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‘Sassenach’, eh? Late Modern Scottish English on the borders of time and space¹

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ABSTRACT

The complex relationship that has always existed between Scots and Gaelic, and indeed between Gaelic and English, has often been the object of studies in language contact (e.g. Ó Baoill 1991 and 1997, Dorian 1993, McClure 1986, Millar 2010 and 2016). Moreover, the historical events that have underpinned the external history of these languages in Scotland are intertwined with important literary developments at all stages. This is particularly true of Late Modern times, when Highland life and culture became the object of both idealization and stigmatization (see Dossena 2005: 83-133); within this framework, literary accounts of the Jacobite rebellions contributed significantly to the spread of Gaelic vocabulary outside Scotland.

In this contribution I will focus on Celtic borrowings into (Scottish) English at a time when language codification was pervasive, but in which popular culture and indeed literature played a very important role in the creation of persistent cultural images. To this end, my analysis will rely both on dictionaries and on literary and manuscript sources.

Keywords: Scotland, Late Modern English, language contact, lexicology, lexicography.

1. Introduction

This paper aims to discuss the role played by literary sources in the preservation, and indeed in the promotion, of Gaelic vocabulary in Late Modern times, to the point that numerous lexical items were actually borrowed

¹ While this paper was being finalized, I was informed that Iseabail Macleod MBE had died in Edinburgh on 15th February 2018. Dr Macleod was a leading figure in Scottish lexicography, and I was very privileged to have had the opportunity to discuss much

into English, despite continuing attempts to restrict geographical variation and long-standing policies aiming to contrast the usage of Celtic languages. After an historical overview of when and how Gaelic was promoted or, much more frequently, discouraged, I will focus on what Gaelic items feature in the most important dictionaries dating from Late Modern times. I will then discuss what sources are quoted in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), in order to assess the impact of literature on the popularization of (exotic) lexical items.

According to the 2011 Census data², less than 2% of the Scottish people aged 3 and over declared they had some Gaelic language skills; more specifically, “On Census Day, 27 March 2011, a total of 87,100 people aged 3 and over in Scotland (1.7 per cent of the population) had some Gaelic language skills. This included 57,600 people who could speak Gaelic”. In particular, the highest proportion was in Eilan Siar (Outer Hebrides, 61%), but other measurable percentages were found in Highland (7%) and Argyll & Bute (6%). Since 2001 percentages appear to have decreased in all age groups above 18 (for instance, “for people aged 65 and over the proportion fell from 1.8 per cent in 2001 to 1.5 per cent in 2011. In contrast, the proportion of people who can speak Gaelic increased slightly in younger age groups: from 0.53 per cent to 0.70 per cent for 3-4 year-olds; from 0.91 per cent to 1.13 per cent for 5-11 year-olds; and from 1.04 per cent to 1.10 per cent for 12-17 year-olds”).

These results account for demographic trends on the one hand, and education policies on the other, given the greater attention paid to Gaelic since 2001, when the UK ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which had been signed the year before, and since the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 effectively began to promote Gaelic education³. This, however, is in sharp contrast with standardizing policies that had been implemented in the past, when attempts to restrict the use of Gaelic had often been very powerful.

Indeed, Highland English is often supposed to have arisen in Late Modern times, when the aftermath of the Forty-Five first and the Clearances later brought about significant change in the lifestyle of the Highlands and Islands, not least on account of the new patterns in the education

of my work with her over the years: her friendly encouragement and advice were a constant source of inspiration. This essay is dedicated to her memory, with much gratitude.

² See *Gaelic Analytical Report* (Part 1 at www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/news/gaelic-analytical-report-part-1 and Part 2 at www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/documents/analytical_reports/Report_part_2.pdf), accessed 03.03.18.

³ See <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/7>, accessed 03.03.18.

system that began in the second half of the eighteenth century and developed throughout the nineteenth century. The Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, formed by royal charter in 1709, certainly contributed to the decline in Gaelic usage, although its policies were often contradictory. By 1872, when the Education Act centralized Scottish education excluding Gaelic, English was pervasive, although with varying levels of competence. This emerges from comments found in Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland* (1791: passim) and, long before then, in the observations of seventeenth-century visitors who observed instances of Highland bilingualism: for instance, Thomas Tucker, in 1655, claimed: "The inhabitants beyond Murray land (except in the Orkneys) speake generally Ober garlickh, or Highlands, and the mixture of both in the town of Invernesse is such that one halfe of the people understand not one another" (Hume Brown 1891: 174). Thomas Kirke, whose account was published in 1679, reported that "Erst"⁴ was unknown to most Lowlanders, "except only in those places that border on [the Highlands], where they can speak both" (Hume Brown 1891: 262).

As a matter of fact, attempts to restrict the usage of Gaelic date back to the early seventeenth century; soon after the Union of the Crowns in 1603, the policy towards Gaelic was influenced by widespread unrest among the clans, and in 1609 the Statutes of Iona imposed schooling in the Lowlands for at least the eldest child, whether male or female, so as to eradicate "ignorance and incivility":

- (1) it being undirstand that the ignorance and incivilitie of the saidis Iles hes daylie incressit be the negligence of guid educatioun and instructioun of the youth in the knowledge of God and good letters [...] it is inactit that every gentilman or yeaman within the said Ilandis, or any of thame, haveing childerine maill or femell, and being in goodis worth thriescore ky, sall put at the leist their eldest sone, or haveing no children maill thair eldest dochter, to the scullis in the Lowland, and interneny and bring thame up thair quhill that may be found able sufficientlie to speik, reid and wryte Ingliche. (Register of

⁴ The general label identifying the Celtic language was *Irische* or *Ersche*, while a more modern spelling was *Erse*. The identification of Scots Gaelic with Irish Gaelic was due to the fact that the former is a relatively recent offshoot of the latter. Introduced into Scotland about AD 500, it developed into a distinct dialect in the thirteenth century. Although a common Gaelic literary language was used in Ireland and Scotland until the fifteenth century, by that time the divergence between Scottish and Irish Gaelic had made mutual intelligibility quite difficult.

the Privy Council 1609: IX, 28-29, at www.scottishhistory.com/articles/highlands/gaelic/gaelic_page1.html)

In fact, the association of Gaelic with “incivilitie” reflects a traditional Lowland attitude which is perhaps most famously and even hyperbolically represented in the *Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy* (1508 – see Barisone 1989: 132; Jack 1997: 220). However, this attitude was rooted in political considerations: an Act of the Privy Council of 10th December 1616 established parish schools with the following premises:

- (2) Forsameikle as the Kingis Majestie having a speciall care and regard that the trew religioun be advancit and establisheit in all the pairtis of this kingdome and that all his Majesties subjectis especiallie the youth, be exercised and trayned up in civilitie, godliness, knowlege, and learning, that the vulgar Inglishe toung be universallie plantit, and the Irische language, whilk is one of the cheif and principall causes of the continewance of barbarite and incivilitie amongis the inhabitantis of the Ilis and Heylandis, may be abolishit and removeit; and quhair as thair is no measure more powerfull to further his Majesties princlie regard and purposis that the establisheing of Scooles in the particular parroches of this Kingdom whair the youthe may be taught at least to write and reid, and be catechised and instructed in the groundis of religioun. (Innes 1993: n.p.)

The fact that in such schools English was taught as a foreign language on the basis of supposedly Standard (i.e. Southern) English has led to the myth of Highland English being ‘better’ than Scottish English on account of the lesser influence that Scots is supposed to have had on the language. However, this is an aspect worth investigating in greater depth, paying attention to both teaching materials and to teachers’ provenance – something beyond the scope of this discussion, but an early investigation of which is provided by Williamson (1982, 1983).

While Highland English was slowly replacing Gaelic⁵, in those same Late Modern times Highland culture acquired an exotic quality

⁵ In the preface to his *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1808 [1840]: 4), John Jamieson commented:

We know how little progress has been made, for more than half a century past, in diffusing the English tongue through the Highlands; although not only the arm of power has been employed to dissolve the feudal attachments, but the aid of learning and religion has been called in. The young are indeed taught to read English, but often, they read without understanding, and still prefer speaking Gaelic.

that favoured its association with ideas of the beautiful and the sublime, heroism and uniqueness – a perception that began with the success of James Macpherson’s *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* (1760), which were claimed to have been “collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse language”, and would persist through Victorian times. James Adams, the only defender of Scotticisms at a time of remarkable prescriptivism, wrote:

- (3) I enter the lists in Tartan dress and armour, and throw down the gauntlet to the most prejudiced antagonist. How weak is prejudice! The sight of the Highland kelt, the flowing plaid, the buskin’d leg, provokes my antagonist to laugh! Is this dress ridiculous in the eyes of reason and common sense? No: nor is the dialect of speech: both are characteristic and national distinctions. National character and distinction are respectable. Then is the adopted mode of oral language sanctioned by peculiar reasons, and is not the result of chance, contemptible vulgarity, mere ignorance and rustic habit.

The arguments of general vindication rise powerful before my sight, like Highland Bands in full array. A louder strain of apologetic speech swells my words. What if it should rise high as the unconquered summits of Scotia’s hills, and call back, with voice sweet as Caledonian song, the days of antient Scottish heroes. (1799: 157)

In fact, Adams’s own defence was not unbiased; besides, the martial quality of the Highland imagery he employed in his Ossianic rhetoric to defend Lowland speech was permissible because he was writing after the 1747 Act of Proscription had been repealed in 1782 and therefore kilts could again be seen as symbols of national identity, whereas after the second Jacobite rising the law permitted their use only in the Hanoverian army:

- (4) from and after the first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and forty seven, no man or boy, within that part of Great Briton called Scotland, other than shall be employed as officers and soldiers in his Majesty’s forces, shall on any pretence whatsoever, wear or put on the clothes commonly called Highland Clothes (that is to say) the plaid, philibeg, or little kilt, trowse, shoulder belts, or any part whatsoever of what peculiarly belongs to the highland garb; and that no tartan, or partly-coloured plaid or stuff shall be used for great coats, or for upper coats; and if any such person shall presume, after the said first day of August, to wear or put on the aforesaid garments or any part of them,

every such person so offending, being convicted thereof [...], shall suffer imprisonment, without bail, during the space of six months, and no longer; and being convicted for a second offence before a court of judicary or at the circuits, shall be liable to be transported to any of his Majesty's plantations beyond the seas, there to remain for a space of seven years. (Act of Proscription, at www.electricscotland.com/history/other/proscription_1747.htm)

In the text of the Act of Proscription we come across lexical items that would be recorded in Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755, see Dossena 2004); the presence of Gaelic vocabulary in English lexicography and more general usage will therefore be the object of the next sections.

2. Gaelic Scotland in (Late Modern) lexicography

Although Celtic Englishes have been the object of much very valuable investigation over the last two decades (see, first and foremost, Filppula – Klemola – Pitkänen 2002; Filppula – Klemola – Paulasto 2008; Tristram 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2007; Filppula – Klemola 2014), most studies have focused on syntax, morphology, phonology and placenames. General vocabulary is only discussed when culturally-marked items appear as authenticating devices (such as in Dossena 2001) or, in Jill Lepore's definition, as 'wigwam words' (Lepore 2001). In addition, Ireland appears to have attracted much greater interest than Scotland as far as the relationship between Celtic languages and English is concerned – see the constantly updated list of references maintained by Raymond Hickey in the *Irish English Resource Centre* (www.uni-due.de/IERC/) – whereas even the very recent and extensive *Oxford Handbook of World Englishes* (Filppula – Klemola – Sharma 2017) pays specific attention to Scotland, Scottish Gaelic and Scots corpora in a very small number of its ca. 800 pages⁶.

However, Gaelic vocabulary can be shown to have contributed significantly to the construal of a persistent image of Scottish culture and even history, in spite of an apparently constant decrease in Gaelic usage (see Dossena in preparation a and b). In what follows, this impact will be discussed starting from possibly the two most important works in English lexicography: Johnson's *Dictionary* and the OED.

⁶ Subject Index entries only point to 11 pages in which such topics are addressed.

2.1. Johnson's *Dictionary*⁷

Johnson's *Dictionary* includes about 200 'Scottish' items, although geographical variation was not contemplated in the *Plan of a Dictionary* (1747) or in the *Preface*. Importantly, these entries do not only represent obsolete or supposedly 'incorrect' expressions, but also refer to specific aspects of Scottish culture. Indeed, in contrast with Basker's claim (1993: 82-86) that Johnson "seems to have included a Scottish word or usage [...] simply to single it out and stigmatise it as a Scotticism", the entries relating to Scottish life and culture do not seem to point to a strictly prescriptive approach.

In the first edition of the *Dictionary* (1755) several etymologies or cognate forms are marked *Erse* or *Earse*⁸. As regards lexical items relating to the Highlands, several of them refer to weaponry and warfare, but also to the Highland garb mentioned in the Act of Proscription, though the Act itself is mentioned only indirectly in the entry for *plaid*, and anyway only in the first edition; on the other hand, in the 4th edition the entry for *caddis* is made more accurate in definition and in geographical specificity – see the examples below:

- (5) I CADDIS. n.s. 1. A kind of tape or ribbon.
 2. A kind of worm or grub found in a case of straw. IV CADDIS. n.s.
 [This word is used in Erse for the variegated cloaths of the Highlanders.]

I PLAID. n.s. A striped or variegated cloth; an outer loose weed worn much by the highlanders in Scotland: there is a particular kind worn too by the women; but both these modes seem now nearly extirpated among them; the one by act of parliament, and the other by adopting the English dresses of the sex.

IV PLAID. n.s. A striped or variegated cloth; an outer loose weed worn much by the highlanders in Scotland: there is a particular kind worn too by the women.

⁷ In the following paragraphs are quotations from the electronic edition of Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755 [1996]). Each entry is preceded by *I* or *IV*, depending on whether it appears in the first or fourth edition; when there are no differences between the two editions, only the first one is quoted. If an entry has more than one meaning, we report the one referring to the Scottish context, leaving the number it has in the original sequence of meanings. The quotations are included only when explicit reference is made to them in the definitions, since these are the actual focus of our analysis.

⁸ Almost immediately, however, critics perceived that many of these etymologies were rather inaccurate, especially the Celtic ones: see Nagashima (1988: 149). Others were the object of more or less explicit correction at various scholarly levels: see Iamartino (1995).

DIRK⁹. n.s. [an Erse word]. A kind of dagger used in the Highlands of Scotland.

FI'RECROSS. n.s. [fire and cross]. A token in Scotland for the nation to take arms: the ends thereof burnt black, and in some parts smeared with blood. It is carried like lightning from one place to another. Upon refusal to send it forward, or to rise, the last person who has it shoots the other dead.

SKEAN. n.s. [Irish and Erse; sagene, Saxon]. A short sword; a knife.

MORGLAY. n.s. A deadly weapon. Ains. Glaive and morte, French, and glay môhr, Erse, a two-handed broad-sword, which some centuries ago was the highlander's weapon.

PORTGLAVE. n.s. [porter and glaive, Fr. and Erse]. A sword bearer. Ainsworth.

Johnson's interest in Gaelic would continue also in relation to the controversy over the authenticity of Macpherson's Ossian poems, which Johnson perceived as a forgery; besides, Johnson subscribed to William Shaw's *Galic and English and English and Galic Dictionary* (1780), and, even before then, he wrote the Proposals for the same author's *An Analysis of the Scotch Celtick Language* (see Nagashima 1988: 22 and Curley 1987). Shaw himself acknowledged: "To the advice and encouragement of Dr. Johnson, the friend of letters and humanity, the Public is indebted for these sheets" (Shaw 1778: xxiii). Cultural interest also emerges from the inclusion of *loch*, *usquebaugh*, and *second sight* in the 1755 edition of the *Dictionary*:

(6) LOCH. n.s. A lake. Scottish.

USQUEBAUGH. n.s. [An Irish and Erse word, which signifies the water of life]. It is a compounded distilled spirit, being drawn on aromatics; and the Irish sort is particularly distinguished for its pleasant and mild flavour. The Highland sort is somewhat hotter; and, by corruption, in Scottish they call it whisky.

⁹ According to the *OED*, the spelling *dirk*, instead of *durk*, was introduced by Johnson without authority, probably reflecting the merging of the two separate sounds represented by <-ir-> and <-ur-> into one.

SE'COND Sight. n.s. The power of seeing things future, or things distant: supposed inherent in some of the Scottish islanders.

This last item would also be the object of a fairly long paragraph in Johnson's *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, of 1775, in which the Gaelic word *Taisch* is discussed in the following terms:

- (7) In the *Earse* [the Second Sight] is called *Taisch*; which signifies likewise a spectre, or a vision. I know not, nor is it likely that the Highlanders ever examined, whether by *Taisch*, used for *Second Sight*, they mean the power of seeing, or the thing seen. (Johnson 1775 [1996]: 95)

As a matter of fact, folkloric interests intertwined with lexicographic ones in many Late Modern works: see for instance the glossaries included in the *Salamanca Corpus*. In Jamieson's own dictionary (1808), the title page stated that the work would illustrate

- (8) The words in their different significations [...] shewing their affinity to those of other languages, [...] and elucidating national rites, customs, and institutions, in their analogy to those of other nations.

A more modern approach would be taken by James Murray's *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, i.e. the future OED; however, as shown in its timelines and sources, specific cultural attitudes did play a role in the presentation of items with a Celtic origin.

2.2 OED Timelines¹⁰

Thier (2007) provides an overview of the main issues concerning the identification of etymologies in the OED and stresses the importance of looking at the periods in which different lexical items are attested, so as to trace their path into the English language. What is also very important, however, is to set these attestations against the cultural, social and historical background in which they occurred, so as to understand how their semantic value may have changed also on account of external factors.

¹⁰ As the OED is now updated both regularly and frequently, in future, quantitative data may be found to have varied as entries are antedated or revised; what is presented here is valid at the time of writing (March 2018).

In order to understand how loanwords have been added to the English language, some quantitative data are required, and will be obtained from the timelines made available in the website of the OED. Relying on such timelines, Table 1 below presents the items borrowed from the different branches of Celtic, while Table 2 focuses on Goidelic and indicates the number of borrowings from each language between the 16th and the 19th century.

Table 1. Borrowings from Celtic languages in the OED timelines¹¹

Celtic			598	
	Brittonic			139
		Breton		6
		Cornish		41
		Welsh		97
	Goidelic			452
		Scottish Gaelic		58
		Gaelic		112
		Irish		293
		Manx		13

Table 2. Goidelic borrowings between Early and Late Modern times (as listed in the OED timelines)

Language	16C	17C	18C	19C	Total
Scottish Gaelic	12	5	6	13	36
Gaelic	28	11	36	26	101
Irish	45	35	49	113	242
Manx	0	1	1	10	12
Total	85	52	92	162	391
%	21.7	13.3	23.5	41.4	100

Table 2 shows that the 19th century was a particularly significant time for the acquisition of Manx and Irish vocabulary, while (Scottish) Gaelic items were acquired in similar numbers in the 18th and the 19th centuries; in general, ca. 65% of borrowings date from Late Modern times.

¹¹ Figures may not add up to the totals given, as the derivations of other items may still be questionable.

Focusing on geographical provenance, rather than language of origin, we find that the so-called Celtic Fringe of the British Isles, i.e. Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, and Ireland, appears to have given its largest contribution in the 19th century – see Table 3a. Only Scotland appears to have contributed a larger number of lexical items in the 16th century, which is probably due to the growing connection between the two kingdoms that developed after James IV of Scotland married Margaret Tudor in August 1503: a connection that would eventually lead to the Union of the Crowns in 1603. However, if findings are broken down by area (Northern Scotland, Southern Scotland, Orkney and Shetland – see Table 3b), the significance of the 19th century emerges again, as the percentages of items that were acquired in that century alone appear to be relatively high. It may thus be worth looking at what kind of items were first recorded in the 19th century, and what sources stand out as particularly frequent.

Table 3a. Lexical borrowings from the Celtic Fringe (as listed in the OED timelines by geographical provenance)

Area	Tot. contributions over time	Of which in the 19C	%
Scotland	18,334	3,437	19
Ireland	2,352	710	30
Wales	176	46	26
Isle of Man	43	20	47
Total			20

Table 3b. Lexical borrowings from Scotland (as listed in the OED timelines by geographical provenance)

Area	Tot. contributions over time	Of which in the 19C	%
Northern Scotland	491	110	22
Shetland	315	99	31
Orkney	227	60	26
Southern Scotland	30	11	37
Total			26

Starting from the semantic domain to which these borrowings belong, we see they are so strongly culture-bound as to become untranslatable;

in fact, the earliest quotations that illustrate them are often from sources discussing folk lore and other traditional features – see the examples below:

- (9) **carval**, n. **Etymology:** < Manx *carval*. A carol, a ballad on a sacred subject.

1873 W. Harrison in *Mona Miscellany* 2nd Ser. p. x A specimen of a Manx *carval* is given... It would have been easy to have given many of these *carvals*, which may be termed a literature entirely peculiar to the Manx people, consisting chiefly of ballads on sacred subjects which have been handed down in writing... Most of these carvals are from 50 to 150 years old, and amongst the favourites may be mentioned 'Joseph's History', 'Susannah's History', 'The Nativity', 'The Holy War', 'David and Goliath', 'Samson's History', 'Birth of Christ'.

1887 H. Caine *Deemster* III. xxxiii. 60 Sometimes he crooned a Manx carval.

1910 *Encycl. Brit.* V. 639/2 Most of the existing literature ... consists of ballads and carols, locally called carvels.

quaaltagh, n. **Origin:** A borrowing from Manx. Etymon: Manx *quaaltagh*.

1. The practice or custom of going in a group from door to door at Christmas or New Year, typically making a request for food or other gifts in the form of a song. Now *hist*.
- 1835 A. Cregeen *Dict. Manks Lang.* 132/2 A company of young lads or men, generally went in old times on what they termed the *Quaaltagh*, at Christmas or New Year's Day to the house of their more wealthy neighbours.
- 1845 J. Train *Hist. & Statist. Acct. Isle of Man* II. 114 Until at the Quaaltagh again we appear To wish you, as now, all a happy New Year.
- 1891 *Notes & Queries* 3 Jan. 4/1 The actors in the Quaaltagh do not assume fantastic habiliments, like the mummers of England or the Guiscards of Scotland. [...]
2. The first person to enter a house on New Year's Day; = first foot n. 1. Also: the first person one meets after leaving home, esp. on a special occasion.

1845 J. Train *Hist. & Statist. Acct. Isle of Man* II. 115 A light-haired male or female is deemed unlucky to be a first-foot or quaaltagh on New Year's morning.

1891 A.W. Moore *Folk-lore Isle of Man* 103 It was considered fortunate if the *quaaltagh* were a person of dark complexion. [...]

sporrán, n. **Etymology:** < Scottish Gaelic *sporan*, Irish *sparán* purse. A pouch or large purse made of skin, usually with the hair left on and with ornamental tassels, etc., worn in front of the kilt by Scottish Highlanders.

1817 Scott *Rob Roy* III. vii. 209 I advise no man to attempt opening this sporrán till he has my secret.

1837 W.F. Skene *Highlanders Scotl.* I. i. ix. 227 The resemblance to the Highland dress is very striking, presenting also considerable indication of the sporrán or purse. [...]

piob mhor, n. **Origin:** A borrowing from Scottish Gaelic. Etymon: Scottish Gaelic *piob mhór*. **Etymology:** < Scottish Gaelic *piob mhór* < *piob* pipe n.¹ + *mhór*, feminine of *mór* ... The Highland bagpipe.

[1790 E. Ledwich *Antiq. Ireland* 241 Having obtained this instrument from Britain, the Irish retained its original name, and called it *piob-mala*, or Bag-pipes.]

1838 A. MacKay *Coll. Anc. Piobaireachd or Highland Pipe Music* 5 When the infirmities accompanying a protracted life, prevented him handling his favourite *Piob-mhor*, he would sit on the sunny braes, and run over the notes on the staff.

1845 *New Statist. Acct. Scotl.* XIV. 339 The names of some of the caves and knolls in the vicinity still point out the spots where the scholars used to practise, respectively on the chanter, the small pipe, and the *Piob mhor*, or large bagpipe. [...]

ceilidh, n. **Etymology:** < Irish *céilidhe*, Scottish Gaelic *cēilidh*, < Old Irish *céile* companion. In Scotland and Ireland: (a) an evening visit, a friendly social call; (b) a session of traditional music, storytelling, or dancing; also *attrib.* and *fig.*

1875 *Celtic Mag.* I. 40 The Highland Ceilidh.

As for labels identifying social groups, the indebtedness to literary sources is clear both in the case of *Gael* and of *Sassenach*:

- (10) **Gael**, n. **Etymology:** < Scottish Gaelic *Gaidheal* a member of the Gaelic race = Old Irish *Gaidel*, *Goidel*. A Scottish Highlander or Celt; also, an Irish Celt.

[1596 J. Dalrymple tr. J. Leslie *Hist. Scotl.* (1888) I. 73 Calling thame al Scottis albeit is plane and euident that mony hundir zeiris eftir, thay war called Gathelis fra Gathel.]

1810 Scott *Lady of Lake* v. 192 The Gael around him threw His graceful plaid of varied hue.

Sassenach, n.¹² **Etymology:** repr. Gaelic *Sasunnach* adjective English, noun an Englishman = Irish *Sasanach*. The name given by the Gaelic inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland to their 'Saxon' or English neighbours. (Sometimes attributed to Welsh speakers: the corresponding Welsh form is *Seisnig*.)

1771 T. Smollett *Humphry Clinker* III. 21 The Highlanders have no other name for the people of the Low-country, but Sassenagh, or Saxons.

1815 Scott *Let.* 21 Jan. (1933) IV. 19 I believe the frolics one can cut in this loose garb are all set down by you Sassenach to the real agility of the wearer.

a1820 Drennan in *Spirit of Nation* (1845) 24 Unarm'd must thy sons and thy daughters await The Sassenagh's lust or the Sassenagh's hate.

a1845 T.O. Davis *Fontenoy* V Revenge! remember Limerick! dash down the Sacsanach.

1876 J. Grant *Hist. Burgh Schools Scotl.* ii. xiii. 410 (*note*) A brave and patriotic Sassenach may be said to have wiped out this stain.

attrib.

1869 W.S. Gilbert *Bab Ballads* 187 All loved their McClan, save a Sassenach brute, Who came to the Highlands to fish and to shoot.

Concerning similarities with features of Johnson's *Dictionary*, we find that in *kilt* there are some indirect references to the Act of Proscription, but also indications (in Burt's and Pennant's quotations) that perhaps it was still in use in some parts of the country even after it had only been allowed in very limited cases:

¹² This entry has not yet been fully updated (first published 1909).

- (11) **kilt**, n. A part of the modern Highland dress, consisting of a skirt or petticoat reaching from the waist to the knee: it is usually made of tartan cloth, and is deeply plaited round the back and sides; hence, any similar article of dress worn in other countries.
- 1746 *Act 19 & 21 Geo. II* c. 39 §17 The philebeg or little kilt.
- 1754 E. Burt *Lett. N. Scotl.* II. xxii. 185 Those among them who travel on Foot..vary it [the Trowze] into the *Quelt*, a small Part of the Plaid, is set in Folds and girt round the Waste to make of it a short Petticoat that reaches half Way down the Thigh.
- 1771 T. Smollett *Humphry Clinker* III. 23 His piper has a right to wear the kilt, or antient Highland dress, with the purse, pistol, and durk.
- 1771 T. Pennant *Tour Scotl.* (1790) I. 211 The feil beag, i.e. little plaid, also called kelt, is a modern substitute for the lower part of the plaid.
- 1814 Scott *Waverley* I. xvi. 232 The short kilt, or petticoat, showed his sinewy and clean-made limbs. [...]

In the entry for *second sight*, instead, the Celtic word identifying the phenomenon is found only in a relatively late quotation dating from 1875:

- (12) **second sight**, n.
1. a. A supposed power by which occurrences in the future or things at a distance are perceived as though they were actually present.
- 1616 in A. Macdonald & J. Dennistoun *Misc. Maitland Club* (1840) II. 189 Be the secund sicht grantit to her. She saw Robert Stewart..and certane utheris with towis about thair craigis.
- 1685 J. Evelyn *Diary* (1955) IV. 470 There was something said of the second-sight, happning to some persons, especialy Scotch.
- 1763 *Pastoral Cordial* 11 Their Faith and firm Belief In Second Sight, and Mother Shipton.
- 1827 Scott *Highland Widow in Chron. Canongate* 1st Ser. I. xii. 265 There are Highland visions, Captain Campbell, as unsatisfactory and vain as those of the second sight.
- 1875 A. Lang in *Encycl. Brit.* II. 204/1 Persons possessing the Celtic *taishitaraugh*, or gift of second-sight.

The data provided so far point to an evidently significant role of literature in the preservation of Celtic vocabulary. This can be attributed to the policies that the editors of the OED implemented for the acquisition of examples, which resulted in informants contributing a vast quantity of quotations taken from literary sources. However, it is undeniable that the popularity of such sources also affected how people perceived the (more or less exotic) realities they described, whether they were geographically or historically distant. In the next section specific attention will be paid to literary and non-literary sources in which the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 features most prominently, in order to see to what extent the roots of persistent stereotypes can be traced back to them.

3. Literary and popular culture

Given the importance of literary sources in the quotations provided by the OED, further analysis is required in order to assess the extent to which Gaelic vocabulary was borrowed into English through literary and non-literary channels. To achieve this aim, I selected a reference corpus comprising two collections of Scottish documents, one pertaining to popular culture and the other pertaining to narrations of the last Jacobite uprising, so as to assess the presence of Gaelic vocabulary in (mostly) non-literary texts.

The former collection includes the ballads available in a site hosted by the National Library of Scotland, “The Word on the Street”: nearly 1,800 broadsides circulating in Scotland between 1650 and 1910 and thus assumed to be representative of current usage. Interestingly, such ballads do not seem to include Gaelic vocabulary in the texts collected under the *Jacobites* and *Highlanders* labels¹³. Of course many Jacobite songs were actually sung in Gaelic and even Scots ones included specific lexical items where required, as shown in the following lines from *Hey, Johnnie Cope*:

- (13) ‘Faith’, quo Johnnie, ‘I had sic fegs,
 Wi’ their claymores and their philabegs,
 If I face them again Deil brak ma legs,
 So I wish you a ‘good morning’.

¹³ Documents about these subjects are listed at <http://digital.nls.uk/broadsides/subject.cfm/key/highlanders> and <http://digital.nls.uk/broadsides/subject.cfm/key/Jacobites> respectively; both pages were accessed on 03.03.2018.

However, Gaelic items are infrequent also in the second collection, *The Lyon in Mourning* (Forbes 1746-75), nearly 600 documents of varying length concerning the Forty-five and its aftermath¹⁴. There we come across only *kilt*, *durk*, *claymore* and *tartan*, mostly in accounts of Charles Edward Stewart's escape after Culloden:

- (14) The Prince at this time was in a small hutt built for the purpose in the wood betwixt Achnasual and the end of Locharkeig. [...]. He was then bare-footed, had an old black kilt coat on, a plaid, philabeg and waistcoat, a dirty shirt and a long red beard, a gun in his hand, a pistol and durk by his side. (Forbes 1746-75: I, 97)

I have had this philibeg on now for some days, and I find I do as well with it as any the best breeches I ever put on. [...] Then he remarked that the waistcoat he had upon him was too fine for a servant, being a scarlet tartan with a gold twist button, and proposed to the master to change with him. (Forbes 1746-75: I, 137)

The reasons for the continuing popularity of these lexical items should therefore be investigated also in other sources, and more specifically in literary ones. First of all, the crucial role played by Sir Walter Scott in the re-launch of tartan on the occasion of George IV's visit to Scotland in 1822 cannot be ignored; in addition, the vast popularity of Scott's novels and their representation of both Scotland and the Jacobite cause is seen in the frequency with which the OED referred to them for instances of first usage or first meaning. Sir Walter Scott is the third most frequently quoted source in the OED, with a total of 17,118 quotations (about 0.49% of all OED quotations). Of these, 449 provide first evidence of a word, while 2,122 provide first evidence of a particular meaning. The distribution of quotations among Scott's works is given in Table 4 below.

¹⁴ The documents, collected by Robert Forbes, Bishop of Ross and Caithness, were published in three volumes at the end of the nineteenth century, and in each volume there is a preface in which the editor, Henry Paton, of the Scottish History Society, provides background notes on both the collector and the papers themselves; these are not arranged chronologically according to the times of the events to which they refer, but follow the order in which Forbes collected them – see <http://digital.nls.uk/print/transcriptions/index.html>. Background notes on the history of the collection are at www.nls.uk/about-us/publications/discover/2009/lyon-in-mourning (accessed 03/03/2018).

Table 4. Walter Scott: most quoted texts in the OED

Work	No. of quotations	%
<i>Heart of Mid-Lothian</i>	1,007	5.0
<i>Fair Maid of Perth</i>	940	5.0
<i>Antiquary</i>	890	5.0
<i>Guy Mannering</i>	765	4.0
<i>Waverley</i>	700	4.0
<i>Kenilworth</i>	685	3.0
<i>Lady of the Lake</i>	655	3.0
<i>Ivanhoe</i>	651	3.0
<i>Rob Roy</i>	639	3.0
Letters	617	3.0

Among such quotations we find both items pertaining to Scottish culture (e.g. *clansman*, *sporrán* and *the Forty-five*) and items that would gain much broader circulation, not least in literary usage – it is the case for instance of *password* and *skyline*; the relevant quotations are given here in chronological order:

- (15) 1799 Scott tr. Goethe *Goetz of Berlichingen* ii. iii. 69 George shall force the fellow to give him the pass-word.
 1810 Scott *Lady of Lake* ii. 68 A hundred clans-men raise Their voices.
 1817 Scott *Rob Roy* III. vii. 209 I advise no man to attempt opening this sporrán till he has my secret.
 1823 Scott *St. Ronan's Well* I. iv. 84 Some boy's daubing, I suppose... Eh! What is this? Who can this be. Do but see the sky-line – why, this is an exquisite little bit.
 1832 Scott *Redgauntlet* II. xi. 247 Ye have heard of a year they call the *forty-five*.

Other successful items first used by Scott were *Gael*, *Glaswegian*, *slainte*, and *petticoat tail* (a triangular piece of shortbread). The contexts in which these lexemes first occurred are given in the quotations below, again in chronological order:

- (16) 1810 Scott *Lady of Lake* v. 192 The Gael around him threw His graceful plaid of varied hue.

- 1817 *Scott Rob Roy* II. ix. 195 The Glaswegian took him by the hand.
 1819 *Scott Bride of Lammermoor* xii, in *Tales of my Landlord* 3rd Ser. II.
 285 Never had there been..such making of car-cakes and
 sweet scones, Selkirk bannocks, cookies, and petticoat-tails,
 delicacies little known to the present generation.
 1824 *Scott Redgauntlet* II. vii. 159 He then took up the tankard, and
 saying aloud in Gaelic, '*Slaint an Rey*', just tasted the liquor.

Although the OED does not refer to the Act of Proscription in the entry for *plaid* either, there is a reference to Queen Victoria's enthusiastic appropriation of Scottish culture in the 1897 quotation illustrating usage of *tartan*¹⁵:

- (17) **plaid**, n.¹ **Origin:** Perhaps a borrowing from Scottish Gaelic. Etymon: Scottish Gaelic *plaid*. [...]
 2. a. A length of such material, formerly worn in the north of England and all parts of Scotland, later mainly in the Scottish Highlands, and now chiefly as part of the ceremonial dress of the pipe bands of Scottish regiments. [...]

tartan, n.¹

1. a. A kind of woollen cloth woven in stripes of various colours crossing at right angles so as to form a regular pattern; worn chiefly by the Scottish Highlanders, each clan having generally its distinctive pattern; often preceded by a clan-name, etc. denoting a particular traditional or authorized design. Also, the pattern or design of such cloth, and applied to silk and other fabrics having a similar pattern. shepherds' tartan, shepherds' plaid: see quot. 1882. In quot. 1810 *pl.* tartan garments.

?a1500

Symmye & Bruder 22 in *Sibbald Chron. Sc. Poetry* (1802) I. 360
 Syne schupe thame up, to lowp owr leiss, Twa tabartis of
 the tartane. [...]

- 1803 *Gazetteer Scotl.* at *Ninians (St.)* Of late, the greater part of
 the tartan for the army has been manufactured in this parish.

¹⁵ More extensive discussion of the ways in which travel, tourism, empire and ideology contributed to the creation of an often artificial image of Scotland and its history can be found in numerous book-length studies, such as Grenier (2005), and is therefore beyond the scope of this paper.

- 1810 Scott *Lady of Lake* iii. 134 Their feathers dance, their tartans float. A wild and warlike groupe they stand.
- 1822 D. Stewart *Sketches Highlanders Scotl.* I. iii. i. 229 The pipers wore a red tartan of very bright colours, (of the pattern known by the name of the Stewart tartan). [...]
- 1897 *Private Life of Queen* xxv. 209 The writing-room is hung entirely with the Balmoral tartan.

Since Culloden, a cultural shift had taken place, not just in legal terms, but also in linguistic and symbolic ones. Highland life, language and culture were now considerably restricted and what survived was reinterpreted in completely different ways: obvious instances of this are in the representation of a new, distinctively military Highland garb in numerous paintings commissioned by the Hanoverian elite – see, most notably, Sir Henry Raeburn’s portrait of Sir John Sinclair (1794-95)¹⁶, but also William Dyce’s portrait of Francis Humberston-MacKenzie (ca. 1840)¹⁷ and – even more significantly – Hugh Montgomery’s portrait by John Singleton Copley (1780), in which kilted soldiers are not defeated as in 1746, but have now become victorious over Indian nations¹⁸.

4. Concluding remarks

The complex ways in which lexical change appears to have occurred in Late Modern times in relation to Scots, Scottish English and Gaelic can be documented both by lexicographical investigations and by analyses of other text types. Although this study has considered only a small fraction of the items that appear to have changed their viability in day-to-day communication after the dramatic events of the last Jacobite rebellion, this overview of their treatment in both literary and non-literary sources has shed light on the significance that such sources have in the creation of persistent images. Even so, quantitative analyses cannot be expected to answer all

¹⁶ See www.wga.hu/html_m/r/raeburn/sinclair.html (accessed 03/03/2018).

¹⁷ See <http://clanmackenziesociety.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/William-Dyces-portrait-of-Francis-Humberston-MacKenzie-shown-in-the-uniform-of-the-78th-or-Seaforth-Highlanders.jpg> (accessed 03/03/2018).

¹⁸ See <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/65/14/27/651427124bb647edaa9df649cf484934--oil-paintings-for-sale-original-paintings.jpg> (accessed 03/03/2018).

research questions, on account of the relatively biased composition of the text collections under investigation: for instance, certain authors may feature more prominently than others among quoted sources, due to their popularity at a specific point in time.

As a result, linguistic studies need to be supplemented with sufficiently broad background knowledge of the social and historical contexts in which such changes occurred. While the importance of the external history of a language has long been acknowledged, recent trends in corpus-based studies appear to have somewhat neglected that. However, quantitative findings require qualitative interpretation both in relation to data and in relation to the cultural framework in which they are seen to occur. Thanks to such an encompassing approach, it may be possible to see that the borders of time and space can hardly be defined when language change is concerned: what falls out of use and what survives, whether with the same or with a new semantic value, may hardly depend on internal rules, but may depend on historical events and how they are narrated, idealized, and even re-interpreted.

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