilization" is articulated as well as the asserted attachment of First Nations to them.

It is my hypothesis that there were at least three different narrative frameworks about the "civilizing" project which were seen as being transferrable from the Scottish Highlands to Native America. These I would title as:

1. Landscape as index of improvement
2. Religious conversion
3. Militarism

The idea that the Highlands were once completely covered with wood was widespread throughout Gaeldom. There was a widespread oral narrative in Gaelic about the burning of the forest which explained this transformation as a tragedy blamed on the Vikings. This narrative provided an interpretive, chronological framework for the Highland landscape, positing a direct correlation between time and the degree of tree cover.[9]

The impact of the heavily-forested landscape of North America upon the collective Gaelic psyche is evident in the pervasive nickname for the continent, *Dùthaich nan Craobh* "The Land of Trees." Gaelic oral narrative displays a high degree of consciousness about trees and there is evidence that immigrant Gaels in North America could see their voyage to the tree-laden continent as something like "time-travel" back to the primal landscape of the Highlands. Writing from Pictou, Nova Scotia, in 1802, for example, Rev. Augustin McDonald says:

> The landscape around and position of the forms are very handsome. But the whole country is as covered with the beautifullest woods

of every description and variety as we may suppose old Caledonia to have been … In the forrests live a number of Indians, sunnburnt complexiont poor shabby and mean in their appearance, but harmless so wandering in their disposition that it is hard to say when they will be induced to give it up or imitate surrounding examples into Civilisation.[10]

In extant poems from the Seven Years' War, Native Americans are called by the nickname *Coilltich* "Forest-Folk,"[11] apparently a translation of English "savage" (from Old French *sauvage* "wild," from Latin *silvaticus* "of the woods"), likely coined by a minister or regimental chaplain such as James McLagan. This terminology reflects the universal idea that "The progress of mankind was from the forest to the field."[12] As the domestication of the landscape signified humankind's ascent to civilization, representing Native Americans as people of the Forest was equivalent to placing them in an earlier stage of social evolution.[13] Gaelic first-encounter narratives also strongly associate First Nations with woods and represent them confronting Highland settlers who clear trees for agriculture.[14] It is ironic that Gaelic poets accepted the epithet *Coilltich*, given that they had long used tree symbolism to describe themselves positively and continued to do so well into the 20th century in both Scotland and North America. The earliest surviving example comes from a poem composed upon the Black Watch's initial departure for North America ca. 1756:

Leoghnaibh garga de'n fhuil Albannaich
Leanaibh ri'r n-airm 's ri'r n-èideadh;
Faighibh targaid eutrom bhall-bhuidh'
Ghabhas dearg' thuagh Choillteach;
'S cuilbheir earr-bhuidh' n làimh gach sealgair,
Seòid a' marbhadh chaol-damh:
O 's mithich dh'Albannaich dol a shealg
Air Frangaich chealgach 's Coilltich.

Fierce lions of Scottish descent,
Be loyal to your arms and to your uniform;
Get your nimble, brightly decorated shields
That will absorb the blows of the axes of Forest-folk,
A bright-ended musket in every huntsman's hand,
Gallant youths killing slim stags:
O, it is time for the Scots to go hunting
After treacherous Frenchmen and Forest-folk.[15]

It is surely significant that some of the first encounters between Gaels and First Nations were in the context of warfare, an activity in which enemies are almost inevitably dehumanized and denigrated. Here again, however, roles and perceptions were malleable, as they often fought together during the American Revolutionary War (see below). By implicit analogy,

just as the Gaels and their forested homeland had been "improved," so were First Nations primitive but capable of improvement by the transformation of the landscape and socio-economic means of production.

One of the primary vehicles of improvement was religion. The difficulties in establishing religious centres in the Highlands and of funding staff for them was such that efforts were few and poor until the second-half of the 18th century, when it was seen as a necessary step in demilitarization and assimilation. Alexander McIntosh vindicated his use of church funds by magnifying the former barbarism of his congregation (at Murlaggan) and their transformation into peaceable subjects (post-1760):

> By his great Application in Instructing the People in the Principles of the Christian Religion, a very Remarkable Reformation is wrought among them; As family Worship is Set up in many Families, an almost Effectual Check put to Theft & Depredation for which Locharkaigside was remarkable throughout the Highlands.[16]

Many of the people who found their way to North America in the 18th century had similar "conversion experiences" which were part and parcel of the restructuring of Gaelic society and cosmology in the post-Culloden era. It is surely significant that the early missionary society, the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK), extended its network from the Highlands to North America in 1729 with the intention of converting native peoples, with the replacement of native languages with English as a concomitant aspect of civilization.[17] Even into the mid-19th century the Scottish Highlands were considered a missionary field as needy of conversion as Africa, Asian, or Native America.[18]

This notion is expressed in Gaelic poetry by Nova Scotia's first Gaelic-speaking minister, the Reverend James MacGregor who came to Pictou in 1786.[19] An even better example occurs in a poem by one of the most celebrated Gaelic poets of Nova Scotia, Iain MacIlleathain, composed ca. 1830, in which he illustrates the belief that the Protestant establishment improved both human life and the landscape itself. The poem is titled "Craobh-sgaoileadh an t-Soisgeil 'san Tìr seo" ("The Propagation of the Gospel in this Country").

> [...] Tha 'n Soisgeul air a mhìneachadh
> Le fìrinn is le gràdh
> A-mach air feadh nan coilltichean
> 'S gun cluinn iad e 's gach àit'.
> Bho chionn trì fichead bliadhna
> Bha an t-àit' seo fiadhaich fàs
> Gun taigh, gun duin' ach Innseanaich,
> 'S e 'n-diugh gu tìreil blàth. [...]
> Gur h-iomadh àit' ri là-san
> Bha 'nam fàsaichean fo choill'

> Is mathain fhiadhaich chòmhnaidh annt'
> 'S loin chabrach mhór na loinn.[20]

> The Gospel has been expounded
> in truthfulness and love
> throughout the farthest forests
> and is heard in every place.
> Some sixty years ago
> this place was wild and empty
> without houses or people but Indians
> but it is now warm and snug; […]
> There were many places in the time [of James MacGregor]
> which were wooded wastelands
> inhabited by wild bears
> and giant antlered moose.

The former deplorable state of savagery is then contrasted in the poem with the notion of material, religious, and agricultural progress enabled by the work of missionaries who in turn have enabled the hand of Providence. While the Indians were thus human representatives of the unimproved state in this poem, it must be noted that poems of exactly the same import were written at this same time about the Scottish Highlands.[21] We must also be aware of the use of people, places and things for rhetorical purposes, especially in Gaelic poetry; images may be used in order to express a certain message without reflecting actual perceptions, at least in their entirety.[22]

In 1791, Patrick Campbell, a native of Argyll, Scotland, visited a group of Mohawks who had fought alongside Highlanders during the Revolution, including the celebrated soldier Joseph Brant. Campbell's notes about their conversation demonstrates again how Gaelic tradition could predispose Gaels as seeing First Nations as undergoing a similar process of conversion and civilization as they themselves had in the past:

> With Captain Brant I had a conversation upon religion, introduced
> by him, indeed, and not by me. He said, that we were told every one
> that was not a Christian would go to hell; if so, what would become
> of the miserable souls of so many Indians who never heard of Christ?
> asked if I believed so, and what I thought of it? I told him very
> frankly, that if all the saints and priests on earth were to tell me so,
> I would not believe them […] but his discourses brought to mind
> a conversation on traditionary record, that passed between Ossian
> the son of Fingal, and Patrick, the first Christian missionary he had
> seen.[23]

Campbell is here referring to a medieval poem in dialogue form which was common in the Highlands. In this dialogue Ossian (or Oisean in proper Gaelic spelling) challenges Patrick's claims of the superiority of Christianity over the pagan Celtic past. This record is one of the most striking

examples of how Gaelic oral traditions conditioned the responses of High-landers in their experiences with First Nations in such a way as to facilitate relating to them as peers.

During the second half of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century, Gaels had formed the bulk of the military might of Royalist and Jacobite movements. The central government responded after major crises by building garrisons in the Highlands and military occupation. In the 18th century, the British military began a process of co-opting the martial energy of the Highlands, allowing for the exploitation of an otherwise unskilled, "surplus" population. In the aftermath of the failed Jacobite Risings (the last in 1745-1746), common Highlanders were recruited by their chieftains-turned-landlords in a conspicuous display of loyalty to the British Crown. The surviving native elite hoped that this would lead to the restoration of their hereditary estates and powers, restricted after 1746. Even ordinary Highlanders hoped that faithful service to the House of Hanover would redeem them from accusations of savagery and rebellion and grant them full participation and membership in the mainstream British polity.[24]

Despite the fact that Highlanders fought a number of First Nations during the Seven Years' War (known in the historiography of the United States as the "French and Indian War"), they tended to fight together against "rebels" in the American Revolutionary War. Highland soldiers in New York province, for example, led parties of twenty or more Native Americans in guerilla warfare.[25]

Patrick Campbell's address to Brant and his fellow Mohawk soldiers emphasizes their common commitment to the British Crown and their loyalty to it as expressed in military service:

> I was obliged to get up, and told them that I would address them in the Indian language of my country, and said in Gaelic, "That I had fought in many parts of Europe, killed many men, and being now in America, I did not doubt but I would fight with them yet, particularly if the Yankies attacked us." My worthy friend Captain McNab explained in English my speech, as did Captain Clinch in the Indian tongue; at which they laughed very heartily.[26]

Campbell equates Gaelic with native languages and foresees continued service together as British citizens. Many 18th-century immigrant Gaelic communities in North America were the result of military rewards, so the impact of military involvement with the British State could hardly fail to make an impression in that period.

The assertion of British sovereignty westward in North America was slow, but it was asserted especially along the trade routes and garrisons established by and for the fur trade, an activity in which Highlanders played a prominent role. It seems particularly significant that several of these have the same names as garrisons built by British forces occupying the Scottish

Highlands after the Jacobite Rising of 1715, namely, Fort William on Lake Superior, Fort George near Niagara and (another) in British Columbia, and Fort Augustus near Edmonton. The policies and procedures created and implemented by Hanoverian forces in the subjugation of the Highlands have been argued to have been applied widely in the British Empire, especially those overseen by the Duke of Cumberland and his officers at the Battle of Culloden.[27]

The *Indian Magazine* was a monthly journal printed in Brantford, Ontario "in the interest of Canadian Indians" (although the section I've examined expresses this interest only in terms of assimilating them to anglophone Canadian society). In the January 1896 issue, it is suggested that a Six Nations Regiment be formed, inspired very much by the Highland Regiments: "the formation of the warriors of the Six Nations into a separate Military Organization, which shall represent their ancient corporal existence, just as the Highland Regiments in the army represent the ancient Scottish Clans."[28] Even the uniform was modelled on Highland military standards:

> It is proposed that the uniform should consist, in addition to the tunic, which must be worn in any case, of kilt and "blanket," thus making a dress, while quite Indian-like, will resemble the dress of the Scottish Highlanders, which is certainly the bravest military costume in existence.

This too offers a vivid illustration of how the "civilizing" of the Scottish Highlands seemed to some to offer a model for the assimilation of First Nations. There is much scope for further investigation of how precedents

Fig. 1. Illustration of proposed Six Nations regimental uniform

set in the Highlands may have been applied in Native America, especially in terms of linguistic eradication and the institutional role of education.[29]

Conclusions

Scottish Gaels had a large corpus of pre-existing cultural concepts and oral narratives which influenced the ways in which they perceived First Nations and their relationships with them. In many cases Gaels drew direct parallels from their own inheritance to the languages and cultures of First Nations. In the 19th century in particular Gaels encountered new paradigms of identity and metanarratives of history developed in the course of European imperialism whose power to reorder the world made them difficult to resist; eventually these incoming concepts were absorbed to a greater or lesser degree as Gaelic communities interacted with the wider anglophone world. Regardless, understanding the Scottish Highland experience in North America cannot be complete without a serious consideration of Gaelic texts, which reveal the synchronic developments of the internal reference points which informed Gaelic mentality and culture, and, in turn, collective and individual action. Much work remains to be done collecting, editing, and analyzing primary sources in Gaelic to give us a fuller picture of the complexities of the Highland experience in North America and how it relates to their interactions with First Nations.

Scottish Highlanders did not agree upon and articulate a single response to their encounters with native peoples with a single voice as a unified group. Like other contemporary peoples in similar circumstances, they chose their responses and made recourse to paradigms of civility and identity according to their local circumstances and individual agendas. Gaels were commonly on the receiving end of oppression in Scotland, and some did not hesitate to make comparisons between themselves and other victims of the Imperial Age. However, as more Highlanders became involved in the institutions of power and wealth in the anglophone world, they saw the opportunities to divest themselves of their "barbaric" past and make common cause with the superior "Anglo-Saxon." Highlanders lived in a complex world of competing interests and exercised varying degrees of commitment to justice and equality; they did not all make the same choices, nor did they all receive the same rewards.

Whatever the profits attained by particular individuals, Highlanders had extensive experience of cultural oppression by the British State and sometimes continued to air their grievances and those of others with similar injuries, but there was an obvious negative cost to opposition to such a formidable hegemony. While Highlanders were subject to such cultural and historical precedents, they were not limited by them. They did not necessarily always believe that resistance to the British State was the best option for

themselves or other subalterns; rather, some preferred to choose to collaborate with it and attain "respectability" within it. While they did not invent the concept of race, it was an instrumental paradigm in the hierarchical structure of power and privilege in North America which some attempted to manipulate to better their ranking. Similar comments could be made of the choices made by various First Nations in regards to racial claims and slave-holding.

The boundaries and categories within concepts of race and civility were never static but in constant flux, especially influenced by the movement of frontiers. When the centralized British State was attempting to assert its authority over Gaeldom and destroy its independence in the 16th and 17th centuries, anglophone Scotland and England were asserted as the centre of civility and Gaeldom (Ireland and the Scottish Highlands) the "savage frontier."[30] In the later 18th century, as Highlanders became more firmly integrated into the British polity and the frontiers of Empire extended over new horizons, the British State tended to draw the line demarcating civility from savagery outside Great Britain, incorporating the Scottish Highlands by contrast to the "less civilized" indigenous peoples subject to imperial ambition. Local conditions and agendas could, however, again cast the civility of Highlanders into doubt, particularly in contrast to the unquestionably superior Anglo-Saxons (in Britain, North America and elsewhere in the British Empire) whose manifest destiny was believed to be moving inexorably onwards. Similar observations could be said about race, and there was a considerable time delay in accepting Celts in general, and Gaels specifically, as unambiguous members of the white race.

Whether Scottish Gaels chose to represent themselves as closely related to First Nations or removed from them by a vast gulf of race and civilization was not a matter of either neutral objectivity or romantic musings. Whatever anglophones might have thought of their resemblances, Gaels themselves had a great deal at stake in such comparisons, as acceptance into the anglophone mainstream was crucial for their success within it. Given these circumstances, it is little wonder that they were under great pressure to make common cause with anglophones and the most effective way of doing this was to create space between themselves and First Nations. Those living on the periphery with little to gain from such acceptance were less liable to align themselves firmly with the anglophone world than those with closer ties. In fact, I gather from the textual evidence I have read to date that those who persisted in maintaining the Gaelic language and culture were often those most sympathetic to the plight of First Nations.

There is still vigorous debate as to whether Scottish Highlanders were victims or victimizers during this time period. Some historians of the Clearances have downplayed the victimization of the Gaels because they were co-opted into the military forces of the British Empire and in many

cases brought about a similar outcome to native peoples as they themselves had suffered in Scotland.[31] It is naive to think that the roles of victim and victimizer are mutually exclusive, however, especially where the historical experience of an entire people is concerned. The expansion of the British Empire effected a cascading chain of domination, dislocation, and subordination. A subaltern group attempting to elevate its position in a hierarchy is especially liable to behave brutally to those in the lower rankings. The impact of European immigrants in North America did not end with the native peoples that they initially displaced: those people in turn displaced others, were co-opted into the military forces of the dominant group, and so on.[32] Neither Highlanders nor First Nations were making decisions with an uncompromised set of options.

I have been able to do little more in this paper than suggest a few ways to interpret the textual remains of Gaels in North America; the complexities and interesting details reside in the data of specific cases. It is my hope that these comments can provide some insight to those willing to continue the work forward.

Notes

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1. For First Nations, see Richard White, *The Middle Ground*.

2. Ohlmeyer, "Civilizinge of those Rude Parts" in *Origins of Empire*; Newton, *Warriors of the Word*, 28-9, 49, 59-70.

3. For example, Clyde, *From Rebel to Hero*; Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British Image*; Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery*; Calloway, *White People, Indians and Highlanders*.

4. See for example Newton, "Becoming Cold-Hearted," 79-91, 107-109.

5. Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada*, 180-81.

6. Newton, "The Macs meet the Micmacs"; *idem*., "How the Highlanders became 'White'."

7. *Scottish-American Journal* 2 July 1885.

8. *Scottish-American Journal* 3 August 1892.

9. Newton, "Coille Mhòr Chailleann"; *idem*., *Warriors of the Word*, 284-86, 289.

10. Macinnes, Harper and Fryer, *Scotland and the Americas*, 185.

11. Newton, *We're Indians*, 122, 124, 125, 140.

12. Thomas, *Man and the Natural World*, 195.

13. Despite the reality, of course, that most First Nations in the east did practice agriculture.

14. Newton, "The Macs meet the Micmacs."

15. Newton, *We're Indians*, 122.

16. Quoted in McLean, *The People of Glengarry*, 55.

17. Meek, "Scottish Highlands, North American Indians and the SSPCK."

18. *Ibid*.; Newton, *We're Indians*, 230-240.

19. Meek, "Craobh-Sgaoileadh a' Bhìobaill."

20. Meek, *Caran an t-Saoghail*, 72, 74.

21. MacInnes, *Dùthchas nan Gàidheal*, 369-71.

22. Newton, *Warriors of the Word*, 317.

23. Campbell, *Travels in North America*, 173-74.

24. Newton, "Jacobite Past, Loyalist Present."

25. McLean, *The People of Glengarry*, 95.

26. Campbell, *Travels in North America*, 168-69.

27. Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery*.

28. I owe this reference to R. Moses, curator at the Museum of Civilization in Ottawa.

29. Szasz, *Scottish Highlanders and Native Americans*, opens the dialogue on this subject although much remains to be done, particularly in Gaelic sources.

30. Williamson, "Scots, Indians and Empire"; Ohlmeyer, "Civilizinge of those Rude Parts" in *Origins of Empire*; Newton, *Warriors of the Word*.

31. See, for example, Richards, "Leaving the Highlands."

32. See, for examples, Calloway, *White People, Indians and Highlanders*, 13-15.

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