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IN Le Musée d’Archéologie Nationale, château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France, there are two bronze objects (no. 52.74 (a) and (b)), which over the years have puzzled archaeologists and art historians. Each consists of two mirror-image D-shaped plates of c. 20cm, and – apart from minor details – they are identical: one side forming the back and one the front piece, both decorated with raised interlaced bosses, and a third plate forming the straight side edges, ending in a projecting beast’s head. The plate illustrated here (Figure 1) is in pristine condition apart from the nail-holes, which show distinct marks of having been brutally torn apart. The French Revolution was long blamed for the fierce treatment of the bronze objects.

The items, which arrived at the museum in 1909 from the private collection of Victor Gay, were quite clearly Celtic, specifically of Irish origin, and as such belonged to the 8th century, as described by Françoise Henry.\(^1\) She also gives an account of the technique applied to form the objects, known to archaeologists and artists as the ‘lost wax method’. A plate of wax is pressed into a fixed matrix where the main shape and decor is carved out. When the wax form is taken out it can be further decorated in details, if needed, before it is covered in clay. The clay form is then burned, so that the wax is absorbed by the clay. While still hot, the form is filled with melted bronze. When cool, the clay form is cracked open and cannot be used again. The original matrix can, however, be used to make other clay forms with similar features as the first, or perhaps with some more or less minor alterations added to the details.\(^2\)

Suggestions of any further provenance or practical application for the two objects in Saint-Germain amounted to little more than speculation until

\(^1\) Henry 1938.
\(^2\) Henry 1938, 71.
the great art historian John Hunt convincingly established how the items were used in an Irish setting. The bronze objects from Saint-Germain, he claimed, would be forming part of a double-winged terminal or finial on the point of a gable of a roof-shaped structure that most probably would have been a large shrine or sarcophagus. Hunt was able to demonstrate Irish stone art in early churches and tombs showing what he believed to be the pointed gable end of roofed shrines, in the shape of the building shown in folio 202 V, the ‘Temple Page’, in the Book of Kells. This is the temple of Jerusalem, with a hip roof and a ridge crest with two snake-like animal heads opposing each other at each end. (See Figures 2 and 3)

The inspiration behind the Irish-Scottish steep hip-roofed shrines, both in the form of large sarcophagi and much smaller reliquary shrines, is probably found in the many sarcophagi and coffins of late antiquity, while the fierce animal heads as terminals of the roof’s ridge poles might have parallels in the carved gable finials on buildings, such as the wooden church on Iona, as suggested by H G Leask.

Although there are many examples of pointed gabled shrines, the terminals in Saint-Germain are unusually large, the largest examples from the period in Irish art. All the known 8th-century Irish shrines are portable. However, from Northumbria we know that the wooden chest made in AD

3 Hunt 1956.
5 Leask 1955, 43-7.
Figure 2. The temple of Jerusalem in the Temptation of Christ scene in the Book of Kells (from Henry 1947, see also Henry 1974, plate 68).

Figure 3. John Hunt’s suggested use of the terminals (after Hunt 1956, 154).
698 to contain St Cuthbert was big enough to contain his body, and Bede (Bk IV, Ch. III) refers to an exceptionally large ‘wooden monument … a dwelling house’ over the grave of St Ciadda. It is only fair to assume that the person commemorated with the only known gabled house-shaped reliquary from the 8th century would have had an unusual status within the Irish community.

By 1956 it was apparent that Hunt had given an explanation to the background of the two objects that could be regarded as final. Any further scholarly work on their function and provenance could only happen on the basis of additional circumstantial evidence. As a matter of fact, such evidence had long been unearthed as far away from France and Ireland as the southwest coast of Norway.

The finds at Gausel

In 1883 the farmer Samuel Gausel was clearing stones from a field on his farm Gausel, just south of Stavanger, when he came across a small mound that contained a grave. Samuel Gausel himself dug up the grave and passed the metal artefacts over to a local blacksmith who sold the objects to the Museum of Bergen. The Museum made contact by letter with the farmer, kindly asking him to see if he could find anything more in the grave, and he consequently forwarded a few more objects he had found. The grave unearthed by Samuel Gausel is nowadays regarded the second richest female burial from the Viking period found in Norway, after the famous Oseberg burial. The artefacts found on Gausel indicate an inhumation grave of a very high status woman. The head of a horse placed in the grave links it to other high status burials on the west coast of Norway, where horses or heads of horses have been buried alongside the dead. Among the objects in the Gausel burial are some bronze and silver brooches and arm-rings that probably were produced in Norway. They are of unusually high quality and indicate the owner’s elevated position in a local setting. The imported goods, however, are what give this grave special significance, for here are unusual objects of such value that, in order to obtain them, the owner would have had exceptionally good contacts and a very high position in society.

A ring of jet (or possibly shale) will originally have come from northern England and it could have found its way to Gausel via trade. Likewise, the fine mounts from a horse harness, a bronze vessel and drinking-horn terminal mounts – all of them Insular – could have been acquired through trade. If so, they tell a tale of contact between Gausel and the new areas of opportunity that had started to open up because of Viking activities across the North Sea in the British Isles.

Egil Bakka has in several articles discussed the artefacts from the Gausel grave. He sees the selection of the high quality imported objects as a chieftain’s first pickings from a large loot. Bakka comes to this assumption not only because of the quality of the objects but also because among them are artefacts that are not usually trade goods since they are likely to have had a religious function. Such artefacts include the remains of an Irish hanging vessel which may be a type of lamp used within a sacral setting.

Two quite weathered and unassuming ornamented objects are of particular interest, for Egil Bakka manages to establish that the remains from Gausel (see Figure 4) are nearly identical to the bossed front pieces of the two bronze D-shaped objects at Saint-Germain. They are so similar that they must have been made from the same matrix. There are a few relatively minor differences in decoration, such as in the braiding of the snake bodies, but these

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Figure 4. The mount from Gausel (from Bakka 1993, 265).

8 Bakka 1993, 284-5.
could easily have been made at the wax plate stage in the production process, as described above. All in all, from the general form down to the smaller details, the mounts from Gausel and Saint-Germain are extremely similar.\textsuperscript{10}

The grave found in 1887 was rediscovered in 1997 as part of a large archaeological investigation of the Gausel area, and an excavation was conducted on the remains of the grave. This unearthed a few additional minor items and confirmed Bakka’s analysis of the grave (see Figure 5).\textsuperscript{11} Based on typology and stylistic judgements, Bakka believes that the Irish objects were

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{figure5.png}
\caption{Suggested reconstruction of the grave of ‘the Queen of Gausel’ (from Børsheim and Soltvedt 2002, 191). The finial is seen in the upper right corner.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{10} Bakka 1993, 266-7.
\textsuperscript{11} Børsheim and Soltvedt 2002, 185-6.
collected in the period c. 830 to c. 850, and in the light of the Norwegian items it is likely that the grave was dug c. 850\times 60.\textsuperscript{12}

Over the years, the area just south of Stavanger has turned out to be an exceptionally rich area archaeologically, not the least because of an unusual concentration of Insular material in graves from the early Viking period. The two neighbouring farms to Gausel, Jåttå and Soma, have also produced some remarkable finds of this kind. However, nothing is quite comparable to Gausel, where there are also three high-status boat graves from the Viking period. They are from very disturbed mounds, but at least one has quite safely been dated to c. AD 850, about the same dating as the ‘queen’s’ grave with the Irish objects.\textsuperscript{13}

**Items from loot**

Before knowing about any Viking involvement, Hunt was convinced of the use of the finials kept in the Saint-Germain museum:

‘No doubt these fragments represent the last remains of the shrine of some Irish missionary saint from the treasury of some French cathedral or abbey, perhaps destroyed during the Revolution’.\textsuperscript{14}

Bakka finds it unlikely that the Irish finial was purpose-built in France. He suggests that the reason for a pair of the decorative plates ending up in France could be down to the sharing or dividing up of Viking loot.\textsuperscript{15} Some of it, he argues, fell into the hands of Vikings who stayed on in Ireland and later on suffered defeat, so that the objects again came into Irish ownership. An Irish monk could in turn have taken it to a safer location in one of the monasteries in France founded by Irish monks.

Bakka’s suggested explanation of a carved-up Viking booty seems reasonable. It is, however, not absolutely necessary to imagine an event involving a Viking defeat and renewed Irish ownership of the artefacts. It could well have been Scandinavians themselves who brought the finial to France. Place-names like *Doncanville* (containing ‘Duncan’) and *Le Mesnil-Patry* (including ‘Patrick’) in the Cotentin, Normandy, prove that some of the Scandinavians who ended up here must have spent time long enough in Gaelic-speaking areas to have brought Gaelic personal names with them.

\textsuperscript{12} Bakka 1969 (unpaginated); Børshøj and Soltvedt 2002, 186.
\textsuperscript{13} Børshøj and Soltvedt 2002, 194-220.
\textsuperscript{14} Hunt 1956, 157.
\textsuperscript{15} Bakka 1993, 269.
either names of slaves or their own mixed offspring.\textsuperscript{16} They could also have brought objects such as the finials with them, which by that time were possibly treasured family heir-looms.

There is scholarly consensus that the finials will have been made within an Irish cultural setting, and most authorities ascribe them either to the late 8\textsuperscript{th} or early 9\textsuperscript{th} centuries. In the following I will argue for a more specific provenance in the geographical periphery of the Irish cultural sphere, namely Iona around the year AD 800. I believe that the peripheral setting is important because it can explain the distinct imagery and techniques in the finials and related objects, and Iona as the centre for the cult of St Columba can explain the motivation behind the iconography.

**Iona as a centre of artistic innovation**

Isabel Henderson has convincingly argued for the influence Pictish art had on ‘mainstream’ Insular art; an influence which was fundamental, long-lasting and mutual:

‘… the relationship between the Pictish animal art of the late eighth century and mainstream Insular art is precisely the same as it was in the seventh century, when aspects of the Pictish incised designs, having their own strongly motivated function, were absorbed into the repertoire of Insular art, and Pictish artists, in turn, responded to and no doubt contributed to the decorative style of the earlier gospel books and the metalwork that lay behind it’.\textsuperscript{17}

Further, Henderson has demonstrated how Iona was a meeting-place between Irish, Northumbrian and Pictish artistic traditions and she has shown how decor and motifs expressed on Pictish stones turn up in the *Book of Kells*.\textsuperscript{18}

Although Ionan art reflects such deep-rooted traditions there is, however, also a decisively novel and inventive element in the artistic expression in the late 8\textsuperscript{th} century. It has long been accepted that Iona was the starting point for the transformation of the early tradition of the free-standing wooden crosses into ambitious high stone crosses. Ian Fisher argues that the group of early large crosses on Iona, and notably St John’s Cross, are highly innovative.

\textsuperscript{16} Fellows-Jensen 1994, 81-2.
\textsuperscript{17} Henderson 1996, 38.
\textsuperscript{18} Henderson 1982.
constructions that convey the impression of being early and experimental, and not derived from any established tradition of stone-carving.\textsuperscript{19}

The dating of stone monuments is notoriously difficult; in most cases dates can only be approximated on the basis of comparative studies. Although the Viking raids did not bring an end to monastic life on the island,\textsuperscript{20} the historic event of Viking raids may establish an end date of about 800 for exceptional undertakings like the high stone crosses on Iona.\textsuperscript{21} At the same time that the early high crosses were being constructed in the middle or second half of the 8\textsuperscript{th} century,\textsuperscript{22} an Iona scriptorium produced the magnificent \textit{Book of Kells}. It is possible that an incomplete manuscript was finished at Kells in Ireland because of Viking attacks, or that it was finished on Iona not long before the raids commenced.\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{st_johns_cross}
\caption{Part of St John's Cross, Iona. (Photo by the author.)}
\end{figure}

\begin{itemize}
\item[20] Jennings 1998, 42.
\item[22] Dunbar and Fisher 1995, 5.
\item[23] Henderson 1982.
\end{itemize}
Due to the difficulties involved in moving such heavy and fragile constructions, the high crosses are most likely to have been produced on Iona. The place of origin of art produced on other, more easily transported media is not so evident, and we lack firm evidence for an art-form such as metalwork from this period from Iona. There has been relatively little excavation on Iona, so the lack of metalworking debris is not surprising. It is, however, becoming increasingly apparent that the intense productivity and outstanding creativity that took place on Iona in the form of stone sculpture and manuscript illumination will similarly have produced ornamental metalwork. As a matter of fact, metalwork is likely to be the stylistic inspiration both for the scribes who produced the *Book of Kells* and the sculptors who carved the three-dimensional ornamentation found on the early high crosses. The snake-and-boss decor of St John’s Cross (see Figure 6) and St Oran’s Cross is closely paralleled with the Saint-Germain and Gausel finials, and Fisher says that the further links of these objects with the *Book of Kells* (and with the Pictish cross-slab at Nigg) make an Iona provenance likely for the finials.

Three-dimensional dog-headed serpents swirling out from bossed ornaments are found on a mount fragment from what probably was a Viking grave at Romfohjellen, Sunndal, Norway (see Figure 7). Fisher illustrates how the metalwork motif from Saint-Germain/Gausel and Romfohjellen is echoed in stonework on the tomb-shrine known as the St Andrews Sarcophagus, on the cross-slab from Nigg, Ross and Cromarty, and on St John’s Cross, Iona, where a snake-like monster bites over the head of a reptile-like creature.

Worth mentioning here as a secular piece of metalwork with similar motifs and techniques is the Londesborough brooch, which is unusual among penannular brooches in that all of its fine decoration is cast work and no filigree is used. Chip-carving is applied on the panels, with complex geometric patterns of interlace encircling raised bosses, and in between are interlaced animals with hatched bodies and pronounced eyes and jaws. Raghnall Ó Floinn points to the parallels exhibited in the fangs and gaping jaws found on the Saint-Germain finials, the Helgö mount (see below) and in

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24 Excavations have proved that metalworking was certainly being undertaken in the 7th century at the hillfort of Dunadd, near Kilmartin (Lane and Campbell 2000, 106-33).
25 Ryan 1987, 64.
28 In the book *Early Medieval Scotland: Individuals, Communities and Ideas*, Alice Blackwell, David Clark and Martin Goldberg have argued that the St Andrews Sarcophagus is not a sarcophagus.
30 British Museum, MLA 1888, 7-19, 101; Londesborough Collection.
the *Book of Kells*, where the birds on the brooch also ‘have distant relatives’.\(^{31}\) Ó Floinn further makes a note of how the unique raised bosses recall larger shrine fittings, which makes him suggest:

‘The brooch could have been produced as a part of a suite of metalwork for a senior cleric, a king-abbot perhaps. There is sculptural evidence for the wearing of such brooches by ecclesiastics.’

Although the iconography on the stone crosses and in the manuscript illuminations is strikingly similar to metalwork such as the mount fragment from Romfohjellen and the Londesborough brooch, it does not prove that the latter two were also produced on Iona in the late 8th century. Undisputable proof will not be provided here; however, what may possibly classify as circumstantial evidence comes in the form of motivation behind the artwork. Is there anything in the iconography that may point to Iona?

**The jaws-clamped-over-head motif**

At one end of the finials, clearly seen also on the Gausel remains, is a human head being gaped over by a monster with an impressive line of teeth (see Figures 1 and 4). On the St- Germain mount the motif is repeated 2/3 down the panel in a smaller version. The teeth are mirrored at the opposite

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\(^{31}\) Ó Floinn 1989, 93.
end of the finials, but there the wide-open jaw is stretched over the tail of one of the snake-like creatures, like on the mount from Romfohjellen.

On the island of Helgö in Lake Mälaren, Sweden, a mount or terminal which may be from a crozier was found during excavations in the 1960s (See Figure 8). The mount was found together with other highly exotic items, among them a small bronze Buddha, during excavation on a location which had been settled and had been used as a trading centre from c. AD 200 to c. 800. Helgö is often interpreted as the immediate forerunner of the trading centre of Birka. The date AD 800 is intriguing in the context of how the terminal must have made its way there at the very beginning of the Viking expansion westward to the British Isles. An ecclesiastical object like this will have started its journey towards Sweden not as a trade good but rather as loot from a Viking raid on a church or a monastery. Clearly, we cannot operate with an absolute date for the end of Helgö as a trading centre but it is still worth noting that the only documented raids on monasteries before 800 are on Lindisfarne, Rechru and Iona.

James Graham-Campbell has questioned whether the object actually is a crozier at all since it has so little in common with known Irish croziers from the eighth to the eleventh centuries. The lack of known parallels could in itself indicate that the mount might have been designed and produced somewhere on the outskirts of the Irish cultural domain. The nearest parallel to the mount is the knop of the fragmentary and intriguingly named ‘Crozier of St Columba’ at the National Museum in Dublin, which has, according to Peter Harbison:

‘... a knop decorated with interlace of a kind which would fit well into the first half of the ninth century, and it bears a close resemblance to the Helgö crook in that it once had four square or rectangular inlays around the widest part of the knop’.

Further, the patterns on the enamel-inlaid socket closely resemble a number of the decorative patterns found in the Book of Kells.

Here, however, we are going to focus on the main motif of the mount, namely the head of a man either being eaten or disgorged by a creature with wide-open jaws. The depiction of the gaping monster is strikingly similar to the Saint-Germain/Gausel finials. The head of the creature has a stylized

32 Historiska Museet, Stockholm, Z5075: 1000.
33 Graham-Campbell 1980, no. 315.
34 Harbison 2004, 32.
Columba and Jonah

eye and teeth bared on heavily hatched jaws that end in enamelled bosses or spirals respectively. On both objects the oversized upper and lower front teeth bite over the human head at the level of the temple. Two beasts protrude from the crook and the larger has a dog-like appearance which is very similar to the beast-heads protruding from the Saint-Germain mount. However, on the Saint-Germain/Gausel finials the human heads are turned the opposite way to the Helgö mount. Here the man’s body is swallowed by the beast, while on the finials the head is at the end of a snake-like appearance winding round and becoming part of one of the bosses. Writing about the Helgö mount, Harbison notices the similarities between the mount and the finials, but gives much significance to the fact that the head is turned differently. While he finds it likely that Jonah from the Old Testament may be represented on the Helgö mound, he finds this interpretation difficult to accept for the finials. We shall soon return to the discussion on the Jonah motif; but first it should be suggested that the differently turned heads might not spring from dissimilar motifs, but rather be the result of different needs in artistic design. The Helgö mount has a very simple design compared to the finials, where the jaws-clamped-over-head motif is interwoven into a complex design with snakes and bosses, all relating to each other. The head on the Saint-Germain/Gausel finials is at the end of a snake body similar to the way in which the head of what is usually interpreted as Christ is mounted at the end of a snake-like depiction in the Book of Kells, folio 34r, the Chi-Rho monogram. In other words, the differently turned heads may come down to artistic necessity rather than dissimilarity in inspirational motifs.

The jaws-clamped-over-head motif is used elsewhere in both Pictish and Irish art, and it is usually interpreted as illustrating the story in the Old Testament about the reluctant Jonah who was swallowed by a *ketos*, a ‘great fish’, which in Pictish iconography is depicted as a *hippocamp*, or a sea-horse, as seen for instance on the Dunfallandy cross-slab. For three days Jonah languishes inside the creature’s belly before he prays for mercy. God then talks to the *ketos*, which vomits Jonah up on dry land. Jonah now pays back God’s mercy by finally obeying the call to prophesy to the people of Nineveh, the capital of the ancient Assyrian empire. In the New Testament Christ himself interprets the story of Jonah as a parallel to his own story. Like Jonah spent three days in the belly of the fish, Jesus will spend three days in the grave.

The stylized gaping monster in both the Saint-Germain/Gausel finials and the Helgö mount has a snake-like body and there is a possibility that it

36 Ibid. 2004, 32.
37 Jonah 1:17.
Figure 8. Mount from Helgö, Sweden. (Foto: Gabriel Hildebrand/Statens historiska museum. With permission.)
Columbán and Jonah is not meant to be a *ketos*, but rather the sea-monster Leviathan in the Old Testament. Leviathan was depicted in Anglo-Saxon art from c. AD 800 as ‘hell-mouth’, the gigantic mouth of a monster that would swallow the condemned on Judgment Day. The motif is widespread in medieval European art, as for example on the famous early-13th-century stained glass window in the cathedral at Bourges. If Meyer Schapiro is right, the hell-mouth image, which was mostly used in England before 1200, was inspired by Fenrir, the giant wolf from Norse mythology who at Ragnarök will swallow Óðinn. Any Norse inspiration behind a possible hell-mouth on the Helgö mount and the Saint-Germain/Gausel finials is chronologically highly unlikely. However, a hell-mouth also appears on Pictish stone slabs and is possibly linked to the imagery on a miniature on folio 188r in the *Book of Kells*, where two monsters on the strokes of the letter ‘m’ lock their jaws over the heads of two intertwined figures. There is, however, good reason to believe that other parts of the *Book of Kells* allude strongly to Jonah and the *ketos*.

On one of the pages of the genealogy of Christ, folio 201r, there is, in line with six plump birds that may represent doves, a strange human figure with fish fins and a pair of fish tails. A similar half-man, half-fish (but with only one tail) figure is found on folio 213r. Although the figures may just be page-filling drolleries, Françoise Henry regards them as allusions to Jonah, and for folio 201r she notices an interesting constellation, namely that the fish-man grabs the letter ‘t’ in ‘qui fuit’ ['who was (the son) of’] on the line where the name ‘Iona’ is entered, as if to draw our attention to the line with the Hebrew form of ‘Jonah’, with the meaning ‘dove’. P. Meyvaert supports the idea that this is a *nota-bene* illustration, directing our attention to the name Iona. As has been noted by O’Reilly, the name Iona/Jonah was used in exegesis to describe St Peter, whose original name was Simon bar-Jonah. The predominant tradition in clerical circles on the island which is now accidentally named Iona would have been a strong association between the names Jonah and Columba. The Irish abbot, scholar and missionary Columbán (c. 543–615) several times made the point that Columbanus, the Latinised form of his own name – meaning ‘dove’ plus the diminutive/hypocoristic suffix –án – made him a

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40 Schapiro 1980, 264.
42 Rynne 1994, 318.
43 Henry 1974, 200 and note 95.
44 Meyvaert 1989, 6.
46 The modern island name *Iona* comes from an 18th-century misreading of *n* for *u* in Adomnán’s *Ioua* in his *Vita Columbae*. See Watson 1926, 88.
namesake of Jonah. Adomnán repeats the point with cognates in his *Vita* about St Columba: ‘... what is pronounced *iona* in Hebrew and what Greeks calls *peristera* and what in Latin is named *columba*, means one and the same thing...', and he comments at length on the appropriateness of the meaning ‘dove’ of the divinely-given name which St Columba carries. Adomnán ends with ‘... he with dove-like disposition offered to the Holy Spirit a dwelling in himself’.48

**The inspirational occasion**

It seems to be an accepted view that the *Book of Kells* was made as a tribute to St Columba. G.D.S. Henderson states: ‘In its general ecstatic visionary quality and in the specific slant of its iconography, the *Book of Kells* is at least consistent with the interpretation of St Columba offered in his official biography’.49 O’Reilly concurs: ‘... an eloquent tribute to a monastic founder and heavenly patron who was so pre-eminently ‘full of the Holy Spirit’.50

What was the possible inspirational occasion in the second half of the 8th century which initiated the great codex in a way similar to Eadfrith’s *Lindisfarne Gospels*, which was created in honour of the relics of St Cuthbert’s arrival to the monastery in 698? A very likely event would have been the translation of the remains of the abbey’s founding father. Columba’s earthly remains were still in a humble outdoor grave when Adomnán wrote his *Vita*. Although certain secondary relics associated with Columba were treasured, such as books written by him and the white tunic he wore when he died, no cult seems to have existed around his corporeal relics. We do not know when, during the following century, the relics of Columba were translated. Fisher has argued that the inspirational occasion for the translation of St Columba’s remains might have been the enactment of the *cáin* in 753.51 The promulgation of the *cánai*, or law codes, were important events which strengthened Iona’s position economically and as a centre for pilgrimage, and great men are known to have participated in the events. The *cánai* of Adomnán were promulgated in 727-30, and the annals then mention explicitly the circuit of his relics. The enactment of the *cánai* of Columba took place in 753, 757 and 778.52 Fisher has suggested that the little chapel next to St John’s Cross (see Figure 9) could have been built to mark St Columba’s grave when his remains were exhumed.

47 Layzer 2001, 78.
48 Anderson and Anderson 1961, 5.
50 O’Reilly 1994, 397.
51 Fisher 1982, 47; Fisher 1994, 47; see also Meyvaert 1989.
52 Fisher 1994, 34.
and enshrined. The dating of the chapel, however, is somewhat late for a mid 8th century event. When the chapel was restored in 1962 the original parts of it were dated to the 9th or 10th century.

Figure 9. St Columba’s Shrine, behind a replica of the St John’s Cross, Iona. (Photo by the author.)

Reasserting the Iona-Kells hypothesis and the dating of the *Book of Kells*, Françoise Henry lands on a date between 790 and 820. As argued above concerning the Ionan stone crosses, it does not look likely that major undertakings like the codex will have been initiated and possibly completed by the Ionan scriptorium in the midst of repeated Viking raids. If, therefore, we focus on the early part of the time period suggested by Henry, there was a particular occasion well worth commemorating for the monastic *paruchia* on Iona, namely the bicentenary year for the death of St Columba, the year 797. Adomnán tells us that Abbot Columbanus commanded the celebration of the Eucharist on St Columba’s day, the 9th of June, probably because the feast of the founding father by then already was an important annual event in the community on Iona. Could the explosive activity of artistic innovation and creativity within the Columban *paruchia* all have taken place with the incentive to celebrate the bicentenary?

The organisation of what was tremendous artistic activity on Iona sometime in the second half of the eighth century would have been an economic and logistical challenge. The effort must have been conducted by an inspired leader with extraordinary managerial and artistic skills. The one in charge would have been the *scribnidh* or scribe of the community, an office which carried equal importance to that of the abbot. The scribe behind the tribute in copper, stone and vellum is anonymous. However, if it is correct that the intense artistic activity may have taken place toward the end of the eighth century, there is a chance that the mastermind could have been Connachtach, ‘an eminent scribe and abbot of Ia’, who, according to the *Annals of Ulster*, died in 802, possibly during the Viking raid that very year. It is rare to hear of scribes in the annals, and the mention of Connachtach could be because he was murdered, although the murder itself is not mentioned. On the other hand, it can also be that Connachtach was such an extraordinarily brilliant scholar, artist and coordinator that his death merited a note.

*St Columba’s shrine?*

Although, as argued earlier, the choice of motif links the Saint-Germain/Gausel finials to St Columba, one cannot claim for certain that they belong to

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55 Adomnán’s *Vita*, 3.12 (‘Quasi die solemni’); 2.45 (Anderson and Anderson 1961). See also Warren 1881, 141 and Lewis 1980, 158.
56 Suzanne Lewis (1980, 139) argues that the Book of Kells ‘may have been initiated but not finished in time to celebrate the second centenary of St Columba’s death in 797’.
57 Warren 1881, 18-19.
58 Henry 1947 i, 61, 70; Lewis 1980, 158-9.
St Columba’s shrine on Iona. However, if we accept the provenance of Iona, it begs the question who else from there but Adomnán and Columba would have been honoured with a shrine of such exceptional decor and dimension? After all, this is ‘the only eighth-century gabled house-shaped reliquary yet known, and the largest Irish example of the period of which we have evidence’. The circuit of Adomnán’s relics is mentioned earlier in the 8th century, typologically most likely too early for the finials to have been made.

The community of Iona would have taken good care of Columba’s relics. His shrine would have been a political and religious centre point:

‘This was the shrine of the Columban paruchia’s founding saint, and within any given monastic paruchia of the Gaelic Church, the monastery which housed the relics of the founding father was the caput or political centre of the said federation’.

The elaborately decorated St Andrew’s Sarcophagus (if that is what is) hints at what the shrine for St Columba on Iona may have looked like. Similar composite ‘corner-post shrines’, all in Pictish areas, have been identified on the Moray Firth and on Orkney and Shetland, including groups from Papil and St Ninian’s Isle. The construction technique makes use of stone corner posts with longitudinal grooves into which side-panels made of stone or wood are slotted. On Iona, two such sandstone corner-posts are found. They cannot be dated stylistically or archaeologically, and they were found at two different locations: one in a stone pile by the abbey and the other in Reilig Odhráin, the burial ground around St Oran’s Chapel. However, they look very similar; each has grooves on adjacent faces and lower ends shaped to be sunk into the ground for stability. One of the possible pair has a hollow carved out in the top end, ‘… perhaps to take the tenon of a decorative finial’. A third post, made of garnet-schist, with an elongated stem and with a massive butt and simple key-ornament, ‘… may have belonged to a stone shrine or supported a metalwork one, or formed a kerb round some place of special sanctity’.

Anna Ritchie attempted a (flat-roofed) reconstruction drawing of a shrine and comments about their use:

‘These shrines were less than a metre long and were designed to hold the bones of a saint. By the time that a saint had been canonized, and the

60 Jennings 1998, 40-1.
62 Ibid., 59.
63 Ritchie 1997, 61.
64 Fisher 2001, 18.
decision had been taken to transfer his or her remains from the grave into a shrine, the body would normally have been reduced to disarticulated bones. The longest of these would be the leg bones, and all would fit easily into one of these shrines. An exception was St Cuthbert, whose exhumed body was found to be merely desiccated and still articulated in 698, and therefore required a full-length wooden shrine-coffin’.\textsuperscript{65}

Peter Yeoman elaborates further:

‘Such a box would probably have been placed in the largest timber church at the monastery, and would have contained secondary relics such as Columba’s tunic, with the bones themselves in one or more decorated caskets inside the box’.\textsuperscript{66}

The Viking raids on Iona and St Columba’s sarcophagus

The Annals of Innisfallen\textsuperscript{67} and the Annals of Ulster (AU)\textsuperscript{68} record the following raids on Iona:

AI 795: Orcain Iae Coluim Chille.
‘Ravaging of Iona of Colum Cille.’

AU 802: I Columbe Cille a gentibus combusta est.
‘Iona of Colum Cille was burned by the heathens.’

AU 806: Familia Iae occisa est a gentilibus, id est lxviii.
‘The community of Iona, to the number of 68, was killed by the heathens.’

AU 825: Martre Blaimhicc m. Flainn o genntib in Hi Coluim Cille.
‘Violent death of Blathmac son of Flann at the hands of the heathens in Iona of Colum Cille.’

It is reasonable to assume that this disruption, destruction, robbery, massacre and the sheer fear that a raid was likely to be repeated will have had a tremendous impact on the community, and in our context it is unlikely that artistic production could have continued on Iona at any significant scale. What would have made Iona attractive to the Vikings were, of course, the treasures associated with a rich monastery and abbey, but the materials in

\textsuperscript{65} Ritchie 1997, 61-2.
\textsuperscript{66} Yeoman 1999, 80.
\textsuperscript{67} MacAirt,1951.
\textsuperscript{68} MacAirt and MacNiocaill 1983.
the artistic work-shops in the form of tools, metal sheets and precious stones would certainly not have been left untouched by heathen hands.

As a monastery, however, Iona continued to exist through the worst years of the Viking raids and the later Norse settlement period. In 807, in order to protect lives and valuables and a normal monastic life, some of the Iona community moved to the newly created monastery of Kells in Ireland. The Book of Kells, completed or not, probably left Iona in that move, possibly together with relics of the paruchia’s founding father. Others from the community, however, must have remained on Iona. In 814, the abbot Cellach returned to Iona after seven years at Kells. The island had now become a place where a Christian could obtain ‘red martyrdom’ in the hands of heathens. Cellach was followed by Blathmac, who did win his martyrdom in 825. For that year it is recorded that ‘Blathmac, son of Flann, received the crown of martyrdom, for he was killed by the foreigners at Hi-Coluim-Cille [i.e Iona]’. In a hagiographic poem, the Frankish monk and scholar Walahfrid Strabo (808–49) gave a detailed account of the events around Blathmac’s death. The main intrigue in the poem concerns St Columba’s shrine:

‘See, the violent cursed host came rushing through the open buildings, threatening cruel perils to the blessed men; and after slaying with mad savagery the rest of the associates, they approached the holy father, to compel him to give up the precious metals wherein lie the holy bones of St Columba; but [the monks] had lifted the shrine from its pediments, and had placed it in the earth, in a hollowed barrow, under a thick layer of turf; because they knew then of the wicked destruction [to come]. This booty the Danes desired; but the saint remained with unarmed hand, and with unshaken purpose of mind; [he had been] trained to stand against the foe, and to arouse the fight, and [was] unused to yield.

There he spoke to thee, barbarian, in words such as these: – ‘I know nothing at all of the gold you seek, where it is placed in the ground or in what hiding-place it is concealed. And if by Christ’s permission it were granted me to know it, never would our lips relate it to thy ears. Barbarian, draw thy sword, grasp the hilt, and slay; gracious God, to thy aid I commend me humbly.’

Therefore the pious sacrifice was torn limb from limb. And what the fierce soldier could not purchase by gifts, he began to seek by wounds in

69 Jennings 1998.
71 Jennings 1998, 39.
72 Annals of the Four Masters (O’Donovan 1856) 823 (i.e. AD 825).
73 This connection is also hinted at by Ian Fisher (1994, 45).
the cold bowels [of the earth]. It is not strange, for there always were, and there always reappear, those that are spurred on by evil rage against all the servants of the Lord; so that what Christ’s decision has appointed for all, this they all do for Christ, although with unequal deeds.’

From Strabo’s more or less contemporary report it is evident that St Columba’s shrine was still on Iona in 825. We learn that it was made of precious metal, and we understand that it was a heavy sarcophagus on pediments but it could still be moved and hidden under ground. Blathmac not only obtained red martyrdom for himself but also managed to keep the hiding-place of the shrine a secret to the ‘Danes’.

It is most likely that the sarcophagus was partly vandalised during one of the Viking raids before 825. This could explain why the nail-holes on the Saint-Germain finials show distinct signs of having been brutally torn apart from its base. If we dare to take Strabo’s account as true in the main, it can be deducted that the sarcophagus itself at that time was not taken away, but that marauders harvested what they could get at in a hurry. In 825, at a time when Iona repeatedly had been thoroughly searched and relieved of its more portable pickings, Vikings who had been on Iona before or had been told about the place came to collect the only valuable object left, namely the costly metal coating of St Columba’s shrine. Clearly, the clerics on Iona had foreseen such an event and had taken precautions, and it seems that they were successful in their attempt to protect the shrine.

Columba’s relics seem to have been on the move after this event. According to the Annals of Ulster, Diarmait, abbot of Iona, took the reliquaries of St Columba to Scotland, and two years after ‘he brought them to Ireland’. We do not know if this included the shrine itself. In the Fragmentary Annals for the year 848 (124-5), we learn that ‘Indrechtach, abbot of Í, came to Ireland with the holy relics of Colum Cille.’. This record is probably connected to the Annals of Ulster’s record for the year 849 concerning the relics of Columba that were removed from Iona and divided between Alba and Ireland. This was done as part of a political manoeuvre by Cináed mac Alpin to transfer the administrative and religious centre of the Columban church to Dunkeld, the political centre of the new nation, Alba. However, concession was given to Irish interests, and some of the relics of Columba, as well as those of his biographer, abbot Adomnán of Iona, were translated to Kells, to the new

74 Translated by Anderson 1922, 265.
75 MacAirt and Mac Niocaill 1983, AU 829.3, AU 831.1.
76 Radner 1978, Fragmentary Annals 849, §238.
77 MacAirt and Mac Niocaill 1983, AU 849.
Columba and Jonah

monastery granted to the Iona community back in 804. It is uncertain from where they were taken, but in 877 the Annals of Ulster records that ‘the shrine of St Columba and all his reliquaries arrived in Ireland, to escape from the Foreigners’. It is clear that a shrine of one form or another was still associated with St Columba at this stage.

Columba and Adomnán were not allowed final peace in Ireland. The monastery of Kells was ravaged in 919, 946, 949, 968 and 969. Certain monasteries which were presumably named after important relics in their possession were also attacked:

CS 976: ‘Scrín of Colum Cille was plundered by the son of Domnall son of Muirchertach.’

CS 977: ‘Scrín of Adamnán was plundered by Domnall ua Néill.’

CS 1037: ‘Scrín of Colum Cille and Damliac were plundered by the foreigners of Áth Cliath [Dublin].’

The Scottish relics of Columba were also on the move after they were translated from Iona to Dunkeld. Columba’s sarcophagus – whether the old one from Iona or a new one made for the church in Dunkeld – stayed in Dunkeld and only disappeared during the Reformation. However, relics of St Columba were carried before Scottish armies in a reliquary called the Breccbennach (‘the speckled or peaked one’). The sacred battle ensign, or vexilla, was carried to Bannockburn by the Scottish army; the intercession of St Columba aided the Scots to victory over the English. It has been thought that the 8th-century Monymusk reliquary is the Breccbennach, but David Caldwell has shown that this is unlikely. Even if the Monymusk reliquary is not the actual Breccbennach some remains of Columba will probably have been kept in a portable house-shaped reliquary which in form would have been similar to the sarcophagus which once housed the earthly remains of St Columba on Iona.

St Columba’s shrine in Dunkeld vanished during the Reformation. Similarly, nothing is left of what went to Ireland. No metalwork made on Iona during the same inspired artistic flourish that produced the stone high crosses and the Book of Kells seem to have survived in Ireland or Scotland.

79 MacAirt and Mac Niocaill 1983, AU 877.
80 Ó Murchadha 1997, 179.
82 Caldwell 2001.
Ironically, only the possibly looted objects found in Saint-Germain-en-Laye and in Scandinavia remain as the most likely survivors from the metalwork tradition on Iona.

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THE members of this Society are perhaps more aware than anyone else that the study of Scottish-Scandinavian interaction has a long pedigree. We have been able to look at the phenomenon from a variety of angles including toponomy, etymology, archaeology and literature. My main interest in the subject broaches all of these, but it is the interactions of Scots with Scandinavia in the early modern period that remains an abiding passion. Given some notable scholarship in recent years, it is perhaps time to reflect on both the origins of the field, and in what ways it has either been advanced, or controversially, become locked into a simplistic and repetitive narrative. Who, we might ask, is discussing this field now, and how has our understanding changed in the 21st century, if at all?

Origins of Scottish-Scandinavian Historiography

In 1907 Thomas Fisher’s book *The Scots in Sweden* was posthumously published.¹ It fanned an interest in the history of relationships between Scotland in particular, Britain in general, and the various Scandinavian kingdoms ever since. It followed on from Fischer’s earlier works on the Scots in East and West Prussia, and the Scots in Germany;² these works themselves owed much to the work of A. F. Steuart who opened the door on Scottish-Swedish military links with an article in *Scottish Historical Review* in 1904.³ An aspect of many of the subsequent works on the relationship between Scotland and Scandinavia is that they often present a linear set of unconnected articles or biographies where the only binding glue is that the word Scotland, or Scandinavia (or any

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¹ Fischer 1907.
² Fischer 1902; Fischer 1903.
³ Steuart 1904.
constituent component thereof) is mentioned in the articles’ titles. Frequently, there are century-long gaps between the events discussed, yet we are invited to believe in a continuing ‘special’ relationship of some sort. These authors have sought to tie in a series of disparate events often hundreds of years apart and collect them together as if they form a cohesive argument or amount to a special relationship. There is no doubt that these collections often contain research of great value, but it can be in small measures to scholars involved in a single discipline or with interests in a particularly focussed historical period. This is especially true of those whose interest is directed to the relations Scots had in a given moment with the wider world in general, regardless of historical limitations to one geo-specific area. Where the scholarship has advanced in the 21st century is, for the most part, in moving away from the narrative biographies and random collections of articles. Rather, more penetrating questions have recently been asked as to what the presence of Scots actually meant to both the Scots and the Scandinavians (and their neighbours) during specific periods of time. One such work is Alexia Grosjean’s critical 2003 study An Unofficial Alliance: Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654. This volume certainly moved the field beyond the antiquarianism of earlier scholarship to what Edward Furgol has described in a review as a “magisterial” assessment for the flourishing of the Scottish-Swedish relationship. Moreover, and crucially, it discussed the gradual replacement of this ‘alliance’ in favour of strengthening Anglo-Swedish relations during the Cromwellian Usurpation;[6] this is the bit the earlier scholarship tended to leave out: the negative, the nasty, and the often fraught relations between the nations and peoples involved.

Grosjean’s book, among others, has added to our extensive knowledge of Nordic-Caledonian links by focussing on an age which saw the mass movement of people, goods and ideas from Scotland to the Scandinavian world – and understanding that it mostly was one-way traffic for all but the commercial aspect. Thousands of Scots moved into Scandinavia, very few Scandinavians contemporaneously moved into Scotland. To understand that difference we have to establish the motivations behind the contacts of the age. This Scottish exodus was prompted by five main types of interaction including:

Diplomatic contact and dynastic alliances (old school kings and queens)
Immigration and emigration (movement of people)
Commercial contacts (movement of goods and capital)

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5 Grosjean 2003a.
Cultural contacts (transfer of ideas, books, art)
Negative contacts (war, piracy and political intrigue)

These categories are pertinent for all peoples in every age, and there is a degree of overlap in each. That some Scots went to war against the Scandinavian monarchs should not be overlooked simply because there is something historically inaccurate about the portrait we have of the relationship between the Scottish nation and other countries in Europe, including the Nordic ones. This ‘comfortable history’ often portrays a happy time when all was well and everyone got along just fine. Examples declaring that the closest relationship Scotland had historically with another nation can be found in numerous publications relating to Ireland, Russia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, The Netherlands and France among others. These, of course, would all seem to be mutually exclusive as surely not every nation could have maintained a ‘special relationship’ with Scotland. We might also ask why England seldom features is such discourse, especially given that it is the only nation on earth which shares a land border to Scotland? Nevertheless, such declarations of ‘specialness’ become repeated by rote, as do errors in Scotland’s relations with other places beyond the singular: Scotland only had one factor in Hamburg and the only interest there was in Shetland fish; Scotland had no trade with Spain – it was Catholic and too far south: The Auld Alliance with France ended in 1560 because Scotland had a Reformation and so on. All these assertions have been repeated in print – but all have been recently challenged in the research of Kathrin Zickermann, Siobhan Talbott and Claire McLoughlin among others.

What both older and recent research is actually telling us is that some Scots did well in and on the behalf of each of these host locations, for example in Bergen, and that such communities, like that in Gothenburg, could be of importance to Scotland through the exploitation of commercial opportunity and involvement in Scottish politics. Other Scottish communities appear to have been of no consequence at all for their homeland, for example the Scots in Sigtuna which became something of a retirement village for former soldiers. Nevertheless the tendency remains to try to make something

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7 Murdoch 2007, 890-913.
8 Zickermann 2005; Zickermann 2013; Talbott 2010a; Talbott 2010b. Claire McLoughlin is currently completing her thesis, ‘Scottish-Iberian Commercial Connections, 1580-1750: The Impact of Dynastic and Political Unions’, at the University of St Andrews. All three scholars have undertaken their research as part of the ‘Scotland and the Wider World’ project within the Institute of Scottish Historical Research.
10 Palm and Undin 2012, 110-27.
‘historically special’ from the amalgam of potted episodes sewn together into a single narrative. In the Swedish case, a book that stands out as perhaps being over celebratory is *Britain and Sweden: A Thousand Years of Friendship*.  
This is an odd title given that neither Sweden nor Britain have existed as fully independent political entities for the last thousand years, and certainly we can demonstrate periods of outright antagonism between the two geopolitical entities at several points in their histories (I hesitate to call them nations, kingdoms or states given the time period suggested). For example, during the second and third Anglo-Dutch wars of the 1660s and 1670s, Scottish privateers delighted in attacking neutral Swedish shipping at a time when other Scots settled and traded from within Sweden; indeed, many of the Swedish ships taken by Scots were owned wholly or in part by other Scots.  
To highlight the contradictory nature of the problem of over-positivism, consider the Professor Anna Bieganska (a modern Polish scholar) who in every one of her dozen or so otherwise excellent articles about the Scottish-Polish relationship includes an irritating statement of the love of the Scots for Poland;  

‘The Scots were aware of their origin and maintained close links with their fellow countrymen. They were also loyal to Poland, a country which they chose as their new homeland, and were conscious of the advantages they enjoyed there’.  

Yet this implies the existence of a homogenous Scottish nation in which all members thought as one. Further, this view does not sit comfortably with historical events which indicated the opposite was true. For example, consider a particularly virulent anti-Polish spy network orchestrated by Swedish, Polish and London-based Scots in the 1620s, and in particular Sir James Spens of Wormiston.  
The network sought to destabilize the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and undermine a Polish army ostensibly being assembled to invade Sweden for the purposes of re-Catholicizing Sigismund Vasa’s former kingdom. But before we start to believe that the Spens spy-network proved the Scots valued the Swedes over the Poles, we have to consider that they were largely working against a group of fellow Scots, assembled by Sir Patrick Stewart, who were bent on overthrowing Gustav II Adolf in favour of restoring Sigismund to the throne of Sweden. As it developed, Spens and his agents set up the British merchant-factor in Poland as a fall guy leaving poor

12 Murdoch 2010a, 237-82.  
14 Murdoch 2010b, 45-65.
Francis Gordon’s reputation in tatters while also bankrupting Patrick Stewart and leaving him looking rather foolish.

Sometimes these intra-Scottish conflicts in Scandinavia were driven by political developments, but more often by personal circumstance: a family feud, competition in business, opposing political or religious beliefs and simple mercenary motives (both civilian and military). The latest research explores these complicated relations as well as the usually more celebrated ‘glorious’ episodes. Thus we learn of one exiled Scot who distanced himself from his compatriots in Stockholm as he believed they strayed from their Calvinist heritage by joining the Swedish Church. Indeed, the devout Presbyterian merchant Patrick Thomson, a resident in Norrköping for fifteen years, sought self-imposed exile from the other Scots in Stockholm as he felt that ‘All the Scots here are Lutherans or Atheists, the English are worse if worse can be […] so I come heir alone.’

Some Scots made a public spectacle of their Lutheranism, such as Daniel Young till Leijonancker. When the English merchant community got together to buy a communal grave in Stockholm’s Maria Kyrka for 600 rdl., Leijonancker purchased one for himself under the altar for 1200 rdl. the following year. Not only that, but he also owned plots in several other Stockholm churches. With such overt support from the Scots community, it should come as no surprise that the Swedish Lutheran clergy itself included several notable Scottish-born clergymen and even more of Scottish parentage.

Examples like these remind us that it is not nations or states that develop an empathy with another region or people, but individuals. We often have many groups from one ethnic background operating, even integrating, into overseas countries that might actually be in conflict with either their host community or, as clearly happened in Scandinavia for many Scots, members of their own

15 National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, Russell Papers, RH15/106/608, Patrick Thomson to Andrew Russell, Stockholm, 22 April 1686. It is not certain Thomson here uses the word ‘atheist’ in the modern context, but instead possibly to denote individuals who were neither Presbyterian nor Lutheran. Given the subsequent statement about Englishmen, and wondering what might constitute something worse than atheism to such an ardent believer, it is possible (though not proven) that he is referring to Scottish Episcopalians as the atheists. As Thomson may have believed Episcopalians were the cause of his exile, he would have been aware that they were at least influenced by Calvinism, as stated by Archbishop Archibald Hamilton. This may have raised them above Anglicans to some extent in his estimation. There were, of course, pure atheists to whom Thomson may have been alluding. For one self-confessed atheist and her subsequent conversion to Christianity, see ‘Mistress Rutherford’s Conversion Narrative’.

16 Stockholms Stadsarkiv, ‘Maria församling, register over döda’, vol. 1656-80, 320 and 544. The English merchants bought their grave on 9 December 1675. Leijonancker bought the grave near the altar on 7 June 1676.

17 For these Scottish Lutherans, Catholics, Calvinists and Orthodox Christians in northern Europe at this time, see Murdoch 2006, 84-124.
nation. What these examples do show is that by the early modern period, a variety of factors had contributed to the presence in Scandinavia of thousands of Scots, with similar numbers in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and significant numbers in England, Ireland, and the rest of Europe.\footnote{18}{The usual boast of 30,000 Scots in Poland-Lithuania has been recently revised down. For the more probable figure of 5-7,000 see Murdoch and Mijers, 2012, 320-7. The problem exposed here is the conflation with ‘ethnic Scot’ as opposed to a ‘migrant Scot’.}

**James VI, Anna of Denmark and the Oldenburg Alliance**

When James VI married Anna of Denmark in 1589, an older Scottish alliance with Denmark-Norway was revived. This ensured continued dual citizenship for the subjects of the houses of Stuart and Oldenburg within each other’s kingdoms, and would last until the mid-seventeenth century. As part of that agreement, there was also a military component. This saw both James VI and Christian IV binding themselves to support each other in times of war. In turn, this led to a fresh exodus of Scottish fighting men to Scandinavia. Surprisingly, perhaps, this did not always work out to the advantage of the House of Oldenburg.

Military migrations brought literally tens of thousands of Scottish soldiers and sailors to both the Copenhagen and Stockholm administrations, reaching a dangerous climax during the intra-Scandinavian Kalmar War of 1611-13. Those Scots in Danish service mobilized at land and sea, including one noble colonel and two admirals. As the main Danish ally, King James was expected to further aid his brother-in-law Christian IV with still more troops, and a force of some 6000 men were prepared for action.\footnote{19}{Murdoch 2000/2003, 39-40, 189-90.} The problem was that King James did not want to see Sweden militarily defeated by the Danes, but preferred the concept of a balance of power where Christian Europe could concentrate on tackling external threats, particularly those posed by the Ottoman Empire. As the research of Alexia Grosjean has demonstrated, James was playing a dangerous double-game with his brother-in-law, Christian IV. Several thousand Scottish soldiers were already in Swedish service with 3000 more covertly sent by him in 1612 to shore up Sweden’s army and thus maintain the Scandinavian balance of power.\footnote{20}{Grosjean 2003a, 34-8.} Some 300 of these were famously killed crossing through Norway at Kringen\footnote{21}{For this episode, see Michell, 1886.} – the source of epic Norwegian poems and songs – though 2500 Scots more passed through via Trondheim unmolested only a couple of months later, alas without giving rise to any similar literary gems from Norwegian poets.
In addition to trying to even up the military contest James deployed two Scottish ambassadors as chief negotiators for the Scandinavian powers.\(^\text{22}\) It is from them we learn that events in Scandinavia might easily have had devastating consequences in Britain. Thus Robert Anstruther wrote to his step-brother James Spens:

‘That if this matter is not speedily looked unto, it will breed a great inconvenience between England and Scotland, and if there be a day of battle, then the English and Scots will cut one another’s throats […] there has passed some message already between some of the nations’.\(^\text{23}\)

A successful Stuart-brokered resolution to the Kalmar War did not just ensure peace between the Scandinavian kingdoms, it also prevented an embarrassing situation where the Scots in the Swedish army would effectively be at war with the largely English army that had been sent to serve Christian IV commanded by Lord Willoughby, perversely sent under the terms of the Scottish-Danish alliance of 1589. Despite the successful conclusion of the Kalmar War which both kept Sweden free and Denmark-Norway in check, there were larger wars looming. None saw the arrival of so many Scots as those who went to war in the Scandinavian phases of the Thirty Years’ War (1618-48), a subject which has received some critical analysis since the mid-1990s.\(^\text{24}\) This collective corpus of scholarship has advanced the role of the soldier away from the simplistic representation of mercenary participation or heroic service and has considered such motivations as dynastic loyalty, confessional persuasion, political aspiration, social climbing, kith and kin loyalty, the evasion of justice, and coercion alongside financial considerations in seeing Scots prepared to fight abroad. It has certainly looked at the impact on the battlefield, but also the effect on devastated communities who lost their men through violent deaths. It has looked at the place of the common soldier as well as the officer class, and also to the importance of women as well as men.\(^\text{25}\)

**The Thirty Years’ War, 1618-48**

The war at the heart of these studies broke out in 1618 and ultimately affected most of Europe and drew in resources from across the globe. The

\(^{22}\) Murdoch, 2011, consulted online at: http://gale.cengage.co.uk/state-papers-online-15091714/essays.aspx


\(^{24}\) See the various contributions in Murdoch (ed) 2001; Worthington 2003; Grosjean 2003a, 74-111.

\(^{25}\) On the role of women in warfare, see Talbott 2007, 102-27.
Danish phase, *Kejserkrig*, lasted four years between 1625 and 1629. A central persona in the war was the half-Danish, half-Scottish icon Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia. In Britain the plight of this Stuart princess and the entry of her uncle Christian IV into the war were frequently woven together by pamphleteers and military recruiters alike. Add into that mix the heady potion of confessional alignment and the role of straightforward finance in attracting soldiers to service is greatly diminished.

Some 6000 English and 13,500 Scots served Denmark-Norway in this war, rallying to the cause of Elizabeth and the reformed religion, albeit there were notable Catholic officers amongst them. Robert Nithsdale was selected as the general of the Scots despite his ‘addiction’ to the religion of Rome. As Charles I asserted, this did not detract from his loyalty to the House of Stuart. The Scots uniquely received permission to fight under Scottish colours in the Danish army on the proviso they added the *Dannebrog* to them, albeit Christian IV was not pleased about it.

‘His Majesty [of Denmark] would have the officers to carry the Dane’s crosse, which the officers refusing […] Captain Robert Ennis was sent into England to know his Majestie of Great Britaine’s will, whether or no they might carrie without reproach the Dane’s Crosse in Scottish colours.’

These soldiers, often decried as mercenaries, clearly illustrated their belief in themselves as an allied army rather than hirelings and risked the wrath of two kings to make sure this was understood. We must be under no illusions as to the importance of this contingent. Scots formed one of the largest single components of the Danish-Norwegian Army. Scottish officers outnumbered Danish officers by a staggering 3:1 ratio in Christian’s army and were given key commands of garrisons, towns and regions, including the important Danish province of Skåne. But the cost in Scottish lives was horrendous. The Treaty of Lübeck extracted Denmark-Norway from the war in 1629 by which time some 12,000 of the Scottish contingent of 13,700 were dead, something William Lithgow was keen to remind Charles I about in his poem penned in 1633.

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26 Murdoch 2000/2003, 202-25
27 Danish Rigsarkiv, TKUA, England AI. Charles I to Christian IV, 8 February 1627.
28 Monro, 1637, vol. i, 2. Charles I eventually gave the Scots the choice of two colours. One had a *Dannebrog* with a Saltire in the corner, the other had a Saltire with a *Dannebrog* in the corner. The comment was added by Charles that the officers could choose the one they wanted, but that they had to choose one in order to get the king of Denmark’s pay. The sketches are recorded in The National Archives (Kew), SP75/8, f.61. ‘The state of the King of Denmark’s Army’, March 1627.
‘Thus look to Denmark
where twelve thousand lye
Serving thine Uncle,
sharpest fortunes try’

The remnants of the Scottish army in Denmark who were still fit for duty transferred into Swedish service – a fighting force of probably less than 1200 men in total.

The Lions of the North

When Sweden entered the coalition against the Habsburgs in 1630, the Danish contingent of Scots joined some 12,000 Scots already served in her army. By the conclusion of the war it is estimated that the total number that had served reached about 35,000 Scots. However a combination of natural wastage, battlefield fatigue, injury and death meant that at any one time numbers were seldom above 10,000 and usually less. Their importance to Sweden came not just through weight of numbers, but also in the roles they fulfilled within the military hierarchy of the army. Some 200 Scots served as officers, up to a quarter of the entire Swedish total. Moreover, at least 70 of these attained the rank of colonel while a dozen became field marshals or generals in this 18-year period. The most notable of these was Field Marshal Alexander Leslie, though one of his understudies, Robert Douglas, also rose to become Field Marshal in the 1650s. Furthermore, two of Sweden’s greatest military victories of the war could not have been accomplished without the Scottish presence. Of these, the Scottish role at Breitenfeld in 1631 has been long known. More recently another major battle, Wittstock in 1636, has been shown to have been a largely Scottish victory in terms of conception and execution. Discussion of this event can be found in a recent edition of this journal, alerting us to the significance of this Society in disseminating cutting-edge research in the field. The important point to note about both battles is the recognition Scottish soldiers, particularly officers, gained from participation in these brutal engagements. Quite often it was reward through positions such as governorships, or other forms advancement in society. Again, Alexia Grosjean has highlighted that there were more Scots ennobled

31 Lithgow 1633.
32 Grosjean 2003a, 105-111.
33 The most complete work on Robert Douglas remains Douglas 1957.
34 See, for example, Captain John Forbes, 1631. See also Monro 1637, vol. ii, 63-5.
36 Grosjean 2003b, 53-78.
in Sweden in a 20-year period than in a comparative time frame at home in Scotland. The important caveat is, of course, that in order to reap such rewards one had to survive; the statistical evidence suggests that the odds were very much against it. That being said, the Scottish contribution was well understood by contemporaries. In 1640, when the Scottish Covenanters went to war with their half-Danish king, their provisional government sent out envoys to seek support for their cause. Sweden was the first country to recognise the provisional regime, a stance which the Swedish regent explained to his own state council in the following terms:

"Och såsom den Skottske nationen haffver nu ifrån een rund tijd, vid pas 60 åhr, hafft stoore kundskaper och umgenge med oss, och en god deel af bemälte Skotske nation bevißt vår framfarne Konungar och Chronan berömelse tienster, att och för denne skull dess lycha och välstånd haffver icke minde varit oss ønskelig än den Skotske nationen sijffver"

‘The Scottish nation has for some 60 years, had a strong relationship with Sweden, and a good many Scots have shown our Crown worthy service … in whatever manner we can help the Scottish nation, we will not be slow to act.’

These were not idle words. In addition to beginning the process of international recognition for the rebelling Scottish regime, Sweden released officers and men to bolster the Covenanter Army including Field Marshal Alexander Leslie. They provided him with enough weapons to equip 12,000 men and finances for many more. This included sufficient artillery for the Covenanter Army – 60 cannon. Moreover, they supplied five Swedish naval warships to transport the above to Scotland. The impact should not be overlooked: without Scots having served in the Swedish army, there would have been no Army of the Covenant (it was effectively Leslie’s Army from Sweden reconstituted) and all that implies for the wider British Civil Wars and the subsequent evolution of parliamentary democracy.

However, when speaking of war it is important not to glamorise or over-celebrate what are actually dreadful events in our history. Nor should we think that the martial arena was the only one in which Scots developed closer

38 Murdoch 2010c, 42-67.
39 Svenska Riksrådets Protokoll, 1621-1658, vol. viii, 97-217. 8 July 1640. The debates leading to this exclamation are discussed in Grosjean 2003a, 166. A full version of the document is available in translation by Grosjean and Murdoch 2007, 214-23.
40 Grosjean 2003a, 165-82.
ties with Scandinavia in the period. The other spheres of interaction are also receiving a more nuanced understanding of our past than the often simplistic version previously painted.

The Civilian Dimension: Denmark-Norway

Where once Scottish commerce was portrayed as the preserve of the lowly pedlar, recent studies into Scottish merchant networks have been rewriting the orthodoxy. Taking each Scandinavian country in turn, we will start with Norway. It is no surprise that Scots populated several Norwegian towns, many of which have recently been evaluated. The influence of Petter Dass in the far north is interesting, but he was Norwegian by birth. Though mostly known for his activities as a priest and songwriter, he was also involved in the Norwegian fishing industry. However, the influence of this legendary ethnic Scot sometimes overshadows the less well-known, but economically more important, activities of others in the Scottish-Norwegian diaspora, even in the far north. Earlier in the seventeenth century, a Scottish community developed in Finnmark where Admiral John Cunningham served as Lensman, or regional governor, between 1619 and 1651. Rune Hagen has estimated that Cunningham brought in some 20 Scottish families, who settled in the region, so a total population of probably around 100 souls is not unlikely. His estimates are important in reminding us of the rural as well as urban community development in this period. Trondheim has also been shown to have been a vibrant location where Scottish fish, timber and iron merchants were based. These often worked in consort with Norwegians or fellow migrants from England. The iron foundry and sawmills at Mostadmark fell into Scottish hands for decades, with Sir William Davidson and consul John Paul owning the works consecutively. Ultimately however, Mostadmark returned to Norwegian control, helped by other Scots who fell out with Davidson in particular. Regardless of the activities of these northern Scots, it is indisputable that Bergen remained the largest Scottish community of Denmark-Norway, and also the most frequently discussed. Easily the most sophisticated understanding of the Bergen Scots to appear in print is the work of Nina Østby Pedersen in the collection Scottish Communities Abroad in 2005. The numbers of Scots Østby Pedersen discusses are impressive, over 300 citizens, but what is of more value is the contextualization of the community.

41 Still a valuable article on Dass is that by Simpson (1985, 53-64).
42 Hagen 2003, 29-52.
44 Østby Pedersen 2005, 135-65
alongside other migrants such as the German Hansa merchants. All together these various Norway-based Scottish communities and the trade they spawned gave rise to the term *Skottetiden* (the Scottish Period) in Norwegian history. This period was contextualized alongside Dutch commercial activity very succinctly by Solvi Sogner in 2003.45

While Denmark and Norway were bound in a regal union throughout the period discussed here, Bergen was not the only city of choice, despite its obvious dominance as the premier destination for the migrant Scot. Scots also settled in numbers on the Jutland peninsula, the Danish archipelago and the three counties of eastern Denmark which are now part of southern Sweden. These communities received close examination in Thomas Riis’s important two-volume set *Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgot*.46 From Professor Riis we learned that Elsinore became the main community on Sjælland, larger even than the Copenhagen community. In this town the hereditary keepership of the Sound Toll devolved to the Lyell family for a period lasting from the 1520s and throughout the seventeenth century.47 Numerous settled merchants, many of higher status, such as David Melvin in the 1660s and Patrick Lyell in the 1680s, became particularly successful.48 Despite the undoubted influence of these men, it is important to flag up that for all that the dynastic relationship was between the Edinburgh and Copenhagen governments, it was Norway, not Denmark, that received the largest numbers of Scots into the Oldenburg state. If nothing else, this highlights the importance of Østby Pedersen’s study in complimenting the work of Riis, and reminding us of the value of broadening our research beyond the artificial confines of political boundaries. The commercially minded were seldom deterred from trading across borders, regardless of the notional importance dynasties attached to borders and treaties. Further proof of this, if it were needed, is found elsewhere in historical relations of Scotland and Scandinavia.

**The Civilian Dimension: Sweden (Finland)**

Despite the Stuart-Oldenburg relationship, Scottish migration to Sweden continued and eventually outstripped the numbers settling even in Norway. Sweden became very important to Scotland as it produced essential commodities for a developing maritime nation, including timber, tar and iron. The quest to get into the market for these goods led to the formation

45 Sogner 2003, 293-303.
46 Riis 1988.
47 For more on the Lyell family, see Kathrin Zickermann’s article in this volume.
of significant communities, particularly as Dutch competition in Norway intensified. The best known of the Scottish communities in Sweden developed in Gothenburg. According to Fisher’s 1907 publication:

‘Naturally the Scottish trade took the shortest route, and first selected those ports on the Western coast of Sweden that seemed to offer the best chances’.49

The insistence on Gothenburg’s prominence in Scottish-Swedish history is one repeated by a number of scholars over the years.50 It is true that two out of twelve of the seats on the City Council were reserved for members of the Scottish nation at the foundation of the city in 1621. The guaranteed position for two councillors undoubtedly drew Scots to the town, including Sweden’s second richest man by the 1630s, John MacLean from Mull. The community continually renewed itself, and received its greatest boost with the arrival of Colin Campbell in 1730 who, with other Scots and notable Swedes, helped establish and run the Swedish East India Company.51

Despite the historical focus on Gothenburg, the Stockholm Scottish community pre-dated the Gothenburg one and can be traced back to the time of the Kalmar Union. The striking fact is that the Stockholm Scots were some six times the size of the Gothenburg community in the 1600s (some 350 identifiable resident Scots compared to only sixty named individuals in Gothenburg over the same period). Until recently, perhaps because of the importance of Fischer’s earlier work, this community has largely gone unnoticed.52 Some 30 men, including the splendidly named Blasius Dundee, became prominent in Stockholm already in 1560s, long before Gothenburg had even been founded.53 With no institutional limitation to the numbers on the city council, more Scots reached higher positions within the city including councillors and mayors, in addition to those who found places in the parliament (Riksdag), the council of state (Riksråd) and the Swedish Church. Additionally, Scots also sat in the College of Commerce (Kommerskollegium), College of Mining (Bergskollegium) and the Treasury (Kammarkollegium), reaching positions of authority they simply could not attain within either Gothenburg or, indeed, the entire neighbouring Oldenburg state. While Denmark-Norway’s civic culture determined to hamper foreign influence, the Swedish state embraced the opportunities these individuals brought, whether Scots, Germans, Dutch

49 Fischer 1907, 7-8.
51 A Passage to China; Ashton, 2003.
52 Murdoch 2010d, 31-66.
or Walloons. In light of this new understanding, it seems the two-councillor strategy for Scots in Gothenburg had not been an advantage at all, but rather the opposite: they were not blessed by being allowed two councillors, actually it seems they were restricted by it. The Germans and Dutch were allowed four councillors each, for example. Thus, when looking for the most important Scottish community in Scandinavia, Stockholm is easily of the greatest significance, particularly in terms of entrepreneurial and political opportunities, and specifically between 1660 and 1710.

Narrowing the focus even further, in a 20-year period from 1670-90, Scots also simultaneously served as the main Swedish trade commissioners in Dunkirk, Brussels, the Hague, Bremen City, Bremen Stift, Wismar, Lübeck, Helsingør, Copenhagen and London. All of these Scots-turned-naturalised Swedes have demonstrably been shown to have facilitated trade with fellow Scots, often despite Swedish regulations which theoretically forbade such actions. This embedding of Scots into Swedish institutions both significantly enhanced commercial opportunities, and subsequently obscured the importance of Scottish-Swedish trade by making it seem entirely Swedish. For example, in 1672, the Scottish cloth manufacturer, Daniel Young sat as a member of the Swedish Parliament. He successfully used his position to ensure that his countrymen had a commercial advantage over their English competitors. Moreover, when Young became Kommersråd (the senior councillor of trade for Sweden) in the 1680s, he declared Scottish wool products free of all Swedish customs duties. He gave countrymen, including the previously mentioned Patrick Thomson, seals, flags and letters which made a number of Scottish ships ‘legally Swedish’ allowing them to sail ‘toll free’ through the Danish Sound.

The profits of such covert Scottish trade were routed into the coffers of the Swedo-Scottish families or, in many cases, repatriated back to Scotland via banking hubs located in Hamburg, Amsterdam or the large Rotterdam-Scottish community. As Adam Smith once observed:

‘The entrepreneur, by directing his industry in such a manner as its produce may be of greatest value, he intends only his own gain … yet by pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.’

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56 For the Rotterdam community, see Catterall 2002.
57 Smith 1863, 115-16.
This is really the crux of the most recent scholarship on Scottish commercial connections with Europe in general and Scandinavia in particular. We are constantly reminded that we are dealing with individuals whose agenda was often self-serving, but who perhaps had an impact they did not intend. Indeed, Scottish families had a discernible impact on their host societies through their significant contribution to the very fabric of Scandinavian society while at the same time ensuring kith and kin in both Scotland and other overseas communities shared in some part from their endeavours.\footnote{For the Scandinavian evidence, see Murdoch 2006, 228-40; For a more detailed analysis on one particular community in Europe see Murdoch 2012, 38-57.}

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, allow me to make some observations to try to tie up a lecture that has only been able to skim over a variety of themes. Firstly, the Scots cannot be excused their part in the imperial expansion of Scandinavian states, even into neighbouring Scandinavian territories. Some of these Scots mentioned above actually extended the bounds of the Oldenburg state, such as Admiral John Cunningham’s voyages of exploration to Greenland and the Labrador Coast in 1605 and 1606. Others participated fully in aggressive Swedish expansionism during *Stormaktstiden*, the Swedish Age of Greatness. This reached its epoch in the Thirty Years’ War, which, for reasons discussed above, had clear implications at home. The impact of these military Scots was felt in Denmark, Sweden, Britain and across the Habsburg Empire. It resulted in suffering for tens of thousands of soldiers, many more civilians and the aggrandisement of only a few of the survivors. But it also provided the manpower for a revolution that embedded Presbyterianism into the Scottish Church and also promoted the concept of limiting monarchical authority. In so doing, it paved the way for similar revolts in England and Ireland by those who felt aggrieved at royal policy.

That said, Scots also played an important role in the development of Scandinavian cities and their infiltration into the institutional apparatus of Sweden in particular was breath-taking. It is their own understatement of the same which was both the key to their success and contributes in no small part to our historical forgetfulness to the significance of their presence. Crucially, the continual movement of generations back and forth across the North Sea raises some interesting questions relating to identity: at which point did Scottish or any other foreign families become Scandinavian? How long did they maintain any sense of their ethnic origin; how did their networks function – answers have been suggested in the sources discussed in the course of this lecture, but there is still much to do.
And in answer to the question postulated at the start of the lecture: yes, I believe we have advanced the field considerably in the 21st century. Certainly there are those who will wish to continue rehash the tales of Scottish soldiers in Scandinavia as mercenaries and repeat that her merchants were simple pedlars despite of the evidence to the contrary. Moreover, there are those who will continue focus on episodes such as the Kringen massacre or see Gothenburg as the main city where Scots operated. Such views are diminishing and the academic community has moved on. We are now integrating the scholarship on Scottish Scandinavia with that of the excellent work being done on Scots in other regions of the world, and with studies which focus on other ethnicities in Scandinavia, particularly the Dutch, Germans and Walloons. Perhaps most interestingly from a personal perspective is that the methodology for studying the Scottish-Scandinavian connection has caught the attention of English scholars who are replicating it and testing English links against the Scottish comparative. Only once these other studies are complete will we actually know the answer to the question of how important Scandinavia was to Scotland in this period (and/or vice versa).

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59 Two of my doctoral students in particular are worthy of mention in this context. Dr Adam Marks recently completed his thesis. The focus of it was ‘England, the English and the Thirty Years’ War, 1618-1648’ (unpublished PhD thesis, University of St Andrews, 2012). The role of Scots as the benchmark for the English involvement in the Scandinavian armies is a major component of the thesis. Similarly, Adam Grimshaw is currently undertaking doctoral research into English commerce in Sweden in the seventeenth century, also at the University of St Andrews. He too is replicating the methodology applied to recent Scottish scholarship, with a comparative analysis very much in mind.
King of Swethen, the Duke of Saxons army, the Emperours army, and that commanded by Generall Tilly, of the Catholique League the 7 September, 1631 Amsterdam, Successors of G. Thorp, 1631


Lithgow, William, Scotlands vwelcome to her native sonne, and soveraigne lord, King Charles wherein is also contained, the maner of his coronation, and convocation of Parliament; the whole grievances, and abuses of the common-wealth of this kingdome, with diverse other relations, never heretofore published. Worthy to be by all the nobles and gentry perused; and to be layed up in the hearts, and chests of the whole commouns, whose interests may best claime it, either in meane, or maner, from which their priviledges, and fortunes are drawne, as from the loadstar of true direction. By William Lithgoe, the bonaventure, of Europe, Asia, and Africa (Edinburgh, John Wreittoun 1633).


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The Control of Trade in Scotland during the Reigns of James VI and Charles I

Claire McLoughlin

At any one time in pre-1650 Scotland, there were three regulatory bodies which were involved in Scottish trade: the Convention of Royal Burghs (hereafter CRB), the Parliament and the Privy Council. The monarch also directly intervened on occasion, and it is perhaps unsurprising that these institutions came into conflict with each other. For example, the records of both the Privy Council and the CRB are littered with references to disagreements between these groups. Despite this, the extent to which the CRB exercised control over Scottish trade cannot be over-emphasised. As one of the largest taxpayers in the kingdom, paying one-sixth of the annual tax income, the CRB often had the deciding say in any matters relating to trade. This balance of power could be altered in times of severe hardship or war, where both Parliament and Privy Council would pass acts which affected commerce. For the most part, however, Parliament allowed the CRB to deal with affairs of trade, regularly renewing their privileges. As Alan R. MacDonald has stated, the actions of the CRB were ‘rarely controversial because these interests seldom clashed with those of the other estates’. This degree of independence was important for the

1 Technically the Convention of Estates provides another example. However, as Goodare has pointed out, the membership of the Convention of Estates was the same as the Scottish Parliament and thus, according to Goodare, ‘it is inconceivable that members of the estates could have wished to do one thing in Conventions of Estates and something different in parliaments’. Therefore, an analysis of both bodies would be repetitive and for the purposes of this paper the Scottish Parliament, which Goodare describes as having ultimate legislative control, has been chosen (Goodare 2004, 147-72).
2 MacDonald 2007, 74.
3 RPS 1578/7/11; 1579/10/38; 1584/5/88; 1593/4/52; 1605/6/44; 1612/10/54.
4 MacDonald 2007, 81.
The Control of Trade in Scotland during the Reigns of James VI and Charles I

CRB. However, it did not necessarily equate to tangible control of merchant activities. The CRB often struggled to exercise authority in its battle against those who traded without licence. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to analyse the relationship between the major institutions (Parliament, the Privy Council and CRB) that affected Scottish trade, as well as other organisations that attempted to influence commerce. From this investigation, it will become clear that while the CRB controlled Scottish trade in theory, converting this regulatory power into real control over the activities of individuals was not quite as simple.

Prior to the research of Alan R. MacDonald, the most commonly cited publication in relation to the CRB was that of Theodora Pagan.5 Her 1926 monograph on the CRB was the most cited work in any traditional economic literature that mentions the CRB.6 More recently, Julian Goodare has examined the relative power of the CRB in comparison to the Scottish Parliament, eloquently arguing that the rules made by the CRB really only applied to their members and did not constitute statute legislation.7 However, he does not go into great detail regarding trade itself. MacDonald’s 2007 publication on the burghs and parliaments of Scotland provides the most comprehensive and up-to-date information on the CRB’s relationship with Parliament, its financial history and its domestic actions.8 In 2010, John Toller investigated the activities of the CRB from the Interregnum until 1688.9 These scholars do not examine the attempts by both James VI and Charles I to interfere in CRB affairs through ‘British’ trading policies. Neither do they seriously investigate the international actions of the CRB in protecting and advancing foreign trade for its members. This article examines the actions of these bodies purely in relation to trade in the reigns of James VI and Charles I, and also considers the CRB’s actions in protecting and assisting Scottish trade on the Continent.

This is especially important considering the resurgence in scholarship over the last two decades regarding Scottish relations with the wider world. Building upon the work of T.C. Smout, in-depth research by several historians, such as Douglas Catterall, Alexia Grosjean, Steve Murdoch, Siobhan Talbott, Kathrin Zickermann and several others, has provided evidence of Scottish-led trading ventures and Scottish communities in various regions of Europe.10 These recent works provide a comparison between the CRB-controlled

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5 Pagan 1926.
6 See Lythe and Butt 1975; Lythe 1960; Smout 1963, 15-16.
7 Goodare 1999; Goodare 2004a, 86.
8 MacDonald 2007.
9 Toller 2010.
Scottish Staple in the Low Countries and those areas where an official Scottish presence was lacking, such as Rotterdam, Hamburg or Stockholm.

As MacDonald has discussed, there was simply no institution in all of Europe like the CRB – it was unique. The CRB was essentially a representative assembly, comprising commissioners from all of the parliamentary burghs, that met regularly to discuss issues affecting trade and their status within the kingdom. The CRB was involved in every area of trade, from petitioning the king and Parliament regarding trading matters to organising the collection of funds for those traders who had been captured by North African corsairs. The burghs within Scotland were ranked by status, with burghs such as Edinburgh and Aberdeen considered the most important and smaller burghs such as Dunbar less influential. This was a protectionist measure allowing the ancient burghs to maintain control of their extensive privileges in the wake of the elevation of new towns to burgh status. Despite this, even representatives of the most ancient burghs were adamant that all burgesses should stick together in the face of Parliamentary or Privy Council attempts to erode their privileges. Therefore, a common theme throughout the CRB records is the issuing of fines to those burghs that failed, when asked, to send a representative to CRB meetings. Until 1672, the Royal Burghs held a monopoly on overseas trade and only those who were members of the merchant guild were allowed to engage in the practice. Therefore, individual burghs would often complain about the erosion of their trade by towns which did not hold burgh status. For example, Aberdeen regularly raised concerns regarding the activities of individuals in Stonehaven and Fraserburgh. As a result, the CRB spent much of its time discussing how to deal with these towns and the ‘unfreemen’ who they deemed a threat to their monopoly. This war against such traders, who were essentially smugglers, was taken seriously. The burghs were asked to report to CRB meetings and detail what methods they were employing to curb the trade of these individuals. An Act of Parliament, passed in 1592, assisted the CRB in its fight by forbidding unfree

11 MacDonald 2007, 57-8.
12 RCRBS i, 122.
13 For example, see RCRBS i, 112-13. The status of the burghs has been investigated in more detail by MacDonald (2007, 166-75).
14 Pagan 1926, 121-2.
15 RCRBS i, 97. This is merely one example, but many Conventions begin by listing those who have failed to appear and penalising them.
16 Cummings 1985, 45.
17 ACL i, 286-9; ACL ii, 31-4; ACL iii, 208-10.
18 For the purpose of this article unlicensed traders will be referred to as ‘unfreemen’.
19 RCRBS ii, 111, 174; RCRBS iii, 3, 311.
craftsmen from operating. Those merchants who possessed a guild licence to trade were not allowed to associate with their unfree colleagues lest they be implicated in their illegal activities. The penalties for dealing with such individuals were high. In August 1633, the CRB decreed that any merchant found owing a vessel or sending goods with an unfree skipper would be fined a hundred pounds. Those who had been caught trading without the correct accreditations, such as William Rose, James Sibbald, William Dishington and Walter Reid, were ordered to desist from trading or apply for permission to trade, the certificate of which they were to present at the next CRB meeting.

As these individuals do not appear in the records of the following CRBs, it is difficult to ascertain their fate, but it is possible that they continued trading without licence to do so. The CRB was fighting a losing battle against unfree traders. This was partly due to foreign complicity in assisting unlicensed Scots to trade (as shall be discussed below). However, it was also due to the inability of officials to control trade. For example, in his report on Scotland’s economic condition during the Cromwellian Commonwealth, Thomas Tucker noted that the landing of boats in parts of Aberdeen’s harbour gave, ‘opportunity of much fraude, in landing goods privatly’. This shows that even larger ports were not capable of monitoring all the trade that passed through them. The coastline was simply too lengthy, and the resources too few, for all trade to be accounted for officially. As S.G.E. Lythe has discussed, the conveying of cargo in small open boats from Montrose to other Scottish ports was prevalent. It would have been relatively easy for such vessels to evade the authorities and the practice of conveying goods between ports in small open boats may well have been conducted by those unlicensed to do so. With this evidence, it is clear that catching every person who was trading without the permission of the CRB was not feasible.

The CRB also struggled to control trade to its Staple port in the Low Countries. Scottish merchants had received privileges in this area since 1295, with the first official Staple being situated at Bruges in 1470. In theory, the Staple port was the only place where Scottish merchants could land Staple

20 RPS, 1592/4/96. A similar act was passed in August 1607 which shows that despite laws to the contrary, unfreemen were still operating (See RPS, 1607/3/24).
21 Pagan 1926, 123.
22 MacDonald and Verschuur 2013, 133.
23 RCRBS ii, 463.
24 MacDonald 2007, 77.
25 Marwick 1881, 23.
27 Ibid, 100.
28 Rooseboom 1910, 1-26. Although the Staple was first situated at Bruges, by 1473 merchants were already moving northward to ports like Middelburg.
commodities, which were defined in 1602 as any goods which paid customs in Scotland.\textsuperscript{29} For the CRB, the advantages were two fold; it made the collection of customs in Scotland less complicated and it allowed the authorities to observe the export process from both the departure and destination locations.\textsuperscript{30} However, to the fury of the CRB, Scottish merchants continued to take Staple goods to other ports, particularly Rotterdam, with CRB meetings frequently discussing this problem and punishing transgressors.\textsuperscript{31} Middleburg was also a common destination for Scottish merchants who argued that they struggled to collect a return cargo from Veere. Thus a new contract in 1612 stated that Veere would pay to have goods, with which Scottish merchants could trade, brought from Middleburg.\textsuperscript{32} Even those who used the Staple port caused problems for the CRB, as demonstrated by a list, recorded in November 1634, of those who had left without paying their dues.\textsuperscript{33} Unfree merchants, who were naturally banned from using the Staple, were also a large part of the problem, especially when significant numbers began using Rotterdam. As noted by Douglas Catterall, the city authorities at Rotterdam did everything they could to encourage Scottish traders to the region, with the foundation of the Scots church in 1643, in particular, being a rallying point for Scots in the area.\textsuperscript{34} The church provided a point of contact for all new arrivals, as well as distributing poor relief to needy Scots.\textsuperscript{35} Scottish coal, which was not a Staple good, had an enthusiastic market in Rotterdam, with the local authorities believing the mineral to be so important that they pleaded with the States General of the United Provinces to prevent taxation on its import.\textsuperscript{36} Moreover, Scottish merchants were using new connections in England as a way to avoid paying duties at the Staple port by shipping goods destined for the Low Countries to England first.\textsuperscript{37} While the CRB attempted to outlaw this practice, it would have been impossible to police as the CRB could not control which port a vessel visited.\textsuperscript{38} If a Scottish ship travelled to London and then on to the Low Countries with Staple goods on-board, there was very little that the CRB could do to either prevent the practice or punish the transgressors.

A comparison can be made with the study of Scots in Stockholm. Steve

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
  \bibitem{29} Davidson and Gray 1909, 190.
  \bibitem{30} Enthoven 2007, 41-2.
  \bibitem{31} RCRBS iii, 22, 31, 120, 128, 227. These are just a few examples. The RCRBS contain dozens of references to traders not using the Staple port.
  \bibitem{32} Enthoven 1996, 215.
  \bibitem{33} MacDonald and Verschuur 2013, 201.
  \bibitem{34} Catterall 2005, 178-9.
  \bibitem{35} Ibid, 178-83.
  \bibitem{36} Ibid, 184.
  \bibitem{37} Murdoch 2006, 142
  \bibitem{38} RCRBS ii, 298-9.
  \end{thebibliography}
Murdoch has mapped the achievements of a successful Scottish community, despite the fact that the city of Gothenburg, with its official Scottish presence on the City Council, has received more scholarly attention. However, unlike in Gothenburg, there were no checks on Scottish activities in Stockholm and thus Scots infiltrated into society without attracting attention. It would be fair to assume that this was also true of Rotterdam. Scottish merchants preferred to work without official recognition of their presence, which consequently contributed to the difficulties experienced by the Staple at Veere.

France also played host to a number of Scottish merchants, despite its lack of a Staple port. Scotland had enjoyed a long relationship with France from the late thirteenth century and, contrary to popular belief, the Reformation did not harm Scottish trade with the French kingdom. Despite the CRB ruling in 1582 that Scottish merchants could not trade with any person ‘nochtt of the trew religioun of Jesus Christ’, in 1588 James Beaton, the archbishop of Glasgow and the king’s ambassador in France, secured from Henry III a customs reduction for Scottish merchants. In 1599 Henry IV renewed these privileges, pointing to the ‘mutual aid and assistance’ which both parties had given to each other. The CRB was keen to ensure that these privileges were regularly renewed, sending commissioners to France in 1601, 1612 and 1635, with James Forret, the baillie and commissioner for Glasgow, nominated to travel with the king’s ambassador, the duke of Lennox, in 1601. In 1612 William Nesbet, merchant of Edinburgh, was instructed to act on the CRB’s behalf and charged with securing ‘his maiestis favorabill letter of recommendatioun directet to the king counsall of France for obtening ane ratificatioun of the ancient legue betuix the kings of France and his maiesteis subiects and realme of Scotland’ (RCRBS ii, 336-8). John Trotter, a merchant dispatched in 1635, secured a notable reduction in import duties against Scottish wool and hides. By 1647 there was an unfortunate reversal of fortunes, with the CRB complaining that Scottish merchants were suffering due to ‘the laying of heavie impositionis upon our countriemen’. This shows that the French perhaps did not lay as much store by the ‘ancient rights and privileges’ as Scottish merchants did. However, it also reveals that the CRB’s interest in overseas trade continued into the 1640s, despite domestic turmoil in Scotland. Regardless of the lack

40 Ibid, 49.
41 See Talbott 2011, Talbott 2012.
42 RCRBS i, 133-4; 284-5.
43 Moncrieff 1751, 48-54.
44 RCRBS ii, 104-5.
45 ACA, SR0 25/3/2. Many thanks to Professor Steve Murdoch for providing a transcript of this document.
46 MacDonald and Verschuur 2013, 297.
of a conservator and a Staple port, trade with France thrived. Although trade with the Staple was important, it is clear that Scottish merchants traded just as well with kingdoms which did not have a conservator in place.

While Scotland’s relationship with France meant that Scottish merchants continued to obtain privileges in that kingdom, the state of affairs regarding Iberia was different. This was due to three main factors: the first being that France was not as reverently Catholic as orthodox histories have previously portrayed. Both Siobhan Talbott and Marie-Claude Tucker have pointed to the presence of a small but significant Scottish Protestant population in France, including Andrew Melville. Secondly, the military aspect of the relationship between Scotland and France, although scaled back, was not defunct, with levies of Scots for French service being held in 1589, the 1630s and 1640s. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, Habsburg Spain was an imperial power with dominions encompassing large parts of Europe, the New World and Asia. As part of the Habsburg dynasty, Spain was also in league with the Holy Roman Emperor. The sheer size and influence of the Habsburg territories, combined with globalised Catholicism, was worrying, especially as, unlike France, the Habsburgs had the favour of the Papal authorities. This was coupled with the fear of the Inquisition, which invaded popular thought and was largely disproportionate to the number of individuals who were actually brought before the institution.

This fear of the Inquisition was cited by the Scottish Kirk in its attempt to have trade with Habsburg Spain and its dominions prohibited. In a meeting of the General Assembly held in April 1593 it was ordered that every Christian within the Kirk should refrain from going to any of the king of Spain’s dominions, where the ‘tyrannie of Inquisitioun is vsed’. In June of the same year the Scottish Kirk took this further, instructing a minister, William Murray, to approach the CRB and read an act passed by the General Assembly which requested that the CRB either ban or suspend trade with the dominions of Spain. It is important to note here that no matter how strongly the General Assembly spoke, their lack of legislative power meant that they

48 Murdoch 2007, 891; Glozier 2001, 119. After the Peace of Prague in 1635 France became one of the most important anti-Habsburg forces on the Continent.
49 Ball 1977, 11.
50 Dandelet 2001, 53-5. This favour was often given by necessity and not by choice. For example, during his reign, Philip II had a strong influence over the papacy due to the Spanish territorial holdings in Italy.
52 Acts and Proceedings: 1593, April.
53 RCRBS i, 402.
could not force the CRB to do anything. The CRB responded that they were unable to make a decision of such magnitude but promised to give an answer to the provost of Edinburgh in due course. In July 1593 the CRB conceded, ratifying and approving a ruling that made traffic and negotiation with the dominions of Spain illegal. Once again, however, it must be noted that this was not law. The CRB had essentially asked the members of its club to desist from trading with Spain and its dominions. While they had the power to fine those burgesses who were not abiding by their regulations, it was not statute legislation. Evidence is available of Scots continuing to trade with Iberia despite the proclamation, including Gilbert Gardin of Dundee who undertook a journey to Lisbon in 1601 and William Clepham who in 1603 reported that he had been trading in Spain since 1598. 

Within a few years, the CRB also began to ignore its own ‘official’ stance against trade with Iberia. In July 1607 the burgh of Edinburgh and its neighbours along the Firth of Forth were given permission to meet and appoint a ‘discreitt’ man for the ‘Counsallado in Spayne’. This was followed by the appointment of William Crawford as consul in Lisbon two years later. The situation was a delicate one. Anti-Spanish feeling in the 1590s made it prudent for the CRB to agree with the General Assembly’s attitude to trade with Iberia. However, once initial fears had died away and peace had been concluded between Spain and England in 1604 the CRB was more than happy to encourage the trade, to the point of acknowledging the need for conservators in both Spain and Portugal. This interesting episode shows the practicality of the CRB, which, while aware it could not ignore the powerful Scottish Kirk, also knew the value of trade with Iberia and was willing to encourage it, regardless of the difference in religion.

Despite the CRB’s monopoly on overseas trade and the punishment that they were able to hand out to those unlicensed to trade, other institutions also had an input on trading legislation. In 1597, the burghs received a significant blow from James VI. Due to a dearth in Crown finances, James decided to

54 Goodare 2004b, 152-8.
55 This was despite the CRB ruling against trade with Catholics in 1582 (See RCRBS i, 133-4).
56 RCRBS ii, 5. Interestingly, according to this record, the Act had been previously discussed and passed in July 1593 and July 1595 respectively, but was not recorded in the Convention book.
58 CSPD 1601-1603, 97; Cecil Papers, CP91/159.
59 RCRBS ii, 242-3.
60 RCRBS ii, 279-80. This shall be discussed in more detail below.
61 For more information regarding the difficult position of Scotland and its monarch during this period, see Saenz-Cambra 2003 and Worthington 2004.
impose a general import tariff on all goods entering the country.\textsuperscript{62} This provoked outrage from the CRB. Aware of the king’s intention, the CRB had been attempting to prevent this measure.\textsuperscript{63} Previous attempts by the Crown in the 1580s had involved the CRB voluntarily providing the sum of four thousand pounds and thirty tuns of wine each year.\textsuperscript{64} However, by the 1590s the Crown needed new ways to raise revenue and, following an uprising in Edinburgh in December 1596, James was determined to control all of Scotland’s estates.\textsuperscript{65} As Julian Goodare has argued, the events of December 1596 were not merely religious. They involved nobles, burgesses and the laity, with several Edinburgh burgesses being imprisoned following their submission to the king at Linlithgow on 23 December.\textsuperscript{66} Ian D. Whyte has stated that ‘the domination of Edinburgh over Scottish trade was even greater than that of London over English commerce’.\textsuperscript{67} Therefore, the importance of the capital and its merchants cannot be overlooked when discussing trading matters. The burghs were unhappy with the situation but believed that everyone would be taxed fairly and knew that, following events in Edinburgh, they were in no position to argue.\textsuperscript{68} Yet, when the act was ratified by the Scottish Parliament, it contained a clause which allowed landowners to import and export goods destined for personal use without a customs charge.\textsuperscript{69} While aware that the tariff would anger the merchants, this was, for James, the lesser of two evils in comparison to reforming direct taxation which would have incensed the nobility.\textsuperscript{70} As Goodare has pointed out, for the most part the governing classes were not involved in trade and were thus happy to exploit the merchants.\textsuperscript{71} This event showed how strong royal authority, combined with support from the landowning classes in parliament, could effectively out-manoeuvre the CRB. However, the CRB was more than capable of defending its liberties and utilising any means at its disposal.

\textsuperscript{62} Whyte 1995, 195.
\textsuperscript{63} RCRBS i, 497. When James had tried to implement the customs tax in summer 1596, the CRB craftily responded that they could not possibly decide on such an important matter themselves and that they needed the Parliament to take control.
\textsuperscript{64} Goodare 1999, 114. As argued by Goodare, the CRB agreed to this sum as they knew the only alternative would be higher customs.
\textsuperscript{65} This event has been referred to as the ‘Edinburgh Riots’. However, Goodare has argued that rather than a ‘riot’, which suggests wanton violence from an impulsive crowd, this was in fact an organised ‘uprising’. See Goodare 2008, 312-13; MacDonald 2000, 175.
\textsuperscript{66} Goodare 2008, 323; 325-7.
\textsuperscript{67} Whyte 1995, 279. David Stevenson (1987, 167) agrees, stating that ‘they [the royal burghs] showed a strong tendency to follow the lead of Edinburgh’.
\textsuperscript{68} Murray 2004, 69.
\textsuperscript{69} RPS, 1597/11/29.
\textsuperscript{70} MacDonald 2007, 73.
\textsuperscript{71} Goodare 1999, 115.
Petitioning the Privy Council occupied a great deal of time for the CRB. The extent of the petitions show not only the disagreement with, but also the degree to which, the CRB believed that it could handle situations better than the other regulatory bodies. While the Parliament and Privy Council were often happy to defer decisions regarding trade to the CRB, some petitions and remonstrations against their policies were unwelcome. The granting of monopolies, in particular, was a subject over which the CRB was often vehement in its disagreement with the Privy Council. In November 1619 the Privy Council granted Nathaniel Udwart and his heirs a monopoly on making and selling soap in the kingdom. This was followed on 25 June 1622 with a monopoly on the export of coal granted to the Earl of Winton. The CRB despised monopolies as it prevented their own merchants from trading in certain commodities. In June 1623 it petitioned the Privy Council. At the top of its list of grievances was the granting of monopolies. The Privy Council’s answer on 18 June must have infuriated the CRB. In their reply they asked the CRB to define exactly what they meant by a monopoly. With regards to Mr Udwart, the CRB’s concern was not merely with his monopoly on the trade of soap. Udwart had also been given the right to manufacture the product too, and this was problematic for the CRB. Soap was vital for cloth production and it needed to be of good quality. Thus the Privy Council heard a number of arguments between Udwart, who claimed his soap was just as good as continental soap, and the CRB, who argued that it was not. In July 1623 it was finally decided that Udwart’s monopoly would be rescinded for a year after which period, if he could prove that his soap was of an acceptable quality, it would be returned to him. Although this was a temporary ban, it remained in place and Udwart’s monopoly was never restored.

There has been serious scholarly debate over the true power of the Privy Council in comparison to the Scottish Parliament. In particular Keith M Brown, Gordon Donaldson, Bruce Galloway, and Julian Goodare have discussed the matter in detail, with Goodare believing, contrary to his peers, that Parliament and only Parliament could pass statute legislation. The arguments involved are complicated and, due to the constraints to space, cannot be contextualised here. However, it is interesting to note that, whatever the case technically, the

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72 Lythe and Butt 1975, 32.
73 MacDonald 2007, 69.
74 RPCS xii, 106-7.
75 Ibid, 752-3.
76 RPCS xiii, 240-2.
77 RCRBS iii, 150.
78 RPCS xiii, 252-3.
CRB believed that the Privy Council’s actions were legally binding and could do serious damage to their privileges. The sheer number of protestations against monopolies demonstrates this. While Goodare provides a convincing argument, how much this mattered to the average merchant or burgh is debatable. The CRB may have had the largest monopoly in the kingdom but they were not going to accept any attempt to chip away at their privileges. Therefore, every incursion upon their rights was treated as of the utmost importance. As Goodare has discussed, this is partly why the Crown continued to grant monopolies; it knew the burghs were wary of protesting too strongly considering their own privileged status.80 The Covenanting Parliament, however, agreed with the CRB and banned individual monopolies entirely in 1641.81

The administration of the Scottish Staple in the Low Countries had been under the control of Scotland’s merchants and burgesses since the mid-fourteenth century.82 The appointment of the conservator, a position created in 1407, was also jealously guarded by the CRB.83 Thus when Udwart arrived in Veere in 1623 with a letter from King James stating that he was the new conservator, the CRB reacted angrily. A letter from the Privy Council to the king states that the burghs and Mr Robert Denniston, the conservator whom Udwart had tried to oust, believed that the king had been deceived.84 The CRB made it clear just how unwanted Udwart was, stating that ‘the saidis commissioneris, all in ane voice, agries to oppose against the gift of the official of conservatorie grauntit to Maister Nathaniell Eduard’.85 In a letter to the Privy Council, James argued that he instructed Udwart not to take up the post until Denniston had died and, even when this event had occurred, he would have consulted the CRB first.86 This event was an unheard of interference in the CRB’s control of the Staple. Had Udwart succeeded, the king would have had control over one of the most important areas of CRB trade, the Staple port. The CRB, however, held firm and demanded their right to administer the position.87 It is impossible to ascertain the king’s true motives behind this

80 Goodare 2004a, 53-4.
81 RPS, 1641/8/192.
82 RPS, 1347/1.
83 Rooseboom 1910, 18.
84 RPCS xiii, 408-9. The Convention tactfully wrote that Udwart had convinced the king by making him believe that Denniston wished to retire and had recommended Udwart as his successor.
85 RCRBS iii, 153.
86 RPCS xiii, 487.
87 In July 1625 it appeared that the CRB had accepted the king’s description of events, or perhaps they thought it unwise to pursue the matter any further, and appointed Sir Patrick Drummond as the new conservator (see RCRBS iii, 187-8).
event. However, considering the policies that James advocated both before and after the Union of the Crowns in 1603, it would be feasible to describe his attempt to obtain control of the Staple as part of a wider British trade policy.

These attempts at creating a unified British trading policy arguably began in 1599, four years before James became king of England. In a letter to the CRB, James asked the CRB to appoint an individual in England similar to the conservator in the Low Countries. The man whom James had recommended for the post was William Hunter, who had been involved in shipping English goods to Spain in Scottish ships in the early 1590s, and also had conducted correspondence with Francis Walsingham, the master of Elizabethan intelligence. Perhaps the CRB was aware of Hunter’s dubious character, or possibly the institution resented more royal interference following the import tariffs of 1597 and saw a chance to reassert its authority. Furthermore, the CRB may have felt that having a conservator in a country where the culture and language were so similar was redundant. Whatever the true reason, the CRB did not acquiesce to the king’s request arguing that the appointment of a CRB in London would be costly and unnecessary. By 1612, however, the conservator had a change of heart, deciding in a meeting in July that a man needed to be found to assist Scottish merchants in England. The CRB deciding that they needed a representative thirteen years after they refused the king’s request, does lend credence to the argument that the CRB wished to deny James the chance to interfere in trade policy. However, it could also have been an admission that such an individual was needed, especially post-1603.

James made another attempt to create a unified British trading policy in August 1605, when he asked the Scottish Privy Council to choose commissioners to travel to France with their similar representatives from England. As MacDonald notes, unlike their English neighbours, the Scottish Privy Council then had to ask the CRB who was to be appointed. Upon arrival in France they were to discuss how each kingdom could gain each other’s advantages. A letter from the Privy Council in England to its counterpart in Scotland and vice versa indicates that the commissioners were elected. A trade agreement

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88 RCRBS ii, 48-9.
89 AGS, Estado K. 1567; CSPSpanish, f. 123. 12 January 1589.
90 RCRBS ii, 62.
91 RCRBS ii, 353.
92 See Murdoch 2006, 150 passim, for a discussion regarding the rights of Scottish citizens in England post 1603.
93 MacDonald 2007, 187.
94 RPCS vii, 113. The only exception was the advantages of the Scottish merchants over the wine trade at Bordeaux which was not for discussion.
95 Ibid, 472-4.
between *Great Britain* and France was concluded in February 1606, giving privileges to merchants of *Great Britain*. However, it is uncertain if this trade agreement was due to the work of this delegation, as their signatures do not appear on the document, and there is no further mention of this commission after July 1605. Four years later, the CRB was forced to intercede when an Englishman, most probably Hugh Lee, was found to be taking customs duties from Scottish vessels. Lee was appointed as consul in Lisbon by the English Spanish Company in September 1605. In their new charter the Spanish Company was permitted to appoint consuls to represent all of the kingdoms of James VI and I. Thus Lee probably felt it was his right to collect the duty from all the vessels arriving from James’ dominions. However the CRB disagreed, appointing William Crawford in 1609 as Scottish consul in Lisbon and requesting that he advise his countrymen on local laws and assist them in their affairs. As the CRB did not appoint their own consul until complaints from Scottish merchants were being made, it is likely that they were unaware that James had granted this right to the English Spanish Company, suggesting a more devious, although ultimately unsuccessful, attempt by the king to control Scottish trade.

James also tried to force Scottish merchants to transport their wares in Scottish and English ships, which he claimed were stagnant in port for want of employment. The CRB, however, was worried that this would lead to higher freighting prices and thus damage Scottish trade. They proposed a compromise: freight to France and the south would be carried on English and Scottish vessels whilst vessels carrying goods to the Baltic would be at the discretion of the merchants. The skippers recognised the importance of the Baltic and thus refused this offer. By this time the arguments had been ongoing for almost two years and James had become annoyed with the lack of progress on the issue. It was not until 3 November 1619 that the matter was finally settled, with the compromise that the CRB had previously proposed being agreed upon. Merchants trading to the south and west were to use ships

96 *Articles concluded at Paris*. The italicising of the term ‘Great Britain’ is my own as, although politically this entity did not exist, this was how King James styled himself and the treaty itself refers to the subjects of Great Britain. Many thanks to Professor Steve Murdoch for drawing my attention to this document.

97 Croft 1973, xliv.

98 Ibid, xxxvi. Within a year of Lee’s appointment the Company was dissolved by a bill for free trade into Spain, Portugal and France, although Lee remained as consul for English merchants for some years (see Croft 1973, xlvi and Games 2008, 100).

99 RCRBS ii, 279-80.

100 RPCS xi, 202-3.

101 RCRBS iii, 87-8.

102 RPCS xi, 571-2; 589-90.
from either England or Scotland. However, in shipping goods to the Baltic and the Low Countries, merchants could continue as they had always done, the CRB successfully arguing that to do otherwise would be detrimental to trade.  

While there is very little evidence for this period, it is interesting to note that, due to the presence of North African corsairs, sailing to southern Europe was a dangerous journey and many small Scottish vessels would not have attempted such a perilous voyage. There are in fact several examples of Scottish ships being taken by corsairs including the William of Burntisland, taken in September 1619, and the Blessing of Kirkcaldy, taken in December 1624. Thus when it came to obtaining goods from Iberia, Scots were more likely to buy such items in the large entrepôts of Rotterdam and London. For example, in 1634 it was noted that a large ship skippered by a Scot arrived in Rotterdam from San Sebastian and then distributed its goods among smaller vessels bound for Scotland before customs officials could examine the cargo. Therefore, to the Convention and the wider Scottish trading community, being forced to use Scottish ships for journeys to France and Spain may not have made much difference to how they already operated. Goodare has argued that James’s royal economic policies meant that the lobbying techniques of the CRB were ‘dismayingly ineffectual’. While this can certainly be said for the 1597 customs reform, which had the support of the nobility, other attempts by James resulted in victory for the CRB. James’s attempts to appoint a London conservator, the consul in Lisbon, as well as his interference in the Scottish staple and shipping, were ineffective, with the CRB cunningly by-passing such attempts.

King James was not the only monarch to endeavour to bring a British element to his dominions’ trade. Charles I also made an effort with his attempts to set up a common fisheries policy. Charles wished to emulate the Dutch, who ruled supreme over the fishing industry in northern Europe. In his plan, Charles wanted to allow all the subjects of his dominions equal access to the waters around the British Isles. The CRB, however, was unhappy with the scheme, which it believed would lead to Scotland’s fisheries being swamped by English and Irish fishermen who would deplete Scotland’s fish stocks.

103 RPCS xii, 107-8.  
104 Ibid, 184-5 ; RPCS 2nd Series i, 144-5. Many thanks to Professor Steve Murdoch for bringing this example to my attention.  
105 ONA, Inventory Number: 94, Act No: 78/143.  
106 Goodare 2004a, 54.  
108 Harris 2000, 44.  
The successful propaganda campaign by the CRB meant that, when the acts were passed, the Scottish administration was un-co-operative, angry at the fact that Charles had narrowed their desired exclusion zone.\textsuperscript{110} The CRB had once again managed to thwart royal policy; although the Charter for fishing was passed, it was soon abandoned and was an embarrassing defeat for royal authority.

Conflict with other kingdoms was an additional reason for royal authority to legislate on the control of Scotland’s trade. From 1625 until 1630 Charles was at war with both France and the Spanish Habsburgs, simultaneously. As a result, in September 1626 the Privy Council, on the king’s orders, banned any Scottish vessel, sailor, skipper or master from going on any voyage without express licence from the Privy Council.\textsuperscript{111} Separate legislation was issued for French wine, with its importation banned on 19 December 1626. The proclamation stated that merchants of England, Scotland, and the merchants of the Continent, could not import French wine into the British Isles on pain of confiscation.\textsuperscript{112} Simultaneous wars with France and Habsburg Iberia would have made obtaining certain goods common to both areas, such as wine and Biscay salt, technically illegal. However, when several merchants complained that their shipments of wine had been confiscated in January 1627, the king allowed the cargo to be restored, accepting the argument that the merchants could not possibly have known about the new embargo.\textsuperscript{113} In February, another Scottish merchant, who had imported French wine in a Dutch hulled vessel, was also permitted to sell his cargo.\textsuperscript{114} Charles I was obviously happy to exempt those merchants who were already journeying to France when the proclamation was made. Coincidentally, the king was not as strict about the importation of wine when it came to his own table. In February 1629 it was decided that Scottish merchants should import wine as the king was planning to visit and that without it his Scottish subjects would be unable to entertain him properly.\textsuperscript{115} Although French wine was excluded from this wine amnesty, it was probably imported from secondary ports, such as those in the Dutch Republic. In her investigation of the wine trade between the Dutch Republic and France, Henriette de Bruyn Kops has stated:

\textsuperscript{110} The CRB wanted the exclusion zone to be fourteen miles around the coast of Scotland and its islands, as well as reserving salmon fishing for Scots alone (See RPS, A1630/7/92; Macinnes 1991, 110-13).
\textsuperscript{111} RPCS 2nd Series i, 430-2.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid, 478-9.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid, 506-7.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid, 527-8.
\textsuperscript{115} RPCS 2nd series iii, 44-5. It goes on to say that there should be no sale of wine at Leith until the king’s residence is sufficiently supplied.
‘The statements of authenticity regarding a wine’s national provenance, be it French, Iberian or Rhenish, are so often in direct competition to the current political situation that they become amusing’ (Bruyn Kops 2007, 113-14).

Despite the conflict, market demand for wines from France and Spain continued. In February 1627 William Dick and William Gray were appointed by the Privy Council to rescue the ship and the cargo of the _St Marie of Lübeck_. The ship had become beached after being captured by Scottish privateer George Langlands while returning from a trading voyage to Spain. Dick and Gray were to secure the ship and if possible ensure the cargo was transported to Leith in order for the perishable goods to be sold quickly. This would allow the proceeds to be distributed to whomever the Admiralty Court decided the vessel belonged to. The vessel carried a significant cargo of Spanish wine and, as the Privy Council wished to ensure the goods were sold in Leith, there was obviously a market for them.

The commodity of salt, especially Biscay salt, provides another example. It was vitally important to the Scottish fishing industry and was preferred over Scottish salt, which was believed to be of inferior quality. During the wartime period (1625-30), the import of salt into Aberdeen from foreign ports remained relatively stable, if somewhat fluctuating, and considering the general preference for Biscay salt, it is unlikely the product was not from this area. Iberian and French commodities, therefore, probably continued to make their way to Scotland under the guise of false ports listed in the records or through entrepôts such as Rotterdam. Much like the CRB’s struggle with ‘unfreemen’, it was very difficult for the Privy Council to ensure that proclamations banning trade to, and goods from, certain areas were actually being adhered to.

The Scottish Parliament was another institution which had a role to play in the legislation of Scotland’s trade, most commonly in periods of dearth. The Records of the Parliament of Scotland give examples of the export of essential foods being outlawed due to bad or late harvests. This was the case in 1587 with legislation banning the export of victuals, and permission given to seize ships...

116 RPCS 2nd series ii, 238-40.
117 Murdoch 2010, 179, 379; RPCS 2nd Series ii, 238-40.
118 RPCS 2nd series ii, 238-40.
119 When Aberdeen began to have difficulties procuring Biscay salt, they made pleas to various authorities to be allowed to obtain the commodity, describing it as vital to the burgh’s commerce (See ACL iii, 213-15; ACL iv, 275-7). Parliament and the Crown also understood the importance of Biscay salt for the Scottish fishing industry (See RPS, 1681/7/51).
120 Taylor 1972, 612.
that were attempting to transport them out of the country.\(^ {121}\) In December 1591 ships bound for Spain loaded with corn were confiscated for this reason.\(^ {122}\) In 1649 Parliament passed a similar Act, with penalties again being imposed on those who attempted to remove supplies of grain from the kingdom.\(^ {123}\) The Privy Council, which met more frequently than the Parliament, also issued proclamations on this matter and with more frequency.\(^ {124}\) Similarly, coal was another commodity regularly banned for export, although without much success. Legislation against its export was passed by Parliament in November 1579, but was largely disregarded by merchants.\(^ {125}\) In 1597 the legislation had to be passed again with Parliament pointing out that the previous law was being ignored.\(^ {126}\) Even James VI became involved. In April 1609 he replied angrily to a protestation of coal manufacturers, stating that coal did not grow and its supply declined with each day. He then asked the coal owners to consider how the kingdom would be affected if the domestic coal supply was exhausted.\(^ {127}\) The arguments regarding coal exports simmered on for decades, with mine owners arguing that coal was so expensive to obtain that, in order to be profitable, its export was essential.\(^ {128}\) In this case, the CRB was firmly on the side of the Crown and Parliament, mainly due to a worry that a scarcity of coal would affect the price of other Staple commodities. This was combined with the fact that as coal was not a Staple good it did not need to be traded through the royal burghs.\(^ {129}\) However, considering the importance of Scottish coal to the Rotterdam economy, it does not appear that the restrictions against its export were stringently policed.\(^ {130}\)

During the 1640s Parliament took on a new role. The Covenanting Government was now a war machine whose legislation had a serious effect upon trade. In July 1643 Parliament ruled that, due to the threat from Irish privateers, no ship could leave without permission and a licence from the Convention of Estates.\(^ {131}\) This was followed in January 1644 by further legislation which affected the prices of goods in the form of an excise tax. This Act placed a tax on a large number of commodities, from alcohol and

121 RPS, 1587/7/49.
122 CSPScotland x, 609.
123 RPS, 1649/1/45.
124 RPCS ii, 588-9; RPCS v, 221-2.
125 RPS, 1579/10/43.
127 RPCS viii, 575-6.
128 RPCS xiii, 570-1.
130 Catterall 2005, 184.
131 RPS, 1643/6/24.
tobacco to imported cloth and all livestock.\textsuperscript{132} This, perhaps unsurprisingly, was a very unpopular move. John Spalding’s \textit{Memorialls} described Scotland as ‘this miserabill countrie overburdenit with uncouth taxationis’.\textsuperscript{133} The burghs, in particular, were suffering from the effects of war at this time, due to the forced loans of the 1640s, as well as the 1644 excise tax and the original customs tax of 1597 (which was increased in 1612).\textsuperscript{134} This financial burden, combined with the destruction of the conflict, was so great that in the late 1640s legislation was passed which allowed certain burghs respite from the excise tax.\textsuperscript{135} For its part, the CRB appeared to carry on as normal during the 1640s, with the burgh of Montrose asked to provide evidence of action against unfreemen and complaints made about individuals transporting Staple goods to unfree ports.\textsuperscript{136} Unfortunately, while the Covenanting Parliament did attempt to bolster Scottish home industry with legislation passed to assist new manufactories, the dire economic situation of the kingdom during the 1640s meant that these acts were largely ineffective.\textsuperscript{137}

While the control of Scottish trade could, in theory, be regulated by Parliament, the Privy Council or the king, it was in reality only controlled by one, the CRB. Until 1672 they held the monopoly on all overseas trade. Michael Lynch has described the CRB as ‘the most highly developed’ of all Scotland’s authorities by the early seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{138} He further comments:

‘The burghs seldom exerted direct political power as such, but they knew their own mind better than any of the other estates and perhaps, at times, better than the crown itself.’\textsuperscript{139}

Several attempts had been made to control Scottish trade, with James VI making the most determined efforts at forcing a unified British policy upon Scotland. These policies, especially his interference with the appointment of the conservator and the freighting of foreign ships, were stiffly resisted by the CRB. In the case of free trade between England and Scotland under James, Scottish merchants exploited the situation taking English goods abroad and

\textsuperscript{132} RPS, 1644/1/65.
\textsuperscript{133} Spalding 1850 ii, 313.
\textsuperscript{134} Stevenson 1987, 173-9.
\textsuperscript{135} RPS, 1649/1/149; Stevenson 1987, 179-82.
\textsuperscript{136} MacDonald and Verschuur 2013, 322-4. These records are a missive found at Aberdeen City Archives by MacDonald and Verschuur.
\textsuperscript{137} David Stevenson has discussed the attempts of the Covenanting government to bolster home industry during the 1640s (See Stevenson 1988).
\textsuperscript{138} Lynch 1986, 61.
\textsuperscript{139} Ibid, 61.
sitting them on for a good profit. The CRB was determined to hold on to its privileges at all costs and was, for the most part, quite successful in doing so. However, administrative control did not necessarily confer actual control. While the CRB was successful in defending its rights to Scotland’s other regulatory bodies, it was unsuccessful in its attempts to control unfree traders. Both at home and abroad, unfree traders continued to be a thorn in the side of the CRB, which, with its large tax burden, could not afford to allow unfree merchants to trade. MacDonald has described the reinstatement of the burghs’ privileges in 1690 as ineffective, stating ‘the dam had burst and the flood was so strong that it could not be repaired’. However, the damage to the CRB’s monopoly was clear decades previously. Despite the CRB’s insistence, traders, both licensed and unlicensed, could not be forced to use the Scottish Staple. Both smuggling and the complicity of the individual burghs in safeguarding their own interests made the policing of the CRB’s regulations nigh on impossible. Even when other regulatory bodies, such as the Privy Council, attempted to ban the export or import of commodities due to dearth or conflict, the transgressions continued. Although the CRB may have wished burgesses to act as one entity, in reality, each trader was more concerned with attempts to be profitable.

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140 RPCS viii, 388-9.
141 MacDonald 2007, 184-5.
king, and King of Nauar, for the more commodious entercourse in traffique betweene
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Introduction

THE Viking expansion of c. AD 800 to 1050 is often assigned a formative role in the cultural and political trajectories of Europe and the North Atlantic. The Viking conquest of Anglo-Saxon England, for example, is well known, with its ‘Great Heathen Armies’, metric tonnes of silver ‘Danegeld’, and plethora of settlement names in -býr/-bœr, -þorp, and -þveitr. One aspect of this diaspora which remains relatively obscure, however, is its impact on the groups of islands and skerries off Scotland’s west coast which together comprise the Inner Hebrides. This paper will focus on one of these, the isle of Islay, at the south-west extremity of the archipelago, and about half-way between the mainlands of Scotland and Ireland (Figure 1). In so doing, it will question the surprisingly resilient assumption that the Inner Hebridean Viking Age was characterised largely by cultural stability and continuity from the preceding period rather than population displacement, cultural disjuncture or the lasting introduction of new forms of societal organisation.

For Norwegian Vikings, it seems likely to have been the lure of Irish riches that kick-started the movement west. The economic opportunities provided by Ireland’s battlefields and marketplaces, in terms of silver, slaves, or simply the chance to build a reputation as a war-leader, offered a gateway to social status of a type fast disappearing in the Scandinavian homelands. It is reasonable to assume that most Norse warbands arriving in the Irish Sea

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1 The term ‘Viking’ is an emotive one, fraught with pejorative connotations (eg. Smyth 1984:141-74). Here, it will be used as a simple pronoun to stand in place of ‘pagan Scandinavian warrior from the period of overseas expansion in the Early Middle Ages’. Where further specification is intended or implied this will be to the leaders in that movement.


3 Cf. Macniven 2013.
Figure 1. The Isle of Islay.
would have sailed past Islay to get there. Local tradition would have us believe
that at least a few of them stopped off on the way. One folk-tale attributes
the name of the island to a Danish princess called Jula.\(^4\) Another notes a
skirmish between the ‘Danes’ (that is, Scandinavians) and ‘Fenians’ (the local,
Gaelic-speaking population) at Gartmain on Lochindaal (c. NGR: NR 336
604).\(^5\) Frustratingly, however, the more reliable documentary sources for this
period, such as the Irish annals, have nothing specific to tell us about when
or in what numbers the Vikings arrived, whether they stayed permanently,
and if so, how the Norse \textit{landnámsmen} (settlers) divided and administered
their newly-won territory.\(^6\) There is one tantalising reference in the \textit{Annals of
St Bertin} to the Northmen getting control of all the islands round Ireland and
remaining there without encountering any resistance from anyone,\(^7\) which
raises the possibility of large-scale Norse settlement in the Inner Hebrides,\(^8\)
and the prospect of a culturally imperialistic restructuring of the social order.\(^9\)
But without further and more detailed accounts, or a significant amount of
corroborating material evidence, the only viable way to develop the narrative
here is to begin with the historical, economic and place-name records of later
periods and work backwards.

This kind of retrospective approach is not new. The place-names of Islay
and the idiosyncratic land denominations of its early modern rentals and
charters, in particular, have been the subject of a number of specialist studies,
albeit several decades ago and without definitive conclusions.\(^10\) Unless the
method employed in reviewing this material makes a concerted effort to
combine matters of etymology, history, and archaeology with field experience,
the situation is unlikely to change. It is also important that special attention is
paid to the developments which separate the extant sources from the events of the Viking Age, and the potentially distorting effect that these are likely to have had on the available evidence.\textsuperscript{11} If closer consideration is given to the context of later material – how the data presented in the rentals, for example, relates to the physical distribution and grouping of landholdings on the ground, and how the resulting patterns compare to those of neighbouring areas, whose fiscal traditions are better understood – the endeavour can, as I hope to show in this article, serve as a useful starting point for the discussion of administrative practice in Islay’s Norse society.

\textbf{Geo-Political Context}

From a modern, mainland perspective, blinkered by the conveniences of city living and a well-developed, land-based infrastructure, the island of Islay might well be dismissed as an unlikely target for Norse settlement. Its peripheral location on the edge of the Atlantic Ocean is relatively inaccessible, and its rugged, insular topography clearly unsuited to sustained population growth. It is important to realise, however, that this is not a view that would have been shared by the peoples of early medieval Norway. Compared to the deeply indented sea-scapes of south-western Norway, with limited access to level, arable land, Islay’s large stretches of fertile and easily-tilled machair (shell-sand soils), not to mention its rolling green lowlands, would have seemed extremely agriculturally attractive. Whether the island has the potential to support large-scale urbanism or agro-industry is a moot point, but its contextually unusual expanses of high-quality limestone-derived soils are more than adequate to support the pattern of dispersed rural settlement favoured by primitive Norse farmers. The high regard in which its farmland was held in the post-Norse period is reflected in its traditional Gaelic epithet of \textit{Bannrigh} (Queen) of the Hebrides,\textsuperscript{12} a perception unlikely to have changed much from the preceding centuries.

For skilled boatsmen, who saw waterways as arteries of communication rather than insurmountable obstacles,\textsuperscript{13} the location of Islay at the entrance to the Irish Sea was also highly significant. With the treacherous whirl-pool of the Coire Bhreacàin to the north and the infamous tidal currents of the North Channel to the south, the sea around Islay was something of a bottleneck in the regional transport network. Whoever controlled this island would have been particularly well placed to control transit between the

\footnotesize{11} Macniven 2013.
\footnotesize{12} Storrie 1997, 15-26; Caldwell 2008a, 1-11.
\footnotesize{13} See Bil 2008.
Hebrides, the Irish Sea, and by extension the ‘Sea Road’ from Norway to Ireland. It was doubtless these two qualities – of relative fertility and strategic location – that underpinned the thriving prestige economy that we know had developed in Islay by the Iron Age. This can be seen from the scores of Atlantic Roundhouses, and island dwellings likely to date from this period (Figure 2); and the rise of the powerful Gaelic Cenél nOengusso (Kindred of Oengus), who it seems from texts like the Mínígud Senchasa fher nAlban were based on the island in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries AD. With such an impressive pedigree, it would be surprising if Islay had not subsequently fallen victim to the predations of the same waves of ‘marauding Northmen’ who were also settling in the Northern and Western Isles, the Isle of Man, Ireland and other places around the Irish Sea. Interestingly, however, this is not how the situation has traditionally been viewed by historians.

In terms of its more recent linguistic and cultural heritage, Islay is well-known as an epicentre of the West Highland Gàidhealteachd (Gaelic-speaking community). Given its status as chief seat of the Gaelic-speaking Lords of the Isles in the later Middle Ages, it has been assumed by numerous writers that the island’s Gaelic identity has continued unbroken from the Dalriadan heyday of the Cenél nOengusso, with the period of Viking raids amounting to little more than an unpleasant interlude, and any signs of a Norse cultural legacy the result of gradual accretion rather than sudden and unsolicited change. The logic behind these assumptions is certainly appealing in its simplicity, but the readiness it demonstrates to dismiss Scandinavian influence raises a number of difficulties. Indeed, given the pioneering conclusions of Jennings and Kruse on the transformative nature of Norse settlement in the Outer Hebrides, it makes sense to review the traditional conclusions on what might have happened only slightly further south.
First and foremost, the complete hiatus in contemporary references to the island from the early eighth century to the late eleventh means there is no clear evidence for local cultural norms, let alone their continuity, for a period of 350 years. On the contrary, with this lacuna corresponding very neatly to the Viking Age, there is abundant scope for both discontinuity and the Norse-driven disruption of the social order. Moreover, while there may not be any specific documentary evidence for ‘Viking’ activity in Islay during this period, Norse cultural influence is clear from the array of high-status Scandinavian artefacts recovered from its machair and farmland, and the place-names of Scandinavian origin that can still be found throughout the island.

Although the large majority of the 6000 or so names recorded in the Ordnance Survey Object Name Books for Islay can be considered formally Gaelic, there are many for which Gaelicised spelling belies morphology and word-order which only make sense if treated as Norse. Historical-philological analysis of this material reveals that the formally Gaelic Beinn Tart a’ Mhill (NGR: NR 208 568), for example, is less likely to derive from a literal ‘Hill of the Thirsty Hill’ than a preceding Norse *Hartafjall (Stag Fell), with the initial /t/ in ‘Tart a’ Mhill’ resulting from the operation of the Gaelic grammar system. Others are rather more transparent. Eileann Orsay (NGR: NR 163 515), for example, appears to derive from Norse *Áróssey (River-Mouth island), and Olistadh (NGR: NR 218 583) from Norse *Óla(fs)staðir (Oli or Olaf’s Farm).

It should also be noted that these Norse names tend to denote culturally and economically significant features in the landscape. Islay’s traditional farm-names, for example, preserve a range of Norse habitative generics (Figure 3), such as bólstaðr, staðir and býr, all meaning ‘farm’ of one kind or another, and now typically preserved as -bus or -bolls (25 independent coinages), -sta, -stadh and -ster (7), and -by (3). In addition to this, however, they also preserve a variety of topographic generics, including dalr (valley), vik (bay) and nes (headland), now preserved as dale, -dail, or -tle (21), -aig, -uig (9), and -nish, -innis (6), with many more found in the names of natural features themselves. The renaming of the landscape in this way points to a complete disregard for native tradition, indicative not only of substantial and widespread Norse settlement in Islay (Figure 3), but most probably also of a level of social segregation unlikely without some kind of ‘ethnic cleansing’. Demonstrably Norse names can be found in all land-types across all parts of

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21 This lacuna in the documentary record is framed by the localised earthquake recorded in AU 740.3, and the death of Manx king Godred Crovan, son of Harald the Black ‘of Islay’, on the island recorded in the Chronicle of the Kings of Man and the Isles for 1095 (CRM §23).


23 Macniven forthcoming.

the island, with any apparent ‘gaps’ in coverage reflecting areas which are either mountainous, boggy, or both, and as such lacking in names generally.

Like the Gaels they suppressed, the incoming Norse had a highly stratified and well-ordered society. We can see this from the lavish Norwegian boat burials of the period like those from Oseberg and Gokstad in Norway, but also in the less grandiose examples from the Scottish Isles such as at Sanday in Orkney, Swardle Bay on the Ardnamurchan peninsula opposite Mull, and Kiloran Bay on Colonsay in the Inner Hebrides. There are convincing arguments that burial in boats represents powerfully symbolic gesturing by the ruling element in Norse society, emphasising control of the principal means of transit within this world, and between this world and the next. On a more mundane level, however, the fact that the incumbents or their families could afford to be buried in such material splendour points to their control of resources. For most of them, these resources would have included revenue raised on landed property in the form of tax.

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26 Owen and Dalland 1999.
Ouncelands, Pennylands and Quarterlands

To tax land effectively requires a system of land assessment. We know from better documented parts of *Scotia Scandinavica* that the insular Norse developed their own systems and terminologies, most notably, or notoriously, the *eyrisland* or ‘Ounceland’, which appears to have given rise to the ‘tirunga’ or ‘terra unciata’ of the Hebrides, the ‘treen’ of Man, and the ‘urisland’ of Orkney and Shetland.30

Rather than representing a fixed area of land, the ounceland was a measure of relative agricultural productivity or ‘extent’, with each unit generating one *eyrir*, or ounce, of silver – or the barter equivalent – in tax, a fairly common phenomenon for the period.31 It appears that the ounceland denomination was later subdivided, in abstract terms at least, into smaller units: 18 in the Northern Isles and Caithness; but 20 in the Western Isles and Inner Hebrides;32 and that at some point, possibly from the late tenth century,33 although perhaps not until the twelfth or thirteenth, these subdivisions acquired the name ‘pennylands’.34

While it is likely that some individual ounceland territories developed from pre-existing landholdings based on native denominations such as the *davach*,35 this does not necessarily point to cultural continuity. Many attested ounceland holdings could be described as fundamental settlement units in the sense that they were both topographically defined and self-sufficient, containing the whole range of economic and cultural resources needed to support a community of a given size. Numerous examples can be found in Orkney, Shetland, Tiree and Man, which appear to combine areas of arable

30 Marstrander 1937, 423-5; Marwick 1952, 209.
31 Cf. McKerral 1943-4; McKerral 1950-1; McErlean 1983, 322.
33 With the Norse king of Dublin, Sithric Silkbeard (c.970-1042), known to have minted silver pennies around 985, it is possible that the concept, if not the coins themselves, was known in the adjacent parts of the insular Norse world, and used to define subdivisions of the ounceland from a relatively early stage (cf. Crawford 1987, 86-91; Rixson 2010, 144).
35 Eg. Thomas 1885-6, 210. It has also been suggested that the division of the West Highland ounceland into 20 pennylands was not the result of Scandinavian influence but a direct survival from the 20 *tech* (house) unit of Dalriadan ship-service apparently recorded in the *Miniugud Senchusa Fher n’Alban* (eg. Easson 1987, 9). If we ignore the inherent unreliability of this text (Dumville 2002), however, and accept that Islay comprised 350 of these *tech* units, this would translate into 17 and a half ouncelands, impossibly small for an island of Islay’s size and relative fertility. By way of comparison, the Isle of Man, which is around 4000 Ha. smaller than Islay, appears to have comprised around 216 treens (= ouncelands) in the Manorial Rolls of 1511-15 (Steinnes 1959, 43). If there is any connection between the ounceland and *tech* systems, therefore, it can only be conceptual, in the idea of 20-part divisions, and not in the comparative extent of the *tech* and the pennyland.
land and rough-grazing with a variety of other ecological zones, such as streams, lochs, peat-banks and woodland, in addition to at least one medieval chapel. With this being the case, there is no reason why even ethnic cleansing of the worst kind would have precluded Norse administrators from retracing ancient territorial boundaries and inadvertently appropriating the units of earlier systems.

Precisely when the ounceland system was introduced or how uniform it ever was is unclear. It is possible that the foundations were laid during the earliest Viking raids. As early as AD 798, for example, we learn in the second entry in the *Annals of Ulster* for that year of the ‘heathens’ (that is, the Vikings) taking ‘cattle tribute from the territories’ in Ireland. Although this particular incidence of taxation may have been ad hoc, it would not be unreasonable to assume that a series of similar episodes would have led to the rise of a standardised fiscal terminology among the Norse incomers, not just in Ireland but also in nearby Man and the Hebrides.

By the mid-ninth century, the advent of permanent settlement is perhaps even more likely to have seen the implementation of localised taxation regimes – possibly based on pre-existing territorial divisions and denominations – with supporting frameworks of units and terms. Depending on how much weight is placed on the later medieval saga evidence, we might highlight here their accounts of the expeditions from the Northern Isles to the Hebrides and Man by Norwegian kings like Harald Finehair in the late ninth century, and Magnus Bareleg in the late eleventh, or Orkney jarls such as Sigurd the Stout in the late tenth century, or his son, Thorfinn the Mighty, in the early eleventh. Although any one of these individuals might have overseen the blanket introduction of a standardised system of taxation or the terminology used to describe it, it is worth remembering that only the activities of Magnus are even moderately well-corroborated in other, more reliable sources, and that it is perhaps not until the late eleventh century that we are likely to find administrations that are sophisticated or effective enough to devise and maintain far-flung taxation regimes.

When it comes to Islay, however, it is important to note that despite a relative abundance of later medieval and early modern charters and rentals, detailing a complex and idiosyncratic system of land denominations, the ounceland terminology is conspicuous by its absence. Instead, the island’s

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37 Sawyer 1976, 75-6.

38 Thomson 1987, 29-34.
landholdings are enumerated principally in terms of ‘quarter(lands)’ of two and a half merks (or 33s. 4d.) in ‘Old Extent’, 39 and ‘auchtenpa(i)rts’ of one and a quarter merks (or 16s. 8d.).40

As systematic yet un-Norse as this system might seem, there are compelling reasons to question its provenance. Although the fractional nature of the terminology is strongly suggestive of a larger, parent unit, this is actually completely unattested. Moreover, and contrary to what might be imagined from an apparent ‘division’ into quarters and eighths, reconstructing the missing ‘whole’ is far from straightforward. Simply adding four quarters together as Thomas suggests, 41 would give an Old Extent value of ten merks, much larger than the ounceland of six merks (£4 or 80s.) known from the same period in the Northern Isles, most of the Hebrides, and Man.42 W. D. Lamont saw this discrepancy as evidence for a complete lack of Norse influence on Islay’s fiscal traditions, suggesting that its later units of land denomination appeared aberrant because Islay alone, in all the Hebrides, had retained the fiscal traditions of the Early Historic period.43 Lamont’s theory is problematic for several reasons, not least the evidence of Norse-driven cultural change provided by the local place-names, but it does raise one very interesting point – the existence of a little-known ‘cowland’ unit of land denomination.

While Lamont linked these cowlands to the abstract property qualifications of the Old Irish law codes, we do not have to go quite as far back to rationalise their place in Islay’s administrative history. It is clear from the early charters and rentals that the Islay quarterland could be subdivided into ten cowlands.44 This means that a group of two quarterlands would comprise twenty cowlands – the same as the number of pennylands in the typical West Highland ounceland – and allowing for the possibility of a reconstructed ‘whole’ of five merks, much closer in extent to the widespread six merk ounceland than the ten merks of Thomas’ suggested four-quarterland unit. It

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39 The ‘Old Extent’ of early modern Scottish charters and rentals is though to derive from land valuations carried out during the reign of Alexander III (1241-86) (see McKerral 1943-4, 1950-1), and thus, potentially, very close in origin to the Hebridean Norse period.
40 The Scots term ‘quarter(land)’ is an adaptation of the Gaelic cerraimh (quarter: cf. Manx Gaelic kerroo); and the Scots ‘auchtenpa(i)rt’ from the Gaelic ochdamh (eighth). The terminology of this system is presented in detail by Thomas (1885-6, 213) and Lamont (1957, 183-5, 1958, 101-3).
41 Thomas 1885-6: 213.
42 Thomas 1885-6; McKerral 1943-4; Marwick 1949; McQueen 1979; Oram 1987; Williams 2002.
43 Lamont 1957; Lamont 1958
44 See, for example, the charters of 1506 and 1588, and the rental of 1722 (Smith 1895, 32-3, 88-93, 521-44).
also suggests that the technical Islay ‘quarter’, and the equivalent of the Manx kerroo\textsuperscript{45} and the Orkney skatland,\textsuperscript{46} was actually the auchtenpairt, or eighth!

It should be noted here that the Crown Charter of 1499,\textsuperscript{47} one of Islay’s earliest detailed fiscal records, presents the island’s landholdings in multiples of five merks. Although the names and boundaries of the constituent farms are not given, it is possible to explore the practical significance of this five merk extent through examination of Stephen MacDougall’s Map of the Island of Islay from 1749-51 – the earliest to show the relative location and boundaries of its farm districts. If MacDougall’s boundaries are scrutinised with due consideration of the underlying topography and the groupings and combined extents of the farm-districts found in the rentals,\textsuperscript{48} a process of geometric analysis\textsuperscript{49} can be used to identify the possible outlines of the old five merk divisions. As can be seen from Figure 4, units containing arable land, which rise from the coast to include upland pasture and more often than not at least one medieval chapel or burial ground, seem to suggest themselves. One explanation for this recurring pattern is the one-time existence of a localised, but now lost, ounceland system of land denomination.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure4.png}
\caption{Reconstructed ‘Ouncelands’ in Kildalton Parish.\textsuperscript{50}}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{45} Cf. Megaw 1976, 19-20.
\textsuperscript{46} Marwick 1949, 1.
\textsuperscript{47} Smith 1895, 28-30.
\textsuperscript{48} Use has been made here of the Shawfield Campbell Rental of 1722 (ibid., 521-44), the first to show the extent of the whole island in quarterlands as opposed to cash figures or abstractions.
\textsuperscript{50} ‘Q’ = ‘Quarterland(s)’. Discretely shaded groupings of landholdings represent the suggested boundaries of now lost ounceland territories with a theoretical extent of five merks or two quarterlands.
The absence of ounceland terminology in the Islay sources must be balanced against the five hundred years or more of cultural and demographic change which separate the earliest fiscal material from the Viking Age. An interval of this length leaves ample scope for an ounceland extent to have been introduced and to have become redundant, with the economic and administrative focus shifting to a half-ounceland unit. While technically a subdivision, we should not forget that this smaller unit would nevertheless represent a fairly substantial division in its own right. Given the known cultural exchange between Islay and the north of Ireland during this period, it is quite possible that the standard Irish term for a substantial division, the cerraimh, or ‘quarter’, was imported and applied with reference to relative extent rather than etymology. The use of intermediate terminology in this way without supporting umbrella terms is not unknown in Ireland. It is also pertinent here to point to the ‘intromissions’ of unpopular Irish tacksmen in Islay in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. Between 1612 and 1614, for example, the island belonged to Sir Randall MacDonnell, later first Earl of Antrim. In 1613, the otherwise disorganised tenants of the island felt so oppressed by the ‘foreign and strange’ laws of Irish incomers that they managed to put aside their differences to petition the Crown to do something about it. It is not outwith the bounds of possibility that one of these intromissions might have been the introduction of new, cerraimh-based terminology.

Norse Administrative Districts?

When it comes to the higher tiers of administrative division during Islay’s Norse period, the documentary record is even less helpful. On further reflection, however, this should not surprise. The particularly vibrant nature of the Gaelic renaissance which followed the rise of the MacDonald Lords of the Isles leaves plenty of scope for the deliberate replacement of Norse administrative terminology before the keeping of documentary records became commonplace. Rather than pointing to any specifically anti-Norse agendas, this would have gone hand in hand with the incomers’ desire to consolidate dominion over the island, and while it would be impractical to make regular changes to the basic building blocks of the administrative system, such as the ounceland and its subdivisions, regrouping them and rejuvenating the terminology used to describe those groups would have been an entirely different matter.

52 Caldwell 2008a, 96-8.
53 Smith 1895, 153-5.
Closer scrutiny of the local place-name material has the potential to reveal individual Norse district-names. The name of the Oa peninsula, for example, which forms a discrete territorial unit recognised in the naming of Kildalton and Oa parish, seems likely to derive from ON *Höfuð, ‘head(land)’, in reference to the conspicuous and sheer-faced landform of the peninsula. Then there is the by-name Lanndaidh, which has been associated variously with the eastern part of Kildalton parish,\(^{54}\) and the land at the head of Lochindaal.\(^{55}\) Derivation here appears to be from ON *Landeyjar, meaning ‘islands of (fertile) land’, an interpretation which is consistent with the topography of both suggested locations and directly comparable with the district of the same name in southern Iceland. Unfortunately, neither of these examples preserve the kind of systematic terminology which could help to identify their boundaries or function(s) within an island-wide system of administration.

To refine the search in a meaningful way, we must look to Scandinavia for guidance. In Norway, the earliest detailed records for larger administrative divisions come from the period after the Viking Age. It is reasonable to assume, however, that this terminology, if not the technical detail of its later usage, originated in an earlier period. In general, these divisions were geared towards the provision of military service of a predominantly naval character, or the administration of local law-codes. Of those with possible reflexes in Scotland, the most relevant are the skipreiða or ‘Ship-service district’;\(^{56}\) the hundari or ‘hundred’ – although it should be noted that the surviving Scandinavian evidence for the systematic use of this term is confined largely to the boundaries of modern-day Sweden;\(^{57}\) the hérað, meaning ‘hinterland, countryside or district’;\(^{58}\) and the þing (lag) or ‘law-district’, within which a specific law code applied.\(^{59}\)

The existence of several of these systems is hinted at in the Islay place-name record. The central part of Kilmeny Parish, for example, is known in documents of the early modern period as ‘Herries’,\(^{60}\) a probable derivation from Norse hérað. This Herries has some of the most fertile land in Islay. It is also adjacent to the Sound of Islay, an important transit route and military

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\(^{54}\) MacEacharna 1976, 31.  
\(^{55}\) Graham 1967, 39.  
\(^{56}\) KLN M xi, 546-51; Marwick 1949; Williams 1997.  
\(^{57}\) Crawford 2006a; Steinnes 1959; KLN M vii: 74-8.  
\(^{58}\) Crawford 1987, 84; Crawford 2006a, 39; KLN M vi, 488-95  
\(^{59}\) KLN M xviii, 334-71; Fellows Jensen 1993.  
\(^{60}\) Eg. ‘Herries’ in 1617 (RMS vii, entry1628, 589-91), ‘Harees’ in 1631 (Cawdor Muniments), and ‘Herreis’ in 1686 (Smith 1895, 490-520).
and forms the backdrop to the proto-urban castle complex on Eilean Mor in Loch Finlaggan, which appears to have been a royal centre for the MacDonald rulers of the Isles in the later Middle Ages. If, as seems likely, the later medieval status of this area is a legacy of the preceding Norse period, we might imagine that the name has survived by virtue of ‘Herries’ having been the most important unit of its type on the island, comparable to the way in which the Harray in Orkney represents the hinterland of the high-status Norse settlement at Birsay.

Then there is the local pronunciation of the farm-name ‘Sunderland’ in Kilchoman parish (NGR: NR 246 645). Contrary to appearances, this is actually [ˈju?nar?tin] – a form which finds support in the Shinart shown on Blaue’s map of 1654. While this makes for difficult Gaelic etymologies, one way of resolving these sounds is to envisage a Norse name comprising a specific element with the genitive suffix –ar, followed by the generic element þing (assembly). The spatial and economic context of the farm lend considerable weight to this interpretation. Sunderland is a substantial holding on good quality land. It also straddles an important overland transit route, and has plenty of pasture for the horses of travellers attending an assembly, or the livestock being taken to market there. Interestingly, there is also a prominent conical hillock on the farm (NGR: NR 232 648) – the remnants of an ancient glacial moraine. Although this has yet to be fully investigated, it is redolent of Tynwald Hill on the Isle of Man and the lögberg or ‘law rock’ at Þingvellir in southwest Iceland, where important legislative and judicial business was carried out. When it is also considered that Sunderland sits beside a lake, as do a number of other important þing sites, including Þingvellir in Iceland and Dingwall in Shetland, it would be reasonable to see [ˈju?nar?tin] as preserving an earlier, Norse *Sjóvarþing ‘the assembly place by the lake’. That is not to say that the name Sunderland, as it appears in print, might not also be of Norse provenance. The two names could have been contemporary and developed along the lines of the generic variation principles set out by Simon Taylor, with each being used to describe a different feature in the local cultural landscape. Elsewhere in the Scandinavian world, the specific element in a given þing name is often taken from the name of an important farm or natural feature within its boundaries. The law district of Gulathing in

61 In 1569, a certain Leonard Sumpter, merchant of Bristol, reported to the English authorities that a force of 32 galleys, a number of other boats and about 4000 men were gathered in the Sound of Islay under Sorley Boy MacDonald and preparing to work for Lough Foyle in Ireland (Smith 1895, 73).

62 Caldwell and Ewert 1993.


64 Taylor 1997.
western Norway, for example, takes its specifying agent from the fjord-name Gulen, from Norse *guli* (with a possible meaning of ‘wind-swept’ or ‘narrow’ passage), while Sandsting in Mainland, Shetland, builds on the name of the settlement of Sand, Norse *sandr*. A similar development in Islay would explain the discrepancy between the written forms and local pronunciation of Sunderland. While the name of the farm could be seen as Norse *Sjóvarland, ‘the farm by/of the lake’, this appears to have become conflated in local usage with the name of the surrounding district, Norse *Sjóvarþing*.

The presence of a *þing* site in Kilchoman does not, of course, preclude the existence of other *þing* sites in other parts of the island. In Islay, as in other parts of the Norse world, there is likely to have been more than one local assembly operating on various different levels. Echoes of another tier of Norse *þing* can be found in the MacDonald *Comhairle* or ‘Council’ of the Isles said to have met in Islay during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This particular council met not at Sunderland, but on Eilean nan comhairle in Loch Finlaggan (NGR: NR 387 680). While the known terminology of the *Comhairle* is Gaelic, its Isles-wide remit could point to origins in an earlier period. It is no doubt significant in this respect that the *Annals of the Four Masters* make references to *Lagmannaiðh nan-Ìnnsedh*, the Norse *Lögmenn* or ‘Lawmen’ of the Isles, who accompanied the Scandinavian kings of Man and Dublin on military expeditions to Ireland in 960 and 970. It would certainly not be unreasonable to see these men as the leading figures from individual islands complete with their military levies.

**Parish networks and their foundations**

Although the Norse origins of names like Lanndaidh, Herries and Sunderland may hint at the previous Norse management of administrative systems, they tell us very little about their mechanics. In fact, unless alternative approaches are explored, the palimpsest they represent is likely to remain impenetrable. As with most settlement historical studies of this type, therefore, it makes sense to address the problem retrospectively, through the filter of what came next, and in particular the systematic and all-prevailing introduction of Christian administrative divisions, such as the parish, from the twelfth century onwards.

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65 KLNM xviii, 379; Sandnes and Stemshaug 1990, 136.
66 Jakobsen 1936, 125.
The introduction of the parish system throughout north Britain, and Ireland in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries represents a clear and final break with older forms of Church organisation. Although the switch to a territorial system of administration, with a focus on pre-existing secular land-holdings, was officially intended to counter inadequacies in the provision of pastoral care, the needs of the Church to maximise its income, maintain authority and at the same time curry favour with increasingly powerful feudal lordships were perhaps equally important. With no surviving accounts of when or why the concept was introduced to Islay, we must draw on the experience of neighbouring areas: especially Ireland, the Scottish mainland and the Isle of Man.

In Ireland, the introduction of the parish system is believed to have taken place at some point between the synod of Rathbreasail in 1111, and the Papal Taxation list of 1306.69 On the Scottish mainland, the process is likely to have been completed in the late eleventh century under the patronage of Margaret Ætheling (c.1048-93), second wife of Malcolm Canmore, or during the early twelfth under that of her sixth son, David I.70 While the Manx parishes were traditionally attributed to the fifth century saint, Maughold, said in the mid-sixteenth century Traditionary Ballad to have grouped together several treens to form a single parish, this is now considered dubious.71 The later medieval parochial network in Man is thought to have been laid out shortly before or during the reign of Olaf the Diminutive (c.1103-54). It was Olaf who confirmed the new Romanised diocese of Sodor (also known as the Sudreys and Sodornes) c.1135, with the Isle of Man forming its spiritual centre.72 As Olaf was King of Man and the Isles, a polity which included the Hebrides, it would be reasonable to assume that he was also responsible for introducing the parish system to Islay. On a more personal level, with Islay thought to be the last resting place of his father, Godred Crovan, Olaf is perhaps even less likely to have neglected its spiritual welfare. If this was not the case, the process can almost certainly be linked to the incoming MacSorley’s foundation of the diocese of Argyll c.1183.73

In either case, it would be hard to imagine that Islay’s parishes developed completely independently of their secular context. In England, where charter

70 Cowan 1960, 43-55; Cowan and Easson 1957, 4-5.
72 Megaw 1963, 187-92; Woolf 2007, 171-82. While an earlier Manx diocese is implied in CRM when it states that in 1079 ‘Roolwer died as bishop and was buried on Man in the same year’, none of the recorded Manx parish churches are mentioned in any document written before the twelfth century (Reilly 1988, 21).
73 McDonald 1997, 211-12
Evidence for this process is abundant, it seems that many parishes followed the layout of earlier estates. In Ireland, where the evidence is less well developed, a close association has nevertheless been identified between the secular *bailebiataigh* and the early parishes in counties Monaghan, Derry, Donegal, Fermanagh, Tyrone and Cavan. Similarly, study of the medieval parochial boundaries in the diocese of Kilfenora has shown that parishes were formed variously from existing tribal territories or groupings of Church holdings. It follows that identifying the earliest known boundaries of Islay’s parish network might provide a framework for the study of the preceding secular divisions, which are, at most, a couple of centuries removed from the *floruit* of its Norse period.

In recent times, Islay has had three parishes, Kildalton and Oa, Kilarrow and Kilmeny, and Kilchoman, corresponding roughly to its three medieval ward divisions, the *Insula de Ilay*, *Myd Ward of Ilay* and *Rynnis of Ilay* recorded in 1541, and its three pre-Reformation ‘rectories’ of Kildalton, Kilchoman, and St Maelrubha or Kilarrow. Although examination of the documentary and archaeological material from the later medieval and early modern periods suggests that each of these rectories was further divided into two early parishes, giving six in total, it is clear that the boundaries of these units fluctuated over the centuries.

There are reasons to believe, however, that the later medieval ecclesiastical reforms in Islay were not limited to the introduction of parishes. The early rentals show an unusual proliferation of farm-districts with names built on the Gaelic generic *cill* (chapel / burial ground). In most cases, this element reflects the (former) presence of a medieval chapel or burial ground within the boundaries of that farm-district. Although the distribution of these ‘cill-districts’ might appear random when seen geographically, establishing their theoretical ‘zones of influence’ and enumerating these in terms of agricultural extent reveals a remarkably uniform placement (Figure 5). Working, once again, from the boundaries shown on MacDougall’s map, and the fiscal data

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74 Morris 1983.
75 McErlean 1983, 332-3.
77 ER, xvi, 612-20.
78 Cowan 1967, 99.
79 Ibid., 97.
80 Ibid., 94.
81 Macniven forthcoming.
82 These units were defined by plotting Thiessen polygons around the central *cill*-settlements, so that any locations inside the polygons were closer to those points than any of the other sample points.
presented in the rentals, it appears that there were three such farm-districts for each of the island’s six early parishes. To put it another way, there was one ‘cill-district’ for every six quarters worth of land.

This level of uniformity raises the possibility of the systematic renaming of a lower tier of administrative division with an approximate extent of 15 merks. The existence of units like this finds some support in the historical record. The Papal Constitution of Innocent III dated 9 December 1203, for example, lists three estates in Islay: those of Herilnean, Mangecheles and Magenburg.\(^83\) The name Magenburg can be traced to Kilmeny parish, where the Loch Moyburg of early maps is now known as Loch Lossit (NGR: NR 408 652). In the rental of 1722, the adjacent farm-district of Lossit is listed as part of a £10 (or 15 merk) holding along with ‘Kilsleaveens, Balluchtruk, Balleclach, Kilmenie and Turmagan’, and the now lost ‘Gertontibbert and Gortenles’. If Herilnean and Mangecheles could be equated with the £20 (or 30 merk) holding of Laintymanniche and Mwicheleische listed in the 1561 rental of the Bishopric of the Isles, it would suggest that the three named holdings of the 1203 Constitution reflect the division of the early parish of Kilmeny into three equal parts of £10 or 15 merks apiece.

Using the same contextualised geometric method mentioned earlier, it is possible to reconstruct similar 15 merk divisions for Islay’s other early parishes (Figure 5). As with the proposed parish divisions, it seems likely that these would have evolved from existing territorial units. Attention can be drawn here to the lands in Kildalton parish granted to Brian ‘Vicar’ MacKay by Donald, Lord of the Isles in 1408.\(^84\) Cross-referencing the names of the constituent farm-districts with the corresponding entries in later rentals, reveals that the estate would have had an Old Extent value of just over 15 merks, and been more or less coterminous with the suggested ‘cill-unit’ of Kilnaughton – raising the possibility that Cill-districts, generally, served a function within the estates of leading families, perhaps as a network of formalised ancestral burial grounds. It is also worth considering, however, that the suggested pattern of cill-units and early parishes finds a very close match in the ecclesiastical divisions of the Isle of Man. Prior to 1796, five of Man’s six sheadings were divided into three parishes each, with the sixth sheading, Glenfaba, having two. Perhaps the most compelling explanation for this similarity is that the administrative tradition of the two islands shares a common ancestry?

\(^{83}\) Smith 1895, 5-8.
\(^{84}\) Ibid., 16-18.
Port Charlotte (known previously as Port Sgioba) is included here to cover a conspicuous gap in the distribution of Cill- districts in this part of the island. Although the modern, planned settlement dates only to the early part of the 19th century (Caldwell 2008, 210-211), the decision to site it here, within easy access of various different ecological zones, points to the previous importance of the location.
Thirls and Sixths

Crucially, administrative division in multiples of three is not mentioned in the pre-Norse sources for Islay. While it is also rare in Ireland, it does find very close parallels in the Scandinavian world. There are the ‘thirds’ of Orkney – described but not defined in Orkneyinga saga; the ‘Ridings’ of Yorkshire – which have nothing to do with horses, but Scandinavian *priðjungir* or ‘Thirds’; the three-part division of each Icelandic Quarter district into várþing or ‘Spring Assemblies’, and of each of these várþing into three goðorð, or ‘chieftaincies’. There were also ‘Thirds’ on the Baltic island of Gotland; and in the counties of Oppland, Bohuslän and numerous other places in mainland Scandinavia.

While division into sixths is also conspicuous by its absence from the pre-Norse systems of Islay and Ireland, this too is a well-known part of the medieval administrative systems of the Isle of Man, which has six sheadings, derived from Norse séttngr (a sixth part), but also of Gotland, large parts of Norway, and elsewhere in mainland Scandinavia. Close reading of Orkneyinga saga, and the easy way its ‘thirds’ and ‘halves’ are said to have changed hands, suggested to Asgaut Steinnes that there were also at one point six-part divisions in Orkney. As the details of these divisions are not preserved in the saga, he developed a model to reconstruct them using the name-typology and spatio-economic context of traditional Orkney farm-names. According to Steinnes, the key to Orkney’s sixths lay in the distribution of one particular group of names – those derived from Norse húsabýr/húsabër.

In medieval Scandinavia, húsabýr and húsabær were technical terms for royal administrative farms thought to have acted as central places for administrative districts known as hundari, and leiðangr systems of naval organisation. Although Steinnes was only able to identify four ‘husaby’ names and associated districts in Orkney, two of these were worth about one sixth of the islands’ total taxable value. By broadening his search to take in the likely onomastically derivative ‘Bu’ of Orphir (a residence of the jarls on the Mainland of Orkney), and the substantial farm of Braeswick on Sanday.

86 Magnusson and Pálsson 1981.
87 Ekwall 1925, 86.
89 KLN M xviii, 375-8.
90 Marstrander 1937, 430-1.
91 KLN M xv, 164-7.
92 Steinnes 1959.
93 KLN M vii, 74-8.
94 Crawford 2006a, 22; Crawford 2006b; KLN M x, 432-59.
he arrived at six administrative divisions of roughly equal extent. Subsequent writers may have dismissed this theory as ‘informed guess-work’, but it does illustrate the value of place-names in reconstructing administrative systems. With minor amendments, it is possible to apply a similar approach to the Islay material.

**Old Norse Borg**

While Steinnes argued on the basis of saga evidence that a system of husaby-centred hundreds was introduced to Orkney during the overseas expansion of the Jarls of Møre in the late ninth century, more recent analyses have placed the phenomenon much later, possibly even as late as the 1190s. Even so, it is possible, as Crawford suggests, that the term husaby is simply a new name for a pre-existing unit.

It should be noted that there are no húsabýr names in Islay, and although it might be tempting to consider those based on Norse -býr in their place, there is no evidence that these names have ever been associated with units approaching the rental value of the Orkney husabys. There are, nevertheless, a number of other names-types which point to the systematic division of the island during the Viking Age. Among the most promising, but perhaps the least expected candidates, are those containing the Norse generic borg, which usually refers to a ‘fortification’. Scrutiny of the Ordnance Survey Name Books for Islay reveals seven locations at which we might at one time have expected to find an independent Norse –borg name (Figure 6). The large majority of these are closely associated with a dry-stone, Iron Age fortification, more specifically of the larger type classified by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland as ‘forts’; or, in the case of Dùn Bhoraraic in Kilmeny, a ‘broch’. As around ninety Iron Age fortifications have been identified in Islay to date (Figure 2), this suggests that the semantic range of Norse borg on the island was rather more strictly defined than ‘fortification’ in general. One possibility is that these seven borg-structures were once associated with central places in administrative divisions, perhaps appropriated by the incoming Norse from the displaced locals. It might be relevant here that parallels can be drawn between Am Burg in the Rhinns, and places like Peel in the Isle of Man, and the Brough of Birsay in Orkney. Am Burg’s continued importance after the Iron Age is

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95 Thomson 1987, 28.
96 Westerdahl and Stylegar 2004, 127.
97 Crawford 2006a, 21-3.
98 See Cleasby et al. 1957, 73.
99 See Brink 1996; Brink 1997; Brink 1999.
confirmed by the foundations of a substantial post-medieval house and its possibly identification as the residence Hector, son of Aileen nan Sop, a minor MacLean laird at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and bailie of the Rhins.

If we accept that Islay’s seven borg-locations reflect a seven-fold administrative division on the island during the Viking Age, it might prompt a speculative re-interpretation of the [ˈju?nar?tɪŋ] in Kilchoman as ON *Sjúhundaraþing, ‘the assembly place of the seven hundreds’. The names Cnoc Undail (NGR: NR 185 518), Brahunisary (NGR: NR 374 470) and Tûndal (NGR: NR 423 473) might then be seen as reflexes of a now lost hundari terminology, more probably through the conceptual re-imagining of a Common Scandinavian term, than the implementation of attested fiscal practice in medieval Sweden.

Alternatively, we might want to refine the criteria for inclusion of given borg names in the list. Take Dùn Nosebridge in Kilarrow (NGR: NR 371 601), for example, from Norse *Hnausaborg (Turf Fortress). The fort in question is of the impressive, yet highly unusual ‘multivalate’ type. Its location also dominates the fertile Laggan Valley, one of Islay’s two main watersheds. If we were to exclude it from the total we would be left with one independent borg name per medieval parish, suggesting perhaps that these reflect a six-part administrative division – six sèttungir. As in Man and Orkney, this would not preclude division into administrative ‘halves’; and this could be where the true significance of Dùn Nosebridge lies. As a structure, Dùn Nosebridge has only one close parallel in Islay, the impressive multivalate fort of Dùn Ghùaidhre (NGR: NR 389 648), which dominates the island’s other main watershed, the Sorn Valley. Between them, these two structures look out over the bulk of the island’s most fertile land, each commanding its own half.

The idea of borg-centred territorial units in Islay is not entirely without foundation. The equation of Magenburg with Lossit discussed above would also place it in the hinterland of the broch of Dùn Bhoraraic. Interestingly, the current name of this monument does not derive directly from the broch itself but the adjacent bay, presumably Norse *Borgarvík (Fort Bay) – raising the possibility that Magenburg is actually the original Norse name for the broch. Given its unique architectural character in an Islay context, and its domination of the fertile heartland of the island, and its command of the strategically important Sound of Islay and its location less than five km from the later...

100 See Caldwell 2008a, 94 and 350 fn81; Caldwell 2011b, 119-20.
101 The area surrounding this fort is associated with the Manx king, Godred Crovan, in local folklore. According to legend, Godred is said to have slain a dragon at Emaraconart, about 2km to the WNW (Earl nd, 18). While he also appears to be the referent in the current name of the fort, it is impossible to say whether this particular association is factual or fanciful.
medieval prestige centre of Finlaggan (NGR: NR 388 681), it is reasonable to suppose that Magenburg derives from an earlier Norse *Meginborg, ‘the main (or most important) fort’, and by extrapolation, the main or most important district. Clues as to the possible administrative basis of this district can be found in later documents.
`Borgs’, Boats and the Beginnings of Islay’s Medieval Parish Network?

Skipreiðir in Islay?

In 1617 Andrew Knox, bishop of the Isles, issued a charter to Edinburgh advocate Thomas Rollock for the lands known as the Tenandry of Lossit.102 This was a substantial but fairly compact landholding, centred on Lossit in Kilmeny and comprising all of the remaining Church lands in Islay which had not been dispersed since the Reformation. With a value of about 40 merks (or 16 quarterlands) in Old Extent, it is only marginally smaller than the idealised value of 45 merks suggested for each of the island’s early parishes. As such, it would not be unreasonable to imagine that the bulk of this landholding originally represented the non-demesne part of Kilmeny parish. What makes the tenandry even more interesting, however, is its traditional reddendo stating that the grantee should provide annually unam cymbam cum quatuordecem lie ores’ (a boat with fourteen oars).

The idea of boat service lends itself easily to association with the exploits of Viking sea-kings. By the mid-tenth century, the introduction of Hakon the Good’s leiðangr system formed the basis of the national levy recorded in the Norwegian provincial laws of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.103 That is not to suggest that the concept of naval levies in the Hebrides was a Norse innovation.104 Indeed, arguments have been presented for the direct continuity of Islay’s naval traditions from Dalriadan times to the post-Norse period.105 For reasons already discussed, however, any perceived continuity seems more likely to be a result of accident rather than design, or limited to broad concepts, such as the boundaries of territories, rather than fine detail, such as the terminology used to describe them. In any case, by the later Middle Ages it appears that the maritime heritage of the Hebrides had been heavily influenced by Scandinavian custom. Contemporary illustrations, such as those on grave-slabs from Eilean Mor and on Angus Mor MacDonald’s personal seal, suggest that the typical naval vessel of the period, the birlinn or ‘West Highland galley’, had evolved from the clinker-built, double-prowed ships of the region’s Viking settlers.106

Notwithstanding these indications of Scandinavian heritage, it is clear that there had been some changes in local naval fashion since the Viking Age. A ship of 14 oars might seem small compared to the minimum 13 bencher, or 26 oar ship, required for the national levy in medieval Norway. However, a

102 Smith 1895, 353-61.
103 Williams 1997.
104 See Easson 1987, 7-8; Caldwell 2010.
105 Eg. Lamont 1957, 58; Easson 1987.
106 See Caldwell 2004, 2010; Rixson 1998
survey of the documentary parallels for the Lossit *cymba* by David Caldwell suggests that it would have required a minimum crew of 3 men per oar, or 42 men in total.\textsuperscript{107} If, as seems likely, the burden of the *reddendo* was ancient and had remained unchanged in terms of manpower, this would suggest that the landholdings of Kilmeny parish were originally required to provide enough men to crew a longship with 21 pairs of oars, close to the standard size specified by later medieval Norwegian legal tracts such as *Frostaþingslög* and *Gulapingslög*.\textsuperscript{108} This level of provision would appear to match that assumed for other parts of the Viking expansion zone in Scotland, such as Orkney. According to Hugh Marwick, late medieval Orkney had a taxable extent of around 180 ouncelands.\textsuperscript{109} If, like the *manngerd* and *lide* divisions of Norway, each of its skattlands (equal to quarter urislands) supplied one oarsman for the naval levy, this would point to a fleet of around 18 ships.\textsuperscript{110} This figure, which appears to be confirmed by saga accounts of the battle of Tankerness,\textsuperscript{111} also provides a rough match for the number of early parishes in Orkney. Considering that the tax raised from Islay in its earliest records was around one third that of Orkney, it might be expected that the Norse rulers of Islay could have raised a fleet of 6 typical longships, a figure which would correspond to the number of early parishes and might suggest that these too previously functioned as *skipreiðir* districts.

### Closing remarks

Following the Norse takeover and settlement of Islay, it stands to reason that its nascent Scandinavian community, or their overlords, would have sought to organise themselves. As in better documented Norse societies, it would not have been long before a system of land administration was introduced to regulate landholdings and social status, in addition to apportioning taxes and other obligations. At any given time, the prevailing system would have boasted a range of standard terms operating on a number of different levels with various different functions. As in more recent times, however, there is no reason to believe that the first system introduced would have remained static and immutable. Indeed, changes over the years, at the instigation of local and regional authorities alike, have left the modern settlement historian with a confusing palimpsest of terms and possible interpretations. Faced with a lack of detailed documentary or archaeological evidence, it will only ever be

\textsuperscript{107} Caldwell 2008b.
\textsuperscript{108} KLMN x, 432-59; xv 546-51.
\textsuperscript{109} Marwick 1949, 6-7.
\textsuperscript{110} See Thomson 1987, 118, who finds no traces of a Norse *leiðang* system in Orkney.
\textsuperscript{111} Clouston 1927-8.
possible to push the debate forward here with the help of an approach that is not only multi-disciplinary and retrospective, but involves a healthy dose of measured speculation.

The purpose of this article has been to demonstrate just such an approach, and how a process of contextualised analysis that takes due account of conditions on the ground has revealed possible traces of two general features of insular Norse administration in Islay: a unit of land denomination corresponding to the ounceland extent known from other parts of Scotia Scandinavica, and the sub-division of the island into divisions of three and six with a view to providing naval service. Whether or not these particular observations convince, it is hoped that the method employed will serve to reinvigorate thinking on the enigma of the Islay extents, and, by extension, the problem of Norse administration in surrounding areas.

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Scottish Merchant Families in the Early Modern Period

Dr Kathrin Zickermann

IN 1638 three Scottish brothers, David, Henry and James Lyall, left their home country to settle in the Swedish capital of Stockholm. Their commercial activity in Sweden marked the beginning of their family’s highly successful engagement in the iron and copper trade which was to last for several generations. The Lyalls are just one of many examples of Scottish merchant families who achieved influential commercial positions in northern Europe whilst settling and conducting business abroad. For example, the Spaldings or the Mackleans played demonstratively in the same league as the Lyalls on the Scandinavian market. Given the success of these families, it is surprising that their activities have not received more substantial scholarly research. It is true that the early modern Scottish diaspora has rekindled the interest of historians in recent years and that significant publications have illuminated Scottish commercial, cultural and military linkages with the wider world. In particular, scholars such as David Hancock, Allan I. Macinnes and Steve Murdoch have demonstrated that Scottish merchants were highly successful, especially when locating their business abroad. At the same time they have shown that traders who spent considerable parts of their lives in foreign countries did not lose contact with their home country. For example, they repatriated part of their wealth to Scotland, where it flowed back into the Scottish economy. The work of these historians has thus begun to challenge the image of Scotland created by older scholarly works which depicted seventeenth-century Scotland as a

1 I would like to thank Professor Steve Murdoch (of St Andrews) for providing documents and advice on the Lyall family. Furthermore, I would like to record my gratitude to Mats Eriksson for interesting discussions regarding the Lyalls and for the provision of further documents and secondary literature. I would also like to thank Sue Mowat for transcriptions of the Jolly Papers maintained in the National Archives of Scotland (NAS).
2 Hancock 2009; Hancock 2007, 5-38; Macinnes 2007; Murdoch 2006.
3 See, for example, Murdoch 2012, 34-54.
deprived and backward nation ‘saved’ by the Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707.  
At the same time the new studies on Scottish trade and commerce contribute significantly to the research of European trade in general. This is especially so as commodity flows, migrant currants and contact networks have received increased scholarly attention in recent years.  

Although Hancock, Macinnes, Murdoch and other scholars have delivered significant new insights, we still have gaps in our knowledge of early modern Scottish trade. These derive from the fact that previous publications have almost exclusively focused on trade by merchants in one particular geographical area or a politically defined territory or with one particular commodity such as fish or wine. For example, studies exist on Scottish commercial contacts with Stockholm and Kedainiai as well as within the Atlantic region.  

Some historians have also concentrated on individuals like the Scottish conservator at Veere, who was the nation’s most prominent commercial factor. Others, including Christopher Smout, have analysed the commercial networks of the Scottish factor at Rotterdam, Andrew Russell.  

What is interesting about this example is that Smout placed the emphasis of Russell’s trading network in the Dutch Republic and Scotland. Another study which built on Smout has analysed Russell’s commercial activities as being embedded in a network which largely operated in Scandinavia. These works thus captured only part of Russell’s commercial activity without achieving a comprehensive assessment of his significance.  

What is so far missing is a comprehensive study of Scottish merchant families over several generations which could compare with Leos Müller’s analysis of the Swedish-Dutch Momma-Reenstierna family, Henry Rosevaere’s examination of the Anglo-Dutch Marescoe-David company, John T. Lauridsen’s analysis of the Marselis family or to Christina Dalhede’s study of Scandinavian and German merchant families and their overseas contacts.  

The fact that we lack a comparable analysis of Scottish families is problematic for several reasons. We know very little about the comparative importance of different trade zones for Scottish merchants. We also know almost nothing about crisis management and business organisation over several generations. Furthermore, we have only just begun to understand the movement of

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4 For examples of older research on Scotland’s early modern economy, see Lythe 1960 or Smout 1963.  
5 See, for example, the articles in Brand 2005 and Brand and Müller 2007.  
7 See, for example, Enthoven 2007, 39-66.  
8 Smout 1963.  
inward and outward capital which is crucial when establishing the state of the Scottish economy during the early modern period. In addition, we have very little knowledge about the transfer of capital between different generations, or indeed between different regions.

This article analyses the commercial activities and transnational networks of two Scottish merchant families over several generations in order to address some of these gaps. It is to be understood as a preliminary study which anticipates a more comprehensive project on the commercial success and behaviour of Scottish merchant families in comparison to their German and English counterparts. The families (Jolly and Lyall) selected for the purpose of this study represent two different types of mercantile familiar networks. The Jollys operated mainly from the Scottish east-coast port of Prestonpans, strategically placing factors and family members in commercial hubs around the North Sea and conducting trade through them. In contrast, the Lyalls orchestrated their trade activities predominantly from Scandinavia and England though without losing their attachment to Scotland and participation in the Scottish trade.

The Jolly Family

From the late 1650s the inner circle of the Jolly family consisted of the skipper and merchant James and his four sons, John, George, Alexander and Robert. The fragmented Leith port books reveal that James undertook several journeys to London with his ship the Black Dog on behalf of various local merchants whilst trading on his own account. For example, on 4 March 1669 James imported one barrel of molasses and 25 pounds tobacco on board his own ship from London. This commercial behaviour was by no means unusual and James Jolly’s activities did not differentiate from those of other Scottish merchants active in trade with England. However, by analysing the extant trade records and family papers we are able to come to some conclusions regarding Jolly’s cooperation with other family members. During the 1660s Isabel Jolly, James’s sister, engaged actively in trade. For instance, on 25 February 1667 she paid duties on comparatively large quantities of sugar, pepper, aniseed,

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11 The research for this project was conducted during my time as Alan Pearsall Research Fellow (Maritime and Naval History) at the Institute of Historical Research (IHR, London).
12 Alternative spellings of the Lyall family name include Lejel and Leijel, used in particular in Scandinavian documents. For the purpose of this article the Scottish variant Lyall has been chosen.
13 National Archives of Scotland [hereafter NAS], Exchequer Records, E72/15/1-9, Leith, 1663-9.
14 NAS, Exchequer Records, E72/15/9, Leith, 4 March 1669.
Scottish Merchant Families in the Early Modern Period

currants, raisins and other commodities imported into Leith.\textsuperscript{15} Three months later James Jolly paid duties on a different consignment of goods on behalf of his daughter (presumably as she was not present in Leith upon the arrival of the ship) thus aiding her transaction.\textsuperscript{16} Assistance in business affairs of family members is a recurring theme in the Jolly documents and confirms the trust usually placed on familiar connections.\textsuperscript{17} The Jolly’s inner network was clearly characterised by cooperation during this and subsequent decades. It also included more distant relatives who operated in foreign ports. For example, in November 1668 a merchant called Henry Jolly, a merchant of Bordeaux, sent a consignment of wine to his relatives in Leith.\textsuperscript{18} Unfortunately, we are lacking further information on the Jollys’ activities in France during the 1660s, but the fact that a family member operated in a French port makes it probable that they regularly made use of this link.

The accumulation of wealth and property in James Jolly’s hand demonstrates that he was a successful merchant. For example, in the 1650s and 1660s James was able to lend sums of money amounting to 9000 merks to John Hamilton of Easter Fallside and his sons.\textsuperscript{19} When the Hamiltons could not repay the credit, the securities given (including several acres of land, three tenements or ‘great lodging’, dwelling houses and salt pans in Edinburgh and Prestonpans) were transferred into his possession in 1673. However, James did not keep these, but gave the ‘great lodging’ to his son John, who had married a woman called Barbara Hunter, daughter of a skipper in Bo’ness, in the same year. His oldest son George received the rest of the properties.\textsuperscript{20} We can speculate that James sought to gradually retire at this point and that he thus passed on part of his possessions. Whatever the reason for this transaction was, it demonstrates a genuine care for the financial security and well-being of the next generation. This is confirmed by a similar transaction made in 1679 when James’s third son Alexander married a woman called Isobel Touch. Like John Jolly’s wife, Isobel originated from a local family of skippers. Her brother Stephen undertook several journeys on behalf of the Jollys, thereby participating in and broadening the family networks. Furthermore, Alexander conducted business on behalf of his father-in-law.\textsuperscript{21} On occasion of their wedding, James Jolly transferred houses, tenements and arable land

\textsuperscript{15} NAS, Exchequer Records, E72/15/5, Leith, 25 February 1667.
\textsuperscript{16} NAS, Exchequer Records, E72/15/5, Leith, 23 May 1667.
\textsuperscript{17} For a discussion of the importance of trust in kith and kin networks, see Murdoch 2006, chapter 1.
\textsuperscript{18} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Bill of Lading, 11 November 1668.
\textsuperscript{19} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Bond, 1673.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Account, 23 July 1680.
into the couple’s possession. This was accompanied by a sum of 1000 merks which was to be complemented by an additional sum from Isobel’s father. The money was to be lent on interest or to be used to buy property, demonstrating that the Jollys deliberately kept a varied portfolio and did not invest all of their capital into long-distance trade.

During the 1670s George, John, Alexander and Robert Jolly gradually took over the family business. Whereas George operated as a merchant from Prestonpans for most of his life, his brothers engaged themselves predominantly as skippers. Alexander became the master of a ship which was part owned by his father and his brother George called the James and Margaret. During the 1670s he frequently sailed to places like La Rochelle, Rotterdam and London, where he acted as factor on behalf of his brother George whilst also trading on his own account. In addition, Alexander kept in close contact with his aunt, Isabel, whom he informed of some of his transactions, indicating that she remained involved in the family business. At the end of the decade the Jolly’s trade network received a new impulse when the fourth of the brothers, Robert, who had initially also become a skipper, settled as a merchant in the commercial hub of Hamburg. During the seventeenth century the city had developed into an important entrepôt between the Baltic and North Sea/Atlantic trade zones aided by an intake of profitable migrants. Southern Netherlanders, Portuguese Jews and the company of English Merchant Adventurers settled in the city from the late sixteenth century and were awarded special group privileges by the municipal authorities. Foreigners who were not part of either of these groups were still able to profit from the city’s relative openness as they were allowed to purchase lesser citizen rights (Schutzverwandtschaft) which enabled them to trade in and through the city. Robert Jolly benefitted from these arrangements which allowed him to conduct business in Hamburg for more than fifteen years on his own account and as a factor for his brothers George and Alexander, trading with Scottish commodities such as fish, salt and coal. Furthermore, Robert’s presence in Hamburg enabled the Jollys to break into the city’s trade links with Shetland,

22 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, 12 August 1679.
23 In 1685 James Jolly transferred further properties in Prestonpans into the possession of Alexander and his wife (NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, 10 September 1685).
25 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Alexander to Isabell Jolly, Rotterdam, 12/22 April 1675.
26 Robert Jolly settled in Hamburg from 1678 after undertaking two exploratory journeys to the city earlier in the decade (NAS, RH15/140, Robert to Alexander Jolly, Hamburg, November 1678).
28 NAS, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1680. For more information on the Jollys’ activities in north-west Germany, see Zickermann 2013a.
which were then predominantly in the hands of local German merchants. In addition, the family profited from trade with commodities which were traded through Hamburg from Scandinavia and England to the Iberian peninsula and France and vice versa. During the 1680s Alexander undertook several journeys from the city to France and Spain on behalf of his brothers and local merchants. On at least one of his return journeys from the Mediterranean he called into Hamburg, before continuing to Norway (to sell some French wine) and from thence to Scotland freighted with timber. However, not all of Alexander’s journeys proved to be profitable. On one of his voyages from Hamburg in 1683 the skipper suffered shipwreck at St Maria (close to Cadiz), losing the James and Margaret but rescuing her crew, his freight (consisting of typical Baltic commodities such as iron, whalebone and stockfish) and the ship’s equipment. Being stuck in the port, Alexander banked on the help of the local English and Dutch merchant consuls, Robert Large and Mr Rus, to both of whom he referred to as being his ‘friends’, indicating a longstanding and trusted business relationship with these men. After the loss of his ship Alexander continued his journeys between Scotland, Shetland, England, Scandinavia, north-west Germany and the Mediterranean on a new vessel called the Alison until he died in October 1687. Despite the death of his brother and business acquaintance, which must have been a blow to the family network, Robert Jolly continued to engage himself as a merchant at Hamburg, commissioning various Scottish and local skippers to transport his commodities. His stay in north-west Germany was interrupted by a short and unsuccessful interlude at the Scottish colony at Darien from whence Robert returned to Hamburg via Scotland. We know that Robert was active in the city at least until the early 1700s, but unfortunately we lose trace of him thereafter.

With Robert’s disappearance from the city, the commercial activity of the Jolly family entered a new phase. Members of the following generation engaged themselves predominantly as skippers and there is no further evidence for the settlement of Jollys as merchants and factors in continental Europe. Following

29 For more information on Hamburg’s trade with Shetland and the involvement of the Jolly family, see Hance D. Smith 1984 or Zickermann 2013b.
30 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1682-3.
31 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Account, 1682.
32 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Letters, Alexander Jolly to George Jolly and to his parents, 23 May 1683.
33 Ibid.
34 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1685-6; Letter, Robert Jolly to Isobel Touch, 3 November 1687.
35 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1687-91.
36 Zickermann 2013a, 125.
in the footsteps of his father Alexander, Stephen Jolly embarked on a career as a mariner on various ships from 1700.\textsuperscript{37} After having worked as a customs official in 1714, he received a commission from six Scottish merchants and skippers the following year to build a ship on his and their behalf.\textsuperscript{38}

Two of the signatories of the contract were his cousins George and Alexander (George Jolly’s sons) who were to own an eighth part of the vessel each.\textsuperscript{39} However, instead of building a new vessel, Stephen eventually bought a ship from his cousin George.\textsuperscript{40} He then sold parts of the vessel on to various Prestonpans merchants and family members. For example, one sixteenth of the \textit{Concord} was purchased by another cousin, called John (another son of George) who also became a crew member.\textsuperscript{41} Stephen undertook several voyages from the Firth of Forth to the Swedish west coast, Norway and into the Baltic.\textsuperscript{42} These journeys were predominantly commissioned by Prestonpans merchants, including Richard and Charles Sherrif (who also owned part of the \textit{Concord}).\textsuperscript{43} For example, in 1719 Richard Sherrif instructed Stephen to sail to Christiansand (Norway) to purchase timber and iron if the commodity was to be obtained for a reasonable price.\textsuperscript{44} Whilst at the port the Scottish skipper was to make enquiries regarding commodities currently in the possession of a Mr Michael Rus (possibly a relation to the Dutch consul at Cadiz mentioned above) and to sell these commodities in case Rus refused to – demonstrating a certain amount of trust placed on Stephen Jolly. Another Prestonpans merchant who commissioned Stephen Jolly was Thomas Mathie who, like the Sheriffs, sent commodities to Christiansand.\textsuperscript{45} In addition to their dealings with Stephen both the Mathie and the Sheriff family requested Stephen’s cousin George, master of the ships \textit{George} and \textit{Elizabeth} (from 1716), to undertake journeys on their behalf to places like Gothenburg, Christiansand and Danzig.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{37} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Certificate, 13 November 1711.

\textsuperscript{38} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Commission, 2 March 1715.

\textsuperscript{39} Stephen Jolly was to own a quarter of the ship. The other signatories were William Young, Alexander Dunbar, Andrew Young and William Stewart.

\textsuperscript{40} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Vendition, 13 October 1715. George Jolly had bought the ship at Gothenburg in June in the same year.

\textsuperscript{41} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Vendition, 4 October 1715. Stephen Jolly sold a further eighth part to a merchant in Prestonpans called Charles Sherrif on 25 October 1715 (NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140,Vendition, 24 October 1715).

\textsuperscript{42} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Crew List and Various Accounts, 1717-18.

\textsuperscript{43} Stephen Jolly sold an eighth part of the ship to Charles Sherrif on 25 October 1715 (NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140,Vendition, 24 October 1715).

\textsuperscript{44} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Letter, Richard Sherrif to Stephen Jolly, 1719.

\textsuperscript{45} NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Account, 1720.

\textsuperscript{46} NAS, CE56/5/1, Custom Book Prestonpans, 1708-18; GD 90/2/193, Bill of Lading, 19 September 1718; Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Letter, William Mathie to George Jolly, 19 June 1717; Account, 18 September 1718.
The Jolly network of the 1710s and 1720s thus had a different quality compared to that of the late seventeenth century. Although George and Stephen occasionally shipped commodities on their own account (and on behalf of each other) they were active predominantly as mariners.\(^\text{47}\) Their network did not include family members who engaged themselves as merchants. This role, which had previously been afforded to George and Robert Jolly, was now given to other local merchant families of Prestonpans. At this point we can only speculate as to why this was the case. It is probable that the family had lost part of their capital in the Darien venture of the 1690s. However, Robert Jolly was apparently able to continue his commercial activities in Hamburg upon his return from the ill-fated expedition, indicating that he had still some capital at his disposal. Another explanation might be that the Jolly cousins perceived a career as skippers to be more lucrative and more risk-free than that of a trader. Given that most family members of previous generations had engaged themselves as mariners (and moreover married into families of skippers) their choice is not too surprising. The extant trade records and Jolly papers reveal that family members engaged in the trade of traditional Scottish export commodities throughout the second half of the seventeenth and during the early eighteenth century. However, whereas Alexander, George and Robert successfully exploited their base at Hamburg and opened up new trade links with Shetland, the Iberian peninsula, and France, Stephen and George predominantly sailed to Scandinavia and to the Baltic. The emphasis of the Jollys’ commercial activities thus changed over time and it can be argued that Stephen and George were less ambitious and of less entrepreneurial spirit than their fathers. Nevertheless, the cousins were not unsuccessful in their careers. When Stephen Jolly died during a journey to Norway in May 1728 he left his possessions to his sister-in-law, Isabel Thomson.\(^\text{48}\) These included 15/16 parts of his ship, household furnishings worth twenty pounds sterling, a silver watch worth five pounds sterling and a considerable sum of over 2043 Scottish pounds.\(^\text{49}\) Ownership of these possessions was contested in part by Thomas Mathie and by David Reid (another skipper of Prestonpans) and his wife Sybilla Bartleman (relict of the late George Jolly). Nevertheless, the sums left to Isabel demonstrate that Stephen had been able to accumulate at least some wealth over the years. We can also assume that the skipper had transferred part of his capital and possessions to his children during his lifetime as his grandfather James had done two generations previously.

\(^\text{47}\) For example, in 1717 George Jolly shipped commodities on behalf of Stephen from Scotland to the Baltic (NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Account, 11 March 1717).

\(^\text{48}\) NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Inventory, 15 May 1728.

\(^\text{49}\) NAS, Wills, CC8/8/92/603, 27 January 1730.
The Lyall Family

As skippers and merchants the Jollys engaged themselves in the Scandinavian iron and copper trade, exporting the commodities to Scotland and (in Robert Jolly’s case) to France. However, their engagement in this lucrative commercial exchange remained small in comparison to the mercantile activities of the Scottish Lyall and Spalding families in Sweden. The three Lyall brothers, David, Henry and James, left Arbroath in 1638 for Stockholm to join the substantial Scottish community which had established itself in the city since the late 1560s.\(^\text{50}\) In order to be allowed to conduct trade through the city they acquired citizen rights, integrating formally into their multi-ethnic host society.\(^\text{51}\) The siblings were either accompanied or later joined by a fourth brother, Adam, who became a citizen at a later date.\(^\text{52}\) From the fragmented church registers we can gauge that Adam, David, Henry and James associated themselves predominantly with three different Stockholm church communities. James’s five children of his first marriage (Gertrud, Margaretha, Jacob, Eva, Catharina) were baptised in the German church between 1645 and 1651.\(^\text{53}\) The link with this community was established by James’s wife Margaretha Eden, the daughter of a councillor (\textit{Rådman}) in Uppsala, whose family had migrated to Sweden from north-west Germany.\(^\text{54}\) Apart from this connection with the German church, James, David and Adam preferred the St Nikolai church to cater for their spiritual needs. It was here that James’s daughter Eva (a child from his second marriage) and David’s five children were baptised between 1660 and 1667.\(^\text{55}\) Furthermore, James purchased a grave at St Nikolai where he buried his first wife in 1653 and a child in 1654. In addition, one of David’s children was also laid to rest here in 1656.\(^\text{56}\) Like their brother, David and Adam

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\(^\text{50}\) Murdoch 2009, 34-6.
\(^\text{51}\) A large number of German, Dutch and Scottish migrants settled in Stockholm from the sixteenth century onwards, bolstering the indigenous population. The influx of Germans alone was so big that the city authorities ensured that they could not make up more than half of the city’s population (ibid, 34).
\(^\text{52}\) According to a short biography in the \textit{Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon} [SBL], Adam did not acquire citizenship rights until 1670. However, there are several documents which explicitly refer to him as a citizen of Stockholm before this time. See, for example, sea passes for Stockholm ships in Svenska Riksarkivet (hereafter SRA), Kommerskollegium Huvudarkivet, Koncept till sjöpass, BIlb, vol. 1.
\(^\text{53}\) Stadsarkiv Stockholm (hereafter StSS), Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Tyska Församlingen, Dopbok, 1639-1700.
\(^\text{54}\) SBL vol. 12, 49.
\(^\text{55}\) StSS, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Tyska Församlingen, Dopbok, 1639-1700.
\(^\text{56}\) StSS Stockholm, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Nikolai Församlingen, Döda, 1627-80.
also purchased graves in this church in 1670 and 1679 respectively.\textsuperscript{57} However, despite this and the fact that their ancestors continued to be associated with St Nikolai, both brothers were buried in the Maria church in Södermalm.\textsuperscript{58} The reason for this remains unfortunately elusive but the fact that the brothers integrated with apparent ease into Stockholm’s Lutheran church communities demonstrates once again the religious flexibility of Scottish and other foreign migrants.\textsuperscript{59} Interestingly, not all four brothers worshipped at the same church. In contrast to his brothers, Henry Lyall attended the St Klara church and it was here that he buried his wife Judit Rokes in 1705 and one of his sons in 1697. He was himself laid to rest there in 1710.\textsuperscript{60} A possible explanation for this is that Judit Roke was a member of the St Klara community and that Henry chose to worship in her church following the example of James’s association with the German community through his spouse. The affiliation to a certain church community was undoubtedly of social importance. However, unfortunately Stockholm’s extant church records do not reveal network linkages created, for example, through the religious sponsorship of children. There are only occasional glimpses of established social connections. For example, in 1656 Gyllenbring, a secretary at the royal court of appeal (\textit{Kungliga Hovrätten}) buried a child in Jacob Lyall’s grave.\textsuperscript{61} Furthermore, Adam laid a new-born child to rest in the grave of a man called Adam Eados at St Maria church, whereas Henry buried a young child in the grave of Baltzar Rokus (almost certainly a relative of his wife) at St Nikolai.\textsuperscript{62}

During the first half of the seventeenth century Sweden’s commerce became more and more integrated into European trade patterns. This development was not least aided by foreign (predominantly Dutch) entrepreneurs and investors who penetrated the Swedish economy and encouraged the production and export of copper and iron.\textsuperscript{63} The increased demand for these commodities in the Dutch Republic and the involvement of Dutch entrepreneurs resulted in a general shift of destinations for Swedish exports from the southern Baltic to North Sea ports like Amsterdam.\textsuperscript{64} Men

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{58} StSv, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Maria Församlingen, Döda, 1656-80 and 1680-1700. David died in October 1670, shortly after he had purchased the grave at St Nikolai church. Adam was buried on 12 May 1686.
\textsuperscript{59} For a discussion of confessional networks and conversion of Scottish migrants, see Murdoch 2006, 84-124.
\textsuperscript{60} StSv, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Klara Församlingen, Döda, 1680-1710.
\textsuperscript{61} StSv, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Klara Församlingen, Döda, 1656-80.
\textsuperscript{62} StSv, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Maria Församlingen, Döda, 1656-80; Nikolai Församlingen, Döda, 1627-80.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 59, 62-6.
like Louis de Geer and Elias and Pieter Trip are just a few examples of foreign merchants who became highly successful in Dutch-Swedish trade. From 1650 England (and in particular London) began to compete with the Dutch Republic as an important market for Swedish commodities. However, Dutch families, such as the Mommas, profited from exporting iron to English ports and Amsterdam continued as an important centre for exports from and imports to Sweden.

Similar to some of the Dutch families, the Lyall brothers managed to engage themselves in the trade with Swedish metals. Leos Müller has demonstrated that James Lyall exported no less than 55,290 ship-pounds of the commodity whereas David exported 12,706 ship-pounds during the period between 1651 and 1660. As has been pointed out elsewhere, this made the Lyall brothers the third largest iron exporters from Sweden behind the Momma-Page 1001.1-2. Reenstierna family and the Swedish merchant Adam Bex. James cooperated closely with his brother Adam during this period, exporting iron predominantly to London but also to other destinations in northern Europe such as Amsterdam. However, James and Adam fell out in the early 1660s, disputing each other’s bills in a court case which dragged on until the 1670s and passed through various legal authorities. In 1662 Stockholm’s lower court administered a preliminary verdict in relation to over sixty contested bills demonstrating how closely intermingled the brothers’ business affairs had become. Particular areas of dispute included expenses for voyages Adam had debited to James, the repayment of loans and differences in the conversion of English to Swedish money and weights and vice versa. Both brothers sought to prove their points by referring to their books and ledgers and by providing attest from business acquaintances. The latter included members of Stockholm’s financial elite, such as a member of the Momma family and the Scottish iron merchant James Semple, demonstrating a business relationship between the Lyalls and these traders. The court made a decision on each disputed sum of money but its verdict was contested by James Lyall and only later confirmed by the royal court of appeal (Kungliga Hovrätten). The quarrel is evidence that family networks were not always stable and could fall

65 Ibid., 69-70.
66 Ibid., 71-2.
71 SRA, Ericbergsarkiv, Nils Gyldenstolpes Papper, vol. 1; For information on James Semple see Murdoch 2009, 44.
72 SRA, Ericbergsarkiv, Nils Gyldenstolpes Papper, vol. 1, Adam Lyall to Gyldenstolpe, 1684, but without date or place given.
apart. In the case of James and Adam Lyall it is interesting to note that the first contested bill was issued in 1651, more than ten years before the court case. It is probable that the brothers at first sought to iron out their differences between themselves or through familiar mediation. However, when this did not work, their fall out was quite spectacular and occupied the Swedish courts for a considerable length of time. This was especially so as James’s widow Barbera (née Dress) took up the dispute once again in the early 1680s, petitioning the Swedish king albeit without success.\(^73\)

The dispute between the brothers impacted on the family network as a whole. From the 1660s Adam cooperated very closely with his brother Henry, compensating for his separation from James. They shared the risk and cost of journeys and transactions and jointly represented their interests when necessary. For example, in 1677 they petitioned the Swedish chancellor, Magnus de la Gardie, in regard to a contested bill they had written to some of his employees.\(^74\) It is probable that the relationship between Adam and Henry intensified after the death of David in 1676 and James in 1678. In addition to his cooperation with Henry, Adam also traded on his own account, exporting iron from Stockholm and Landskrona to Flanders and to Amsterdam during the 1660s.\(^75\) He was so successful in his commercial transactions that he became the most important importer of goods into Sweden in 1670.\(^76\) David and James also continued to engage themselves in the iron trade. According to Leos Müller, James exported 33,465 ship-pounds of the commodity during the 1660s, a smaller but still substantial quantity compared to the previous decade.\(^77\) It was either him or one of his brothers who sent consignments of iron to Leith in Scotland, where they were assisted by a fifth brother and local merchant called Arthur Lyall.\(^78\)

During the 1680s the Lyall network benefited from new developments at the Danish-controlled Sound. From the sixteenth century a branch of the Lyall family had settled at Elsinore, where some family members achieved influential positions.\(^79\) For example, Sander Lyall (d. 1560) became a successful merchant and engaged himself as custom-house officer and provost. His son Frederick also became a custom official in 1583 and a provost in 1591.\(^80\) The family maintained a presence at Elsinore into the seventeenth century, trading

\(^{73}\) Ibid.
\(^{74}\) SRA, de la Gardiesamlingen, E1475, Adam and Henry Lyall to de la Gardie, Stockholm, 11 June 1677.
\(^{75}\) SRA, Kommerskollegium Huvudarkivet, Koncept till Sjöpass, BIIb, Vol. 1, 1666-7.
\(^{76}\) Ibid., 87.
\(^{78}\) NAS, Exchequer Records, E72/15/1, Leith, 10 August 1663.
\(^{79}\) Christensen 1970, 136.
\(^{80}\) Ibid.
with Scotland and other destinations in the North Sea and Baltic region.\textsuperscript{81} They also explored new trade routes and engaged themselves in the Danish East India trade.\textsuperscript{82} The familiar network was occasionally replenished with fresh blood from Scotland. For example, in the 1680s Patrick Lyall arrived from his home country after having previously engaged himself as a skipper and merchant in Edinburgh and London.\textsuperscript{83} At Elsinore he became the British merchant consul. This office had been established in 1671 to assist and protect the commercial exchange of Scottish and English merchants at the Sound and was first taken up by the Lyalls’ fellow countryman John Paul.\textsuperscript{84} Patrick was the nephew of the Lyall brothers in Stockholm and Edinburgh and thus created a bridge between the family branches in Scandinavia and Scotland. He was in contact with Adam and Henry Lyall and Patrick’s presence and position at the Sound was without doubt of advantage to them.\textsuperscript{85}

The commercial success of the Lyall brothers between the 1660s and 1680s was not built on trade alone. As Murdoch has pointed out, Adam, James and David also became major players in the metal industry, following the example of other Scottish migrants who successfully engaged themselves in the production of iron and/or silver.\textsuperscript{86} Through his second wife Barbera Maria Dress, whose father Andry produced iron in Sweden since the 1620s, James came into the possession of mines and ironworks in Rockhammar, Ör and Hammarby in the Nora district.\textsuperscript{87} Furthermore, he owned the Vällnor ironworks in Knuty.\textsuperscript{88} Together with his brother-in-law Adam Radou, he also leased mines and ironworks belonging to the Swedish Crown in the Nora and Linde districts. In addition, he obtained the lease for additional ironworks and properties in Norr and Söderbärke with his brother David.\textsuperscript{89} The latter was a business partner of Claes Depken, an iron producer who was related to David

\textsuperscript{81} Riis 1988, 232-3.
\textsuperscript{82} For example, William Lyall took over the office of governor of Tranquebar in the 1640s (Bredsdorff 2009; Murdoch 2006, 210).
\textsuperscript{83} NAS, Register of Deeds, RD8, 107, Bond, 17 March 1663; Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Charles II, 5,24,78, Correspondence, Capt. John Strachan and Patrick Lyell to the Navy Commissioners, 2-30 August 1666.
\textsuperscript{84} Murdoch 2006, 156-8.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 159.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 189-92.
\textsuperscript{87} Värmlandsarkiv, SE/VA/916/F1e/84, Fastbrev på Hammarby gård och hammar (...) för Jacob Leijel, 1662; SBL, ‘Andry Dress (Dreiss) (c.1585-1651)’, vol. 11, p. 443; ‘Jacob Leijell (1612-1678)’, vol. 22, p. 448.
\textsuperscript{88} Hållander 1990, 80.
\textsuperscript{89} Murdoch 2006, 190; SBL, ‘Jacob Leijell (1612-1678)’, vol. 22, p. 448.
through his wife. Depken was, furthermore, an assessor in the Bergskollegium (the ‘Board of Mines’), a central institution which regulated Sweden’s metal industry. He initiated the construction of new ironworks and furnaces in Älfkarleö, Härnäs and Hytton in the late 1650s, half of which he sold to David in 1662. David took an active part in the administration of these industrial complexes and he and his family moved to Älvkarleö, situated about 110 miles north of Stockholm.

The following generations of Lyalls continued to engage themselves in the iron industry whilst also taking over related governmental positions. After David’s death his oldest son (also called David) took over the Älvkarleby iron works. He also became an assessor of the Bergskollegium in 1688 and also held an office as Bergsmästare (‘Master of the Mines’) in Uppland and Västernorrland from 1691. His son (also David) followed in his and his grandfather’s footsteps and took on the directorship of the Älvkarleby complex until his death in 1727. Several other Lyall family members held shares in the ironworks at this time. Henry’s son, Adam, also became a Bergsmästare in Öster and Västerbergslagen in 1700 and assessor of the Bergskollegium in 1713. Furthermore, James’s son Adam engaged himself as owner of the Hellefors silverworks after finishing his studies at Uppsala University. All three cousins were ennobled in the 1710s for their contributions to the Swedish metal industry. It is noticeable that the emphasis of the Lyall commercial network in Sweden shifted from the iron trade to the production of metals. Whereas the first generation of Lyalls had engaged themselves both in the commercial exchange with the commodity and in the industry, David Davidson, Adam (son of Henry) and Adam (son of James) focused on a career in the production of iron and on a career in government positions. This behaviour was not untypical. There are several examples of other foreign merchants, such as Willem Momma and Willem Bruyn, who moved from trade to industry and estate ownership.

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90 SBL, ‘David Leijell (1621-1676)’, vol. 22, p. 448. David’s wife was the sister of Klas Depken’s wife.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
94 Anders von Stiernman 1755, unpaginated; Murdoch 2006, 191.
95 Liljeroth 1931. The Lyall family members who owned shares included Borgmästare Johan, Petter, Lieutenants Lars and Johan, Elisabeth and Caisa Helena Lyall.
96 Ibid.
97 Stiernman 1755; Murdoch 2006, 191.
98 Ibid.
more lucrative and that they avoided the risks of overseas trade. However, the Lyalls’ engagement in the commercial exchange did not end here. Two of Henry’s sons, Henry and Balthasar, migrated to the British Isles in the 1710s and rose to become directors of the Honourable East India Company.100

**Conclusion**

The above comparison of two kin-based networks has demonstrated some of the commercial activities of the Jolly and Lyall families in northern Europe. The Jollys operated their business mainly from Scotland, placing family members in strategic locations abroad. Henry and Robert Jolly undoubtedly aided the expansion of the family’s commercial links by opening up trade with and through Hamburg and France. Despite his long-term presence in the north-west German port, Robert Jolly did not formally integrate into his host society through the acquisition of full citizen rights. As outlined above, Hamburg’s laws allowed foreigners to be commercially active and it is probable that Robert Jolly chose to stay in this port precisely for this reason. Whilst he must have linked himself socially to the city’s traders, there is no evidence that he established any permanent roots, for example through a marriage to a local woman. His abode in Hamburg thus had a temporary character and Jolly’s decision to leave the city for Darien seems to have been a comparatively easy one. Throughout his residency in north-west Germany, Robert cooperated closely with his relatives George and Alexander, the latter of whom provided a mobile link within the family network. Part of the brothers’ success lay in the variety of their commercial activities. They participated in a wide range of trade routes and in the commercial exchange with a large number of commodities, including traditional Scottish export commodities like coal, fish and salt. When a particular commercial exchange became unprofitable they explored different avenues, proving a great deal of flexibility. For example, in the early 1680s Robert complained about a decay of maritime trade except in France.101 This was not only through the loss of ships (due to the on-going Franco-Dutch War) but also through a wave of bankruptcies of merchant houses in the Spanish Netherlands, France and

100 The National Archives, C11/2762/45, Henry and Balthasar Lyall v Simmons, 1716; Will of Balthasar Lyall, PROB 11/703/103, 1740. For additional information on Henry and Balthasar Lyall see Gentleman’s Magazine or Monthly Intelligencer, vol.1 (1731), 2; Parliamentary Archives, Naturalization (Jacobson, &c.) Act HL/PO/JO/10/6/5/1524, 1 March 1700; East Sussex Record Office, Mortgage (by Lease & Release, 2 copies of release) for £4,000 DLW/572-4 11, 12 Apr 1752. I thank Peter Leyel for passing these references onto me.

101 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Robert to Alexander Jolly, Hamburg, 22 April 1681.
London to whom the Jolly family was commercially connected. It was shortly thereafter that the Jollys established their trade links with Shetland, adding a new commercial connection to their portfolio to compensate for the difficulties experienced elsewhere. When trade itself did not seem to be a lucrative alternative, Alexander’s and George’s children fell back to the family’s traditional professions as skippers and mariners. Their engagement as mariners gave them an income and a highly respected position within society without having to bear the full risk of commercial transactions. Interestingly, the vacuum left by the withdrawal of the Jollys from their role as traders was filled seamlessly by other Prestonpans merchant families, such as the Sherrifs and Mathies.

The Lyalls operated undoubtedly on a larger scale than the Jollys and it can be argued that they were as successful as other major European merchant families, such as the Momma-Reenstiernas. As significant players in the Swedish iron trade and industry, they maintained a large trading network with other destinations in the Baltic and North Sea region, including Scotland. Their commercial exchange was aided by family members in their home country and at the Danish Sound. Unlike the Jollys, the Lyalls became firmly integrated into their host societies, acquiring citizenship rights and influential positions as councillors and consuls. They also intermarried with other important merchant families who were crucial in aiding the Lyalls’ success in the metal industry. It is likely that without the aid of the Dress or the Raddou families they would have remained confined to trade. A quality the Lyalls shared with the Jollys was their flexibility in their commercial behaviour. They frequently changed locations within Sweden and other places and even branched out into the trade with East Asia. They thus proved to be extremely mobile and flexible, following the most lucrative markets around the globe. They also covered a spectrum of professions, engaging themselves not only as merchants but also as owners of ironworks, skippers and members of Swedish institutions, such as the Bergskollegium, and British monopoly companies, such as the East India Company.

The significance of the Lyalls in the Swedish iron trade and industry is comparable to that of other influential foreign merchant families like the de Geers. They adopted similar strategies as other migrants, moving from involvement in the commercial exchange to the production of raw materials they imported, taking ownership over various mines in Sweden and contributing significantly to the Swedish economy. The Jolly family, on the other hand, did not have any comparable opportunities and their overall contribution to the Scottish economy has yet to be evaluated.

102 Ibid.
Importantly, the Jollys and Lyalls are just examples of their respective types of early-modern Scottish merchant families. Previous research on mercantile networks indicates that the commercial behaviour of the Jollys was in principle comparable to that of other Scottish families, such as the Spaldings, Sherrifs and Mathies. However, we cannot come to a conclusion on this until further research has been conducted on the trade activities of these families. Given their comparative significance, it is astonishing that Scottish merchant families have not received more scholarly attention in the past. This is especially so as the commercial activities of familiar networks abroad remained connected to and impacted on the Scottish economy. Further research on familiar networks in Scotland and abroad will undoubtedly shed new light on the commercial behaviour of Scottish traders over several generations, allowing us to write a new history of Scotland’s economy and to provide a fresh alternative to the more pessimistic conclusions sometimes reached by historians. In order to fully understand the commercial success and failure of Scottish merchants over several generations it is crucial for research to move away from orthodox trade records such as port books and custom records and to concentrate on merchants letters, ledgers and other family papers maintained in Scottish and foreign archives. A focus on these alternative documents will unearth new information and permit a deeper and more comprehensive insight into early modern Scottish trade.

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North Atlantic Drift:
The Scandinavian Dimension in
Modern Scottish Literature

Michael Stachura

‘So far and no farther, the guardian commands. But the voyager must refuse the other’s definition of the boundary.’

– Salman Rushdie, *Step Across this Line*¹

‘Our nations are not built instinctively by our bodies, like beehives; they are works of art, like ships, carpets and gardens. The possible shapes of them are endless.’

– Alasdair Gray, *Lanark*²

IN a recent interview with Mark Lawson on BBC Radio Four’s *Foreign Bodies* programme, Ian Rankin was asked about the similarities between Scottish and Scandinavian crime writing. ‘I do think the Scottish sensibility, psychology, psyche is very close to Scandinavia’, Rankin observes. As well as a sense of introspection and bleakness that he deems the northern winters and short, bright summers can bring to the Scottish and Scandinavian imagination, Rankin believes there is also commonality in the sense of being ‘on the edge of Europe, looking in, or … on the edge of culture’³ While this interview is concerned mainly with crime writing, Lawson’s question and Rankin’s answer outline wider themes in modern Scottish culture that are central to this paper: that of Lawson’s question being indicative of interest in looking north to Scandinavia in post-devolutionary Scotland and Rankin’s identification of peripherality as being, somewhat paradoxically, central to this discussion.

This paper will examine the adoption of what Cairns Craig in his influential study *Out of History* (1996) terms a ‘peripheral perspective’ in

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³ Extended Interview: Ian Rankin on Rebus, BBC Radio 4.
the work of contemporary Scottish writers Margaret Elphinstone, Kathleen Jamie, Christine De Luca and Robert Alan Jamieson.4 Drawing support from post-devolutionary criticism’s aspiration for a more cosmopolitan and international dimension in Scottish literature, this paper will explore how these writers have centred on Scotland’s northern peripheries and articulated its transnational possibilities. Instead of ‘looking in’, as Rankin has observed, to the more dominant networks of globalised, centralised power and influence, these writers have shown an interest in creating an alternative imaginative and discursive space between the peripheries of northern Europe. The north of Scotland is not seen as any kind of frontier, limit or conclusion, but a transformative space that can defamiliarise connotations of national belonging and broaden Scotland’s imagination northwards into transnational contact with its Scandinavian neighbours and beyond. As Salman Rushdie states in *Step Across this Line* (2002), ‘To cross a frontier is to be transformed.’5 In short, it can be argued that these writers ‘[deploy] imagination’, as Peter Hitchcock proposes in *Imaginary States* (2003), ‘as a positive for alternate modes of Being and being conscious in the world.’6

I will begin this paper by outlining several theoretical issues in modern Scottish criticism that will inform my analysis of these contemporary writers. It can be very generally argued that devolutionary writing in Scotland – that is, writing that has contributed, as the writer Suhayl Saadi has argued, ‘to the post-devolution literary-historical dynamic of national self-determination’ – has national politics and identity as central concerns.7 In post-devolutionary criticism, however, this national interest is now being both extended and transcended. As Eleanor Bell states in *Questioning Scotland* (2004), ‘[Devolution] provides a long-awaited and much-needed potential for Scottish literature to look beyond the often overly fixed boundaries of “home”.’8

The second part of this paper will turn to Scotland’s peripheral and liminal north. In the ‘Editorial’ to the May edition of the online literary journal *The Bottle Imp*, ‘The Unreliable Narrator’ responds to Samuel Johnson’s (in) famous eighteenth-century jibe that Scotland, removed as it is from the centre of political, economic and cultural power in London, is a peripheral hinterland by suggesting that it is in fact exactly this peripheral perspective that has given Scots a more outward-looking predilection: ‘The Scots labour under no such illusion [of Johnson’s notion of peripherality]; proudly marginal, consciously

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4 Craig 1996, 30.
6 Hitchcock 2003, 1.
7 Saadi 2007, 28.
8 Bell 2004, 41.
peripheral, the world is our oyster.'9 The work of Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa has been influential in formulating the notion of the borderland as a liminal space where political and cultural identities can be both brutally essentialized as well as creatively deconstructed.10 It has been through the adoption of such a peripheral perspective in the work of several contemporary Scottish writers that a transnational northern dimension in modern Scottish literature has further developed.

The final part of this paper will focus exclusively on the work of Jamieson and De Luca.11 It is in the work of these two contemporary writers that the transnational engagement with Scandinavia is most pronounced. I will begin my analysis by looking at the use of modern Shetlandic in their poetry. Speaking of his own use of this vernacular, Jamieson has described it as ‘an idiolect, not a dialect.’12 This is true also of De Luca, as both poets construct the language of their poetry in quite different ways. Through their use of such an idiolect, however, which consists of a mixture of Scandinavian-influenced old Norn, Scots and English, both writers have demonstrated its potential to cross borders and open up a transnational discursive space between Shetland, the Scottish (and British) mainland and the fringes of northern Europe. Furthermore, while there is a problem with much Scottish literature written in dialect being lost in translation or simply untranslatable outside of Scotland’s borders, Jamieson and De Luca have been active promoters and participants in translation workshops with writers from the Nordic countries and elsewhere. My consideration of the use of Shetlandic in these writers’ work will be accompanied by an analysis of the more imaginative articulations of a transnational north in their poetry and prose.

10 cf., Borderlands/La Frontera 1987.
11 In doing so, I do not mean to suggest that Shetland is the sole representative of Scottish engagement with the north. Elphinstone’s Islanders (1994) and modern saga novel The Sea Road (2000) are obviously influenced by the Norse-themed work of ‘The Orkney Skald’ George Mackay Brown whose poem Water, published in 1996 and which follows an exiled speaker around the northern spaces of Scotland and Scandinavia, could be used as another important example of the devolutionary imagination moving into engagement with the north. Brown’s fellow Orcadian writer Eric Linklater also cast his imagination northwards during the Scottish Renaissance (as did his fellow Renaissance writers Hugh MacDiarmid, Neil Gunn, and Naomi Mitchison), trying his hand at saga writing in The Men of Ness (1932) and bringing World War Two intrigue to the islands off Scotland and Scandinavia in The Dark of Summer (1956). Simon Hall has also identified Gregor Lamb’s Langskail (1998) as a modern fiction set in ancient Orkney, as the title of his chapter in The History of Orkney Literature (2010) suggests. Constraints in space and the desire to keep the focus of this article within a post-devolutionary chronology keep me from examining the importance of these writers in any greater depth.
As stated above, Lawson’s question to Rankin is suggestive of larger interest in contemporary Scotland regarding its relationship to and links with Scandinavia. Such an international perspective is central to post-devolutionary Scottish literature and criticism. In an appended chapter to the second edition of his influential book *Devolving English Literature* (2000), Robert Crawford argues that with a renewed sense of national purpose comes an international prerogative: ‘To develop that autonomy in the post-devolutionary era requires more than ever an alert and inclusive looking out.’\(^{13}\) It is an argument that he reiterates once again at the start of his chapter on contemporary Scottish writing in *Scotland’s Books* (2007): ‘The challenge for Scottish literature today is to engage not just with Scotland but with the world.’\(^{14}\) Such a determination to look outwards has been facilitated by a shift in Scottish criticism around the 1980s that embraced Scotland’s multiplicities of culture as a creative benefit rather than adhere to an earlier post-war desire to organise and understand Scotland in more essentialist terms. As Berthold Schoene states:

‘No longer regarded, or led to regard itself, as exclusively Scottish and thus found or finding itself lacking, it becomes free to reconceive of itself in broader terms, with reference to other cultures (not just English culture), indeed as situated within a vibrant network of interdependent cultural contexts.’\(^{15}\)

Looking beyond Scotland’s borders and engaging with aspects of Scottish culture that can also be seen to transcend any singular view of ‘Scotland’, such as recent interest in the literature of Scotland’s diaspora, has been noticeable in many recent critical texts. In *Celtic Identity and the British Image* (1999), for example, Murray Pittock urges Scotland to renew and explore ‘old links of Celtic commonality (real or imagined)’ with Ireland.\(^{16}\) Scotland’s history as both victim and agent of British imperialism does hold complications when trying to (re)forge these connections. As Jamie Bawn reacts to his grandparents’ somewhat naïve view of Scottish and Irish relations in Andrew O’Hagan’s *Our Fathers* (1999), ‘“Ireland’s its own country no thanks to Scotland,” I said, catching my own breath. “And Ireland never did you any favours either”.’\(^{17}\)

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13 Crawford 2000, 329.
14 Crawford 2007, 657.
15 Schoene 2007, 9.
Complicated as these relations are, new publications such as James McGonigal, Donny O’Rourke and Hamish Whyte’s *Across the Water: Irishness in Modern Scottish Writing* (2000) and Alison O’Malley-Younger and Willy Maley’s *Celtic Connections: Irish-Scottish Relations and the Politics of Culture* (2012) have begun the process of exploring these connections and issues in greater depth.

While there has therefore been marked interest in re-establishing transnational Celtic connections, I will argue that there has also been interest in looking north to Scandinavia. Imagining Scotland as part of a larger northern or Nordic world has been a discernible aspect in the devolutionary and post-devolutionary process. As examples that bridge both worlds of literature and politics, one can turn to the devolutionary writing of Alasdair Gray and the post-devolutionary proposal of a northern perspective in Robert Alan Jamieson and Murray Wallace’s ‘Editorial’ in the autumn edition of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1997, an article that has since been re-published on the popular *Bella Caledonia* website, therefore bringing the topic of Scotland and Scandinavia into more contemporary debates regarding Scotland’s constitutional future as it readies itself to vote on independence in 2014.

Published in the wake of the failed 1979 devolution referendum, Gray’s novels *Lanark* (1981) and *1982, Janine* (1984) can be read as despairing accounts of contemporary Scotland. The Glasgow of *Lanark*, ‘Unthank’, reminds one of Edwin Muir’s description of Edinburgh in the 1930s as an ontological empty space, and the central protagonist of *1982, Janine*, the aptly named ‘Jock’ McLeish, is the representative of a Scot stifled by Thatcherite economics, conservative self-hatred and the mantra that Scotland is ‘a poor little country, always [has] been, always will be.’ However, there is unanimous agreement among critics and readers alike that Gray’s texts, in the words of Robert Crawford, ‘helped encourage a new cultural and even political confidence.’

Michael Gardiner sees *Lanark* as demonstrating ‘an encyclopedia of possibilities in which normal time and space restrictions are suspended’ and Carla Sassi reads the conclusion of *1982, Janine*, with its vision of Jock standing at a platform with a sense of both uncertainty and determination, as an optimistic image of both man and nation ready to ‘[come] to terms with [their] past mistakes and [shape their own] future.’

As part of this determination to imagine Scotland differently, Gray suggests that Scotland should look north towards what he believes to be the more socially democratic ethos of the Scandinavian countries. No doubt

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18 Gray 1984, 66.
19 Crawford 2007, 647.
20 Gardiner 2009, 183.
influenced by the despondent prospect of Thatcherism, 1982, Janine seems to suggest that Scotland, as part of the British political state, is in the wrong socio-political climate. Responding in his ‘Epilogue’ to his own character’s refrain that Scotland is ‘a poor little country,’ Gray states, ‘Though John McLeish is an invention of mine I disagree with him.’ Scotland, Gray argues, should model itself upon Scandinavian countries such as Denmark, Norway or Finland. The impression Gray gives is that Scotland has fallen from its place as a northern European or Nordic country and has been subsumed instead into what he believes to be the less social-democratic, more neo-liberal UK political agenda. ‘Our present ignorance and bad social organisation make most Scots poorer than most other north European countries,’ says Gray, ‘but even bad human states are not everlasting.’ This last statement that ‘bad states are not everlasting’ seems to appear in Why Scots Should Rule Scotland, a political pamphlet first published in 1992 and then again in 1997, as the promotion of Scotland being part of a Nordic Union, arguing, ‘with all their variety [Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland] share a basis of social welfare which Britain has abandoned or perhaps never reached.’

In the same year as Gray’s political pamphlet, Robert Alan Jamieson and Murray Wallace published Issue 98 of the Edinburgh Review under the title ‘more boreal’, a clear indication of the issue’s northern focus. Their ‘Editorial’, ‘More Boreali’, which, as I have already mentioned, has since been re-published to coincide with contemporary Scottish political events, argues that, post-devolution, ‘Scottish culture must “go into the north”, to fulfill the creative potential of its future as a northern European country in post-imperial Britain.’ In doing so, Jamieson and Wallace argue that new opportunities will arise alongside an ‘Alliance with “peripheral” neighbours around the rim of Europe.’ ‘Let Scotland’s future be a “north” …,’ they conclude. ‘By looking north that habitual south-eastern click in the Scottish neck clicks back into place.’

This Scandinavian dimension in the work of Gray, Jamieson and Wallace has been widely debated recently within Scottish political circuits. While Scotland is not, as yet, part of any Nordic Council or Union, Andrew Newby states, ‘Images of Nordic society, often idealized, have permeated political discourse in Scotland since the establishment of a devolved parliament in 1999.’ Indeed, as David Arter has highlighted in The Scottish Parliament: A Scandinavian-Style Assembly (2004), the Parliament itself has found

22 Gray 1984, 345.
25 Ibid, 8.
26 Newby 2009, 308.
influence in the deliberative inter-party legislative process of committees in Scandinavia. ‘[It] is reasonable to surmise,’ says Arter, ‘that several of [the parliament’s] members envisaged Scotland becoming a Scandinavian-style bargaining democracy.’ Finally, in 2010 the journalist Lesley Riddoch co-founded the think tank Nordic Horizons that holds regular meetings and public conferences about Scandinavia and how such debates can influence Scotland. The Scandinavian dimension in modern Scottish culture is therefore strong, as indicated in the attention it has generated in both the national and international media. As the Danish journalist Peter Stanners of The Copenhagen Post stated in 2011, commenting on the political aspect of this northern turn, ‘[Scotland’s] gaze may be starting to shift.’

But as the poet and critic David Wheatley states in a recent article entitled ‘Savouring Scandinavia off Scotland’ in The Irish Times, ‘Political arrangements come and go but geography is a more obstinate beast’. The above discussion has tried to outline a broader interest in Scandinavia in contemporary Scottish political culture. The second part of this paper, however, will analyse how the ‘obstinate beast’ of geography has been influential in facilitating more imaginative transnational articulations of the north in contemporary Scottish literature. While a northern peripheral perspective is not apparent in Gray’s work, it is a discernible element in the work of Elphinstone and Jamie and a central component in the work of De Luca and Jamieson.

II

As Rankin’s response to Lawson suggests, peripherality is an important aspect within Scottish and Scandinavian perspectives. The shift in the 1980s from an internalised discussion of ‘Scotland’ to a decentralised view of many Scotlands has created significant interest in the ability of the liminal space of the periphery to question and complicate any attempt to fix connotative national borders. As the editors of Beyond Scotland (2004) point out, Scottish literary criticism predicated ‘Scottishness’ ‘as a site of internalised contradiction.’ They go on:

While this conception has, when used discriminately, been a productive conceptual tool, it has also constrained Scottish criticism in its insistence on the idea of tradition defined by its internal oppositions... In his desire to be ‘ay whaur extremes meet,’ [Hugh] MacDiarmid did not anticipate
that the place of intersection might be as likely to occur on the periphery as at the centre.\textsuperscript{30}

In her chapter ‘The (B)order in Modern Scottish Literature’ in \textit{The Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature} (2009), Carla Sassi argues that the issue of borders, both internal and external, has been a noticeable factor in modern Scottish literature, and the subject of liminality, which has been given extra emphasis in relation to post-devolutionary criticism, is significant in its ability to question ‘the very concept of national (b)order.’\textsuperscript{31} Sassi has also remarked on recent interest in Scotland’s peripheral spaces: ‘Linguistic regionalism and de-centralisation are strong trends in Scotland today,’ Sassi notes in \textit{Why Scottish Literature Matters} (2005), turning, as I will also do later in this paper, to the work in modern Shetlandic of Jamieson and De Luca as significant examples of this.\textsuperscript{32}

The publication in 2011 of \textit{These Islands, We Sing: An Anthology of Scottish Islands Poetry}, edited by Kevin MacNeil, is testimony to such devolved interest in the peripheries. Furthermore, MacNeil goes on to talk about the importance of liminality in the perspectives of writing from and about the peripheries. ‘The edge is the point at which everything can change, and can do so quite completely,’ MacNeil explains. ‘As with trashing tide meeting solid land, the periphery is a place where opposites clash or converge, where creativity and danger are at their most alive.’\textsuperscript{33} Borders, frontiers, boundaries—these all become important aspects in the (de)construction of identity, for, as Michel Foucault articulates in \textit{The Order of Things} (1970):

‘their edges touch, their fringes intermingle, the extremity of the one also denotes the beginning of the other. In this way, movement, influences, passions, and properties, too, are communicated. So that in this hinge between two things a resemblance appears.’\textsuperscript{34}

It is with such a peripheral perspective that writers such as Elphinstone, Jamie, De Luca and Jamieson have expressed an alternative northern transnational discursive and imaginative space in contradistinction to the constructions and networks of more dominant cultural, political and economic hegemonies, whether domestic or global. As Craig explains:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30} Carruthers, Renfrew and Goldie 2004, 11.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Sassi 2009, 149.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Sassi 2005, 174.
\item \textsuperscript{33} MacNeil 2011, xxi.
\item \textsuperscript{34} Foucault 1970, 20.
\end{itemize}
‘We need ways of thinking about tradition which neither forces us to accept the concepts of dominant cultures … nor makes us simply a poor reflection of the same fundamental structures. We need a peripheral perspective that allows us to draw our own lines of filiation, within our own culture, between ourselves and the core cultures, but most important of all, between ourselves and other peripheral cultures.’

He reiterates this theory in his chapter ‘Centring on the Peripheries’ in Bjarne Thorup Thomsen’s edited book of essays *Centring on the Peripheries: Studies in Scandinavian, Scottish, Gaelic and Greenlandic Literature* (2007), a text that focuses on the ‘complex spaces of the Nordic world and Scotland.’ As Craig explains at the conclusion of his chapter:

‘To centre on the peripheries requires us to trace the ways in which the peripheries appropriate from each other the tools of cultural resistance, copy forms by which they can adapt to the pressures of outside forces, and remake the difference by which they can continue to live within their own value systems. To the historians and critics of the centre, these pathways will be invisible but their invisibility to the centre is the opportunity of the periphery to construct an alternative kind of history, a different kind of map of the ways in which the past has been shaped, and therefore of the ways the future might be shaped.’

In a recent conference organized by Nordic Horizons, ‘Possible Orkney’, the discussion centred around how the geographical position of the Orkneys could be used as a gateway into the Nordic world. Similarly, only 200 miles, as the raven flies, from Tórshavn in the Faroe Islands and Bergen in Norway, which is approximately the same distance between Lerwick and Inverness, the Shetland Isles, with their strong Scandinavian history and culture, and reaching out as they do into the North and Norwegian Seas, provides a space alongside Orkney and the north of Scotland where ‘fringes intermingle’ and where borders and notions of being, as we shall see, can undergo creative defamiliarisation. As David Wheatley writes about Shetland: ‘… as one clears the cliffs at Sumburgh Head to land on Shetland the Scandinavian ambience is unmistakable.’ Scotland and Scandinavia intermingle here via Shetland.

35 Craig 1996, 30; my emphasis.
36 Thomsen 2007, 9.
37 Craig 2007, 32.
38 Wheatley 2011; my emphasis.
This sense of defamiliarisation is also apparent in the poetry of De Luca. In her poem ‘Time Circles’ from *Wast wi da Valkyries* (1997), for example, two locales, one in Shetland and one in Denmark, are disrupted from any association with a singular geography and juxtaposed within the personal memory of the speaker creating a moment of instability and displacement: ‘Mirknen haps a rummelled broch on Houlland’s knowe, / rowes hit in a twilt o lavender: saft smoored as a Danish Hjøllund a year ago.’ 39 Similarly in her poem ‘Olympic Runes’, published in *Southlight Magazine* in 2011, Norwegian and Shetlandic landscapes intermingle in the mind of the speaker: ‘Climmin bi Fjellveien,’ the speaker begins, ‘bairns pass me, / Skis shoodered lik Olympic javelins.’ Although we are physically located in the poem near Fjellveien, Bergen, with the bay of Vågen visible in the distance, the speaker passes by ‘bairns’, which evokes a very Scottish situation. Not only does De Luca present to the reader a linguistic connection between the Scottish word ‘bairn’ and the Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish word for child, ‘barn’, the feeling of being in one physical place is defamiliarised by the intrusion of a distinctly Scottish dimension. This happens once more at the end of the poem when the speaker describes ‘… toon lichts … mirlin / apön da black fjord; or a Shetland voe?’ 40 The use of parataxis via the semi-colon juxtaposes two distinct elements as if they shared some kind of connection in the mind of the speaker. The dark Norwegian fjord of the speaker’s present location is here imaginatively if instantaneously uprooted from its geographical location and compared alongside a Shetlandic voe from the speaker’s personal memory. The description of this Norwegian landscape in De Luca’s Shetlandic register – both visually and audibly constructed as it is out of a strong Scottish and Scandinavian mixture – adds further to the creative derangement of Scottish and Scandinavian space. As Rachel Trousdale states in *Nabokov, Rushdie, and the Transnational Imagination* (2010), transnational writers will often try ‘to convey the compatibility of apparently disparate locations, which are linked by the author’s real-world experience as well as by fictional juxtapositions.’ 41

It is by adopting this peripheral perspective that several contemporary Scottish writers have begun to explore the possibilities of the north, bringing in the northern peripheries and creating, in Craig’s words, ‘a different kind of map’ of the past and the future. Their work envisions a transnational north wherein the north of Scotland becomes part of an inclusive northern mindscape and discursive space. By devolving attention to the northern peripheries, Scotland is able, in Crawford’s words, ‘to consider [its] position in the world’

40 De Luca 2011, 7.
41 Trousdale 2010, 19.
as well as bring about a broader ‘sense of being part of an international community’. Before going on to analyze this aspect in the work of De Luca and Jamieson, I will conclude this segment of my paper by highlighting how this northern perspective has found imaginative expression in the work of Elphinstone and Jamie.

Following in the footsteps of George Mackay Brown’s Nordic fiction, Elphinstone has been active in directing imaginative engagement northwards. In her chapter ‘Some Fictions of Scandinavian Scotland’ in *Scotland in Europe* (2006), Elphinstone states, ‘For many writers in Scotland … Scandinavia is an aspect of past history and present significance, which to overlook would leave Scottish literature the poorer.’ She takes this idea further by suggesting that engagement with Scandinavian history and literature by Scottish authors connects these places transnationally:

‘Scottish novels set in the Norse past shift constructions of Scotland a little to the north. They insist that we review Scotland on the map: no longer positioned in the extreme north, as maps of Britain would suggest, Scotland becomes one of a network of far flung islands linked together by seaways, so they become a cohesive cultural, if no longer political, hegemony.’

Like Brown, who interspersed his own metaphysical and ecological philosophy of ‘silence’ throughout the worlds and words of the Norse sagas, especially *Orkneyinga Saga*, Elphinstone builds her own imaginative narrative through her engagement with the tales and histories of the Norse sagas in her novels *Islanders* (1994) and *The Sea Road* (2000). Her first Norse novel, *Islanders*, presents the reader with a significant change in perspective from the more traditionally masculine representations and expectations of the Norse world. As Simon Hall states,

‘Violence is minimal, erupting and passing quickly without much comment, there is no central blood-feud, there are no battles, and the lawsuits result in peaceful resolutions as opposed to the bloodshed we might expect in saga proper. There are lengthy and detailed descriptions of characters’ inner-feelings and a large amount of space is devoted to the

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43 Elphinstone 2006, 105.
44 Ibid, 110.
45 Brown’s notion of ‘silence’ can be very generally described as a blending of the structures of Catholic myth with the processes of agricultural, ecological and human cycles of life, death and rebirth. Lack of space deters me from speaking of this aspect of his work in more depth.
lyrical evocation of natural surroundings. Female characters command as much of the narrative as male characters, and there are gay characters. All this is a far cry from anything written in thirteenth-century Iceland.‘46

The politics, heroism and violent masculinity of the traditional Viking world as represented in the sagas touch only marginally on the daily lives and struggles of the small community of Fridarey (Fair Isle). Instead we follow the story of a teenage girl, Astrid, who has been shipwrecked on the island en route to Noreg (Norway) from Dyflin (Dublin). The peripherality and isolation of Astrid’s new surroundings is analogous to her own marginal position within the community. Within this historical narrative, however, we follow a more modern and universal theme of female struggle against male patriarchy as Astrid endeavours to assert her own autonomy in a world where male guardians make decisions and life choices on her behalf. Once again, Hall summarises Elphinstone’s proto-feminist revision of traditional saga expectations:

‘Part of what the novel seeks to do is create a fleshed-out narrative for marginalised female characters from the landscape and period of Orkneyinga Saga. Islanders redresses the imbalance by choosing as its central character a damaged young woman, and dwelling on themes – such as the inner lives, the struggle against oppression, and the sexuality of the women of Fridarey – the like of which would never have occurred to the original saga authors, or their male translators and imitators in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.’47

It is a feminist revision that is also apparent in her second Norse novel The Sea Road. As Elphinstone states at the beginning of her book, ‘The characters and events in this novel are chiefly based on the accounts found in Eirik’s Saga, Graenlendinga Saga and Eyrbyggja Saga.’48 But within these tales Elphinstone weaves her own narrative of Gudrid, a fiercely independent and somewhat iconoclastic Icelandic woman and the relation of her journey to Vinland. ‘I attempted to emulate [saga writing],’ Elphinstone says, ‘so far as was compatible with a twentieth century novel that also required the central character and first person narrator, Gudrid, to give expression to her emotions and inner life.’49

46 Hall 2009, 166-7.
49 Elphinestone 2006, 115.
As well as a shift in perspective in terms of traditional representations of the social dynamics of the Norse world, Elphinstone’s novels attempt to alter the traditional geographical perspective of the reader by centring on the northern peripheries. This is best exemplified with the 180-degree reversal of the map of the British Isles and the continent at the start of Islanders that centres instead on the north of Scotland and Scandinavia. As Hall states, ‘This map identifies the northern territory and at the same times indicates that we will be expected to look at it differently, suggesting the altered perspective that is such an important preoccupation of the text.’

This desire to engage the reader’s mind with the transnational space of the north is a central preoccupation of all of the writers discussed in this paper. ‘North is a mythic place,’ Elphinstone claims; ‘for post-Romantic writers it is the place where Frankenstein’s monster disappeared, ... something dangerous, uncanny, and Other.’ For Jamieson and Wallace, ‘The myth of the empty north, synthesised in the southern soul, is now widespread.’ In De Luca’s poem ‘Airbourne Over Orkney’ from Voes and Sounds (1995) the Orkney Isles seem strange, silent and mythical, as if untouched by any form of consciousness. They are ‘skins of ancient monsters’ that ‘sleep deeply, unstirring.’ The editor of the fictional A History of Zetland in Jamieson’s novel Da Haapie Laand (2010), the Reverend Archibald Nicol, who writes from the ‘Heart of Scotland’ in Perth, is upfront about his ignorance of Scotland’s north, admitting that he is more knowledgeable about theological mythologies than ‘the boreal peaks of my native land.’ However, ‘venturing imaginatively there [Nicol] came upon a land such as [he] had never glimpsed even in moments of reverie.’ As he states later on:

‘I have said that I but recently came to this knowledge of Zetland, and it is true that until a matter of some eight months ago I neither understood its geographical position, the extent of the country, nor its strategic nature. I realise that my early perusal of maps had not aided this, as the archipelago rarely appeared in its true position or comparable scale in such documents, presumably as it spoiled the composition of the frame, being simply too far north and too far east to fit neatly.’

Through imaginative engagement with this geographical realisation, the Reverend’s map changes and necessitates the acknowledgement as to how

50 Hall 2009, 163.
51 Elphinstone 2006, 116.
54 Jamieson 2010, 19; my emphasis.
55 ibid, 64.
Shetland, once seen as ‘too far north and too far east,’ can broaden Scotland’s sense of spatial awareness and representation alongside other northern countries: ‘I had not realised either that [Shetland] shared latitude with Bergen and Oslo, with Stockholm and Helsinki, with St Petersburg – indeed, the southern tip of Greenland.’\textsuperscript{56} As De Luca argues in her poem ‘Nae Easy Mizzer’ from \textit{North End of Eden} (2010), which comments on the cartographic anomaly identified by Nicol, ‘Shetland [should not] be banished tae a box / i da Moray Firt or left oot aa tagidder.’ Instead, Craig’s ‘peripheral perspective’ should be adopted. ‘Peripheral has new meanin,’ De Luca tells us; Shetland should be made ‘centre stage.’ By centring on the peripheries, Scotland’s geographical imagination is extended northwards into a wider Nordic network: ‘A polar projection changes foo we figure oot / Wir world.’\textsuperscript{57}

Such a change of perspective is what is at the heart of Jamie’s most recent publication \textit{Sightlines} (2012). Within this book of essays, Jamie brings a new perspective to things both familiar and strange, including notions of geographical awareness. As one professor tells her while she studies cancerous cells through a microscope, ‘The thing is, you perceive what you expect, what you’re accustomed to. Sometimes it needs a fresh eye, or a looser mind …’\textsuperscript{58}

This is why Jamie recounts having her geographical imagination extended northwards while watching the northern lights off the coast of Greenland:

‘“What brings me? I don’t rightly know. But for thirty years I’ve been sitting on clifftops, looking at horizons. From Orkney, Shetland, St. Kilda …?”

“Suddenly I wanted to change my map. Something had played itself out. Something was changing.”\textsuperscript{59}

‘You are placed in a landscape, you are placed in time,’ Jamie muses. ‘But, within that, there’s a bit of room for manoeuvre.’\textsuperscript{60} The fact that the north recurs in Jamie’s writing – Iceland, Greenland, Norway, the Hebrides, the Northern Isles, and so forth – shows how Jamie is another contemporary Scottish writer looking to engage with the transnational possibilities of the north, albeit more in terms of an engagement with the north as a space and natural environment than any cultural association. Any idea of wilderness or remoteness associated with these spaces is soon removed with the employment of a peripheral perspective: ‘… I soon came to distrust any starry-eyed notions

\textsuperscript{56} ibid, 64.
\textsuperscript{57} De Luca 2010b, 19.
\textsuperscript{58} Jamie 2012, 35.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid, 16.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid, 71.
of “wild” or “remote.” Remote from what? London? But what was London?\(^6\)
Elphinstone and Jamie are therefore two writers who have been central to this imaginative northern perspective in Scottish literature. I will now finally turn to a greater analysis of this transnational northern aspect in the poetry of the Shetlandic writers Jamieson and De Luca.

III

I will begin an analysis of Jamieson’s and De Luca’s poetry with a discussion of their use of modern Shetlandic. The language question in Scottish literature is centuries old. Writing in vernacular in Scotland is, as Cairns Craig argues in *The Modern Scottish Novel* (1999), ‘one of the foundations of the philosophical orientation of Scottish fiction.’\(^6\) Both the use of Scots as a means of national identification and the purging of ‘Scoticisms’ was a major issue in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the fallout between Hugh MacDiarmid and Edwin Muir over the use of Scots in the first half of the twentieth century has been widely discussed. As Fiona Stafford has argued, the inheritors of this debate in the latter half of the twentieth century felt an anxiety of influence as they tried to negotiate an expression of patriotic loyalty and linguistic confidence through the use of Scots as well as achieve a greater sense of creative expression. But just as the 1980s saw a critical turn towards a celebration of Scotland’s cultural plurality, so to, Stafford argues, did Scotland’s linguistic diversity start to be seen as a means of creative strength rather than a subject for anxiety. As Stafford states, younger poets have approached the language question from a perspective that ‘has been chary of absolute choices and tending instead towards more exploratory, interrogative, ironic or wittily tangential approaches.’\(^6\)

Modern Shetlandic is, as Jamieson describes it, ‘a fascinating fusion of Norse/Scots/English with a subtle strain of the ‘Hollander’ who had been for three hundred years the key trading partner.’\(^6\) While modern Shetlandic can be referred to in terms of an Insular Scots dialect, it is better to view Jamieson’s and De Luca’s use of this vernacular, as Jamieson himself proposes, as an ‘idiolect’ due to evident variations in spelling and pronunciation unique to each poet. Both Jamieson and De Luca have spoken about their poetry in Shetlandic as a means of regional identification as well as an attempt to show its creative potential. For De Luca, the main concern with writing in Shetlandic is

\(^6\) Ibid, 143.
\(^6\) Craig 1999, 98.
\(^6\) Stafford 2012, 233.
\(^6\) Marsack 2006, 10-11.
a means of ‘helping hold back the monoglot tide [and] helping raise the status of the dialect.’ While Jamieson is also concerned with ‘[proving] Shetlandic is as capable as any tongue of making poetry,’ he also views it as a source of poetic expression, ‘taking Ezra pound’s exhortation to ‘make it new’, or the Russian Formalists’ shout about the same time to ‘make it strange’, as [his] poet’s motto.’

Starting out as a poet, De Luca felt that writing in dialect was somehow parochial and that to express more universal subjects meant writing in English. ‘I wrote in Shetlandic when the location or theme of the poem seemed to fit,’ De Luca says; ‘and everything else I wrote in English.’ This ‘personal linguistic barrier’, as De Luca calls it, is reminiscent of the anxiety identified by Stafford. An important change in De Luca’s confidence in writing in Shetlandic seems to have occurred alongside the momentum of devolution in Scotland. As De Luca states, ‘The proportion of poems in Shetlandic in my first three collections, published within Shetland, increased from 30% (1994) to 44% (1997) to 47% (2002). Then in 2005 Luath Press in Edinburgh published Parallel Worlds – it had 64% of the poems in Shetlandic, 70% if one counted the actual pages.’ As De Luca states:

‘So I have switched completely in terms of language balance since I first started writing, with two thirds now being in Shetlandic rather than in English. There was no plan on my part, just a growing confidence over the years in offering poems in Shetlandic beyond the shores of the northern isles and not being hidebound or restrictive in the ideas or themes I might tackle in dialect.’

Of more importance to this paper, however, is how the use of Shetlandic has been a means of creating a transnational discursive space in the north. Drawing as it does from Shetland’s Scandinavian linguistic heritage as well as from Scots and English, modern Shetlandic, as De Luca states, ‘pushes the limit of the concept of the dialect.’ Their writing in Shetlandic is not done in isolation; it has the ability to be understood and appreciated outside of Shetland also. The strong Scottish element within the vernacular will be identifiable and understandable to those who have read dialect poetry from the Scottish mainland, and both poets also provide Standard English keys for broader comprehension. De Luca also writes poetry in English, which appears

65 De Luca 2010a, 116.
66 Jamieson 2005, 9, 3.
68 Ibid, 110.
alongside poems in Shetlandic that have an English glossary. Jamieson goes so far in his poetry collection *Nort Atlantik Drift* (2007) to translate his poems in Shetlandic into English. But the Scandinavian dimension within modern Shetlandic via the use of Old Norn words also facilitates a linguistic link with the Nordic countries. The ‘interference,’ as De Luca describes it, of Norn, Scots and English in Shetlandic provides the opportunity of writing poetry that is simultaneously regional, national and transnational. This was another major factor in De Luca’s growing confidence in writing in Shetlandic. As she points out:

‘I think that the later, but equally critical, influence on my perceptions about language in my poems was having interest taken, specifically in my dialect poems, by foreign poets, frequently Nordic writers, and their warm-hearted translation of them and finding that I could render their poems into Shetlandic with little recourse to English. This respect shown for our dialect by other European writers had a big influence on my linguistic confidence.’

She goes on: ‘Given that they all spoke fluent English they frequently remarked that they found more difference between Shetlandic and Standard English than between some of the other Nordic languages which are interrelated. It was as if they had discovered a long-lost half-brother or cousin.’

De Luca shows various examples of this, such as her translation of the Norwegian poet Thor Sørheim’s lines ‘smake calde, søte bær / etter ei natt med frost’ from his poem ‘Lufing’ into Shetlandic: ‘taste caald sweet berries / eftir a nicht o frost.’

Both writers have, therefore, been active in projects designed to bring together poets’ works from around the northern European peripheries and have them translated into the languages of each locality. As Salman Rushdie states in *Imaginary Homelands* (1992), ‘It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling, obstinately, to the notion that something can also be gained.’

De Luca and Jamieson are, in Rushdie’s eyes (and if you will pardon the gender bias), ‘translated men’: their work has crossed oceans and frontiers; they have translated the work of various writers from various nationalities (especially northern Europe) and have similarly had their own work translated into various languages. The act of translation itself, as Paola

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70 Ibid, 110.
71 Ibid, 110.
72 Ibid, 112.
Zaccaria points out, carries an inherent transnational process: it can be ‘read as a practice of transformation and crossing, composition and recomposition between texts and cultures.’

Scottish vernacular literature oftentimes fails to be read outside of Scotland by the sheer untranslatability of its content. Discussing this aspect in the work of Irvine Welsh, for example, Katherine Ashley states, ‘Welsh’s voice, which is aggressively, sometimes uncompromisingly, Scottish, is precisely what cannot be conveyed in translation.’ What makes modern Shetlandic interesting in terms of the issue of translation is that it is by its very etymological and historical construction a vernacular that carries familiarity with other northern nations as well as the Scottish mainland. It is this aspect of Shetlandic that has brought together various projects concerned with building a transnational linguistic community among countries situated in the northern peripheries as a means of countering the homogenising forces of market-orientated globalisation as well as the traditional pull of the cultural centres of Europe.

One such collaboration was part of a wider workshop initiated by Literature Across Frontiers involving several writers and the subsequent publication of *All Points North: Shetland, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Latvia* by the Scottish Poetry Library in 2006. Similar to Craig’s ‘peripheral perspective’, the aim of the book, as the director of the Scottish Poetry Library, Robyn Marsack states, is ‘to promote literatures written in small and minority languages, encourage translation between them and develop closer links between practitioners working with these languages.’ Furthermore, this project seems to be an attempt to place Scotland, via Shetland, into a more northern European mindscape. As Barrie Tullet states of the design of the text: ‘Visually this was intended to reflect the views of the Shetland coastline. The shore, the hills, the sea are all replaced by the texts.’ What this does, both visually and imaginatively, is to have the Shetland Isles constructed linguistically around the various dialects and languages of the northern European peripheries, therefore locating the Shetland Isles into an identifiable transnational northern culture. In its experimentality, Jamieson believes the poems will leave ‘a deeper sense of connectivity between these northern places in the minds of participants and audience.’ This has been reciprocated in such Scandinavian publications as Håkan Anderson’s *Landskapets lycka* (2004) and Adalsteinn Ásberg Sigurdsson’s Icelandic translations of contemporary

74 Zaccaria 2006, 57.
75 Ashley 2010, 113.
76 Marsack 2006, 8-9.
77 Ibid, 8-9.
Shetlandic poetry in *Hjaltlandsljóð* (2012). What this does it to incorporate the northern peripheries into a wider transnational linguistic and imaginative community. As De Luca poetizes in ‘Celebrate in Wirds’ from *Parallel Worlds* (2005), words can ‘oppen wir een ta newness [and] mak space fur wis’.79

A good example of this desire to ‘mak space’ and engage transnationally and one that echoes Craig’s desire for the peripheries to ‘appropriate from each other the tools of cultural resistance’ is De Luca’s poem ‘Ice Floe On-line’ from *Parallel Worlds*:

‘We scrit wir wirks ta mak connection
wi laands whaar eence dey wir a link;
dan send dem dirlin alang meridians
tae aa erts arround wir virtual wirld.

Eence uncans cam bi oar or sail:
a land sea circle vaege, da wirks
maist likely faered. Wir wirks birl
aff a satellites an starns; loup and tirr,

crackle lik mirry-dancers i da lift.
We set dem sheeksin owre Arctic distances
ta gently rummel Babel’s To’er, an bigg
instead a hoose ta hadd wir difference.’80

De Luca here appropriates for her own use a product of globalisation, the Internet, a medium that can be seen as a means of facilitating cultural homogenisation centred around cultures with the greatest economic power, and uses it instead to ‘mak connection’ with Scandinavia. As Craig states:

‘Accepting the peripheral, maintaining the peripheral, communicating from periphery to periphery – these imply the possibility of a space from which it is possible to critique and resist the obliterating effects of international capitalism.’81

Having these Shetlandic words symbolically ‘birl’, ‘loup and tirr’ through the standardised binary of satellite communication has a subversive edge to it, much like the chaotic music of starlings in Edwin Morgan’s ‘The
Starlings in George Square’. The placement of such words into the matrix of a homogenising system of communication and business can be seen to disrupt the official routes and allocations of globalisation in order to ‘mak connection / wi laands whaar eence dey wir a link.’ As Morgan states, ‘There is something to be said for these joyous messengers / that we repel in our indignant orderliness.’

As the title of his collection Nort Atlantik Drift suggests, the idea of ‘mak[ing] space’ is also central to Jamieson’s work. As he states in his poem ‘Atlantis’, Shetland is ‘A laand wie waatir fir a boarder.’ Borders are therefore not fixed but mutable and encourage broader movement and connection. This is most evident in Jamieson’s poem ‘Bottlit’. In this poem we follow a boy’s desire for his ‘Hæie’s chinchir koardjil’ to drift ‘Fæ dis laandfaa … / oot ta Riekjaviek ir Tromsø, / t’Heligolaand ir Tor’s Havn.’ While the poem ends on a humorous note as the bottle only ends up reaching Eshaness, ‘dat ungkin laand akross da sie’, the fact that the speaker’s imagination is transported around the northern peripheries is significant of the larger transnational aspect I have been discussing. By having the Hay’s cordial bottle – a recognizable symbol, perhaps, representing a wider Scottish culture, as ‘Hay’s of Aberdeen, makers and purveyors of soft drinks, were famed throughout the north of Scotland’ – move imaginatively around the north demonstrates the intent of having Scotland inscribe itself, via Shetland, into a northern space alongside its Scandinavian neighbours.

At the conclusion of Electric Brae (1992), a novel replete with devolutionary political and cultural themes, Andrew Grieg has Jimmy Renilson finally scale in symbolic triumph The Old Man of Hoy in Orkney. Once at the top, ‘[Renilson] stands up straight and looks to the south. On a better day you can see Scotland clear.’ While Grieg looks to the south in an attempt to ‘see Scotland clear’ and make sense of the country during a period of great uncertainty, the writers discussed in this article, writing in a post-devolutionary era, have looked to the north and east in an attempt to articulate its transnational possibilities. In doing so, they have articulated an alternative northern imaginative and discursive space that counters the greater impact of globalisation and pull of core cultures. Through an imaginative engagement with the geography, culture, history and linguistic possibilities of Scotland’s north and Northern Isles, these writers are in the process of changing Scotland’s map northwards into an awareness of being part of a broader transnational northern community.

82 Morgan 2000, 28.
84 Ibid, 36.
85 Ibid, 35.
86 Grieg 1992, 312; my emphasis.
It is a perspective that can influence not just the north of Scotland but the way the whole of Scotland imagines itself. Once labelled ‘The Athens of the North,’ Edinburgh could with such a switch in perspective consider itself instead, as the character Archie suggests in Tom Stoppard’s play *Jumpers* (1972), ‘the Reykjavik of the South’, albeit devoid of the adverse connotation originally intended by the playwright.87

**Bibliography**


87 Stoppard 1972, 69.


THE history of the Scottish diaspora in Poland-Lithuania during the early modern period is an extremely interesting, yet only partially researched, issue. Although one can trace a number of works, mainly articles on local Scottish communities in Poland and different aspects of their activities, scattered throughout various journals and collected volumes, there has been to date no study dealing with the subject on a more general scale from a longer chronological perspective. Peter Paul Bajer’s attempt to provide his readers with such a work has resulted in an impressive volume of nearly 600 pages. Although there is no doubt that he spared no effort to deliver, and in some areas succeeds marvellously in doing so, there are points at which this success is only partial.

The book consists of a short introduction, seven chapters, a conclusion, 15 appendices and a bibliography. There is also a glossary which is very useful for non-Polish readers. The first chapter appropriately presents an overview of primary sources and previous research on the Scottish diaspora in Poland-Lithuania during the early modern period. The subsequent chapters cover the reasons for the Scots’ decisions to migrate and settle in Poland-Lithuania (ch.2), the scale and chronology of this phenomenon (ch.3), as well as the motives, social make-up, and activities of the diaspora (ch.4). Chapter 5 focusses on the life of the Scottish migrants, that is, their position in society, financial status and organisations, while chapter 6 deals with the role of
the Kirk and interactions between Scottish Protestants and people of other confessions. Finally, chapter seven discusses the fascinating question of some Scots’ inclusion into the Polish-Lithuanian noble elite.

The research integrates material from many sources, including an impressive range of manuscripts preserved in Polish, Lithuanian, German, Ukrainian, Russian and even Irish collections. Bajer also uses the latest literature by both Polish and foreign authors extensively. There is, however, a striking lack of German secondary sources, which is a serious drawback considering the fact that there was a significant number of Britons (including Scots) in Danzig and Ducal Prussia and their presence has been documented and analysed by authors writing in German, most recently by Almut Hillebrand.

When it comes to the book’s contents, there is no doubt that Bajer has presented very plausible arguments for recognising that the number of Scots in Poland-Lithuania was lower that has been claimed in the past. According to his assessment, the number should be estimated at 5000 to 7000 individuals, reaching its peak in the late 16th-early 17th century. This is not a completely new discovery, as the fact that the Scottish diaspora was in fact much smaller than argued by some early-modern sources (with estimates between 30,000 and 50,000 people), has already been put forward by some historians. Nonetheless, Bajer deserves acclaim for his meticulous analysis of the sources which made it possible to support this thesis with solid statistical data as well as his editorial work on the Subsidy of 1651 (Appendix I) and compilation of lists of Scottish names appearing in various records (Appendices II-XI), British officers in Polish service, and Scottish families included into the Polish nobility (Appendices XIII-XV).

He also included in his research the hitherto neglected issue of the role of women in the diaspora. He clearly proves that they were not only more numerous than previously believed, but also much more involved and active in the life of the Scottish communities.

While the sections in which he analyses municipal and Church records or tries to trace the origins of the migrants are nothing but first-rate, there are some parts which, in spite of all indications that the author had worked equally hard on them, are clearly below his usual standard. This can be illustrated by the section of chapter four focusing on diplomats and agents. Bajer, as he informs his readers, puts together ‘diplomats, envoys, negotiators, factors, agents, financiers and businessmen’, but does not explain how he defines the differences between those groups or what criteria he uses for placing a person into any one of them. This results in a confusing mix-up, where individuals who had never held any official diplomatic position are described as ‘British ambassador in Warsaw’ (Sir Robert Steward, p.169) or Englishmen appearing
as Elizabethan or Stuart diplomats being mentioned in a way that suggests they were actually Scottish (such as John Rogers, John Denham). Nothing is said either about the post-1603 changes in the Stuart diplomatic service and foreign policy, which were crucial for the question of the Scots presence in the British diplomatic corps, not only in Poland-Lithuania, but also in northern Europe in general.

There are also some clear mistakes. For example, there is no proof that Henry Lyall remained in the post of ambassador in Poland-Lithuania ‘for the next five years’ after he had received the nomination for ambassador extraordinary in 1604 (p.166). Similarly, Sir Patrick Gordon of Braco never was ‘James’s envoy in Gdansk 1635, [where he] played a vital role in the peace mediation that eventually led to the Stolbova treaty’ (p.169), as by then he had already returned to Scotland (he had left his position as a Stuart diplomatic agent in the mid 1620s and was replaced by his nephew Francis). Furthermore, he definitely could not have been involved in the Stolbova mediation as James VI/I’s representative in the mid 1630s, as the treaty was signed in 1617 and the king died in 1625. Similar problems can be pointed out when analysing the appendix listing British diplomats in Poland-Lithuania (Appendix XII, pp. 458-61).

This may lead to the observation that the book’s main problem is its broad scope; if the author had decided to focus, for example, on one main group of migrants, such as merchants, and treat the others in a more general way, he would still have been able to present arguments supporting his main theses and write a very good book. At the same time, it would have been much easier to avoid mistakes such as those mentioned above, which clearly result not from lack of knowledge, but from the difficulties that arise when dealing with such a mass of information and sources. The same can be said about the impressive, almost 50-page-long bibliography, where Bajer lists many publications and dissertations that were actually never cited in his book. At the same time, there is at least one case concerning the late Professor Teresa Zielinska, in which he attributes the author’s works to somebody else. Consequently, one is tempted to conclude that in some cases, more does not necessarily means better.

In spite of these shortcomings, the publication of Scots in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth is good news. Bajer has provided his fellow historians with a massive dose of information and new sources that will be appreciated by current and future researchers of Scottish-Polish relations in the early modern period, and that is something he should definitely be thanked for.

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THE Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs have, until this publication, been synonymous with James Marwick’s edited collection from the 19th century. While extensive, there are crucial missing years from those volumes which MacDonald and Verschuur have admirably endeavoured to fill. Trawling the repositories of the National Library of Scotland, the National Archives of Scotland and Aberdeen City Archives, the editors have successfully plugged some of the gaps, including the year 1555 and several years between 1631 and 1648. The volume is well indexed, allowing specific searches for countries, individuals and commodities and is easily comparable to the previous volumes of Marwick. The lengthy editorial conventions section also allow a simple comparison and understanding of the different records used, for example by explaining that records from Aberdeen City Archives and the National Library use folio numbers, while the records from Burntisland held at the National Archives of Scotland use page numbers. Footnotes also assist the reader by explaining uncommon words and phrases as well as providing links to other regulatory bodies where relevant.

It is almost disappointing that these ‘missing’ records reveal that the Convention continued as it always had done, even during the tumultuous 1640s, something that the editors themselves comment upon in the introduction. Further the lack of records from the 1640s is also slightly disenchanting and one is left cursing the survival of documentation from dozens of peaceful years while the records of the ‘troubles’ have yet to and may never come to light. That said, the information provided retains value; indeed, the evidence that the Convention continued as normal during these years has in a sense put paid to one of the last ‘what ifs’ in Convention history. While the activities
of the Scottish Parliament, General Assembly and Privy Council during these years were all well known, those of the Convention were not and the present volume does fill some of the gaps.

While the endeavours of the editors to provide new insight into the actions of the Convention are to be applauded, the introduction to the volume is not without problems. To begin with, there is confusion between the term ‘factor’ and the office of ‘Conservator’. The editors discuss the attempts of the Convention to ‘establish and oversee factors in France to monitor and facilitate Scottish trade as was the policy at Veere’ (p. 21). However, as well-known scholarship by Professor Steve Murdoch et al. has shown, factors and the Conservator at Veere were different roles and not interchangeable. Factors, or as the editors correctly identify, facilitators of trade, were present all over Europe for merchants of all nationalities. They were essentially middle-men for traders. The Scottish Conservator at Veere was far more than this – he was a merchant-consul extraordinaire, who was permitted to adjudicate in judicial matters involving Scottish merchants. In short, the Conservator was far more powerful and influential than any ordinary factor.

Moreover, a lack of referencing is also an issue. The introduction acknowledges that Scottish merchants traded with France, Germany, England, Ireland and Scandinavia without acknowledging the majority of the scholarly work which has investigated these topics. While Siobhan Talbott’s research has been acknowledged, it merely tips a nod to her thesis for historiographical purposes and does not acknowledge the serious research that she herself has undertaken in regard to Scottish privileges in France. Also missing is reference to Steve Murdoch’s work on Scandinavia (2006) or France (2007) or indeed the work on similar subjects covering the Netherlands by Douglas Catterall (2002) or northwest Germany by Kathrin Zickermann (2009). One wonders why one relevant scholar is brought into view while others with equally important things to say on the subject are omitted.

These introductory issues aside, this volume, along with Marwick’s, is essential to those investigating the activities of the Convention throughout its influential period of the 16th and 17th centuries. The editors are to be congratulated on completing the arduous task of locating, transcribing and editing this edition. It is the hope of this reviewer that they will be equally successful in locating similar documents relating to this important institution and that the Scottish Historical Society will be pleased to publish such findings in the future.

Claire McLoughlin
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TO historians of the Thirty Years’ War, understanding the relationship between Sweden and its erstwhile ally Brandenburg is absolutely essential, and, to date, the war period pre-1635 has received the most attention from scholars. This is unsurprising given that competition for Pomerania placed the two states on a collision course and would to a large extent define their relationship throughout the conflict. However, what most historians do not acknowledge, and what Riches demonstrates most capably in this account, is that the relationship lasted the course of the 17th century, and that actions during the Thirty Years’ War – although a particularly strained episode – were in fact just the continuation of policy that had been active for a number of years prior (p.121).

Riches does this through the lens of ‘new diplomatic history’, that is to say, ‘the investigation of foreign relations and diplomatic practice via the insights of social, intellectual and cultural history, as well as engagement with social scientific and literary theory’ (p.4). This incorporates individuals and their social and belief systems into diplomatic activity, and therefore analyses this activity on a more nuanced level than that achieved by previous studies, which focus on official state activities. Indeed, whilst Riches still recognises the importance of the more ‘traditional issues of how and why countries related to one another as they did’, and this takes its place in the study, the core of his argument is that an individualistic element worked alongside, and often in spite of, the officially sanctioned diplomatic line (p.6). As such, he argues that diplomatic activity was conducted by a number of ‘protestant cosmopolitans’ (defined as individuals with a world-view simultaneously
political, intellectual, and religious [p.9]), who conducted foreign relations on both an official and unofficial level between Brandenburg and Sweden for more than one hundred years. This is done through five chapters which for the most part proceed chronologically to keep in line with the advance of historical events, with the exception of chapter three, which takes a more detailed look at the diplomatic activity behind the wedding of Gustav II Adolf to Maria Eleonora and the proposed wedding between Queen Kristina and Elector Wilhelm Friedrich. In these chapters he carefully highlights the main players on both sides who conducted diplomatic activity, such as Samuel von Winterfeld and Christoph von Götze on behalf of Brandenburg, and Johan Adler Salvius and Gustav Horn for the Swedes.

Such an analysis, of course, enlightens the processes behind diplomatic actions and that diplomatic actors often had their own personal agenda that did not always represent the view of the state. One example of this was the meeting between Kurt von Pfuel and Gustav Adolf in the winter of 1631 (p.134-35). Brandenburg’s official line was primarily that it did not want to turn Pomerania into a battleground. Sweden, meanwhile, wanted Brandenburg to cast aside its neutrality in favour of declaring war against Emperor Ferdinand II and to enter into a Protestant alliance with the Swedes. Von Pfuel, although officially supporting the Brandenburgian line, wished that Brandenburg would take a more active role in the war and expressed his regrets to this effect to the king, but was still nonetheless forced to take the official passive line. Indeed, as Riches also demonstrates, Brandenburg’s more active participation on Sweden’s behalf in the war can be linked with the rise of the ‘Swedish’ party (von Pfuel, von Götze, Samuel von Winterfeld, and Sebastian Stripe [p.117]) in Brandenburg, and their subsequent fall (and the equivalent rise of Catholic advisor Count Adam von Schwarzenburg) can be linked to Brandenburg’s entrance into the Peace of Prague (1635) and the issue of the Advocatorial Edict in 1636 (p.126). When negotiations for peace between the two re-initiated in the 1640s, it was these individuals who would help to restore the relationship to what it once was, and who were a known quantity to State Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna and the Swedish government (p.127). What Riches shows quite capably is the ability of Brandenburg/Swedish relations to survive such points of obvious crisis, and it was not until the very nature of diplomatic dealings themselves changed that relations deteriorated completely (p.287).

Whilst there is little doubt that this book provides an exciting and important insight into a diplomatic world that was controlled both by individuals and the state, he is not the first person to encompass this dual-sided angle into new diplomatic history as he states (p.6), and indeed earlier
studies have been done in this field in the same ‘Northern World’ series in which the present volume is published. Alexia Grosjean’s *An Unofficial Alliance: Scotland and Sweden, 1569-1654* (NW6, Leiden, Brill, 2003) investigates the Scotto-Swedish relationship during the same period that Riches covers and is of particular value to readers of Northern Studies. Sweden and Scotland did not have an official alliance per se (nor did Brandenburg and Sweden until the 1650s), and yet the Swedish Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna expressed the importance of the Scottish relationship in the Swedish riksråd in 1640 (Grosjean, p.177). Indeed, the relationship Grosjean discovered is somewhat mirrored by the Brandenburg-Swedish one in that it was conducted by a number of individuals who often furthered the interest of both countries. Alexander Leslie, Earl of Leven, was of course a prime example. Leslie was an army officer who eventually reached the rank of Field Marshal in January 1636 and was one of a number of Scots to enjoy successful careers in the Swedish ranks. Whilst it is worth remembering that Grosjean’s study was primarily a military and naval one, diplomatic activity was of course conducted by military officers as well. Riches does not acknowledge the full potential of this military dimension even though the rather encompassing spectre of the Thirty Years’ War looms large for a significant part of the period under investigation. This became especially significant when the interests of Brandenburg soldiers and Swedish authorities diverged after the death of Field Marshal Johan Banér, and the foreign soldiery in the Swedish army rose up against their senior officers. Major General Adam Pfuel, brother to Kurt von Pfuel and half-brother to Gustav II Adolf, was one of the protagonists in this drama, and the relationship between Pfuel and Oxenstierna would remain strained. The fact that a senior officer in the Swedish army was of Brandenburgian descent, at a point in time where Brandenburg was officially allied to the Emperor and was actually attempting to undermine the Swedish war effort, is more than a little fascinating and it is important to incorporate this into our understanding of the ‘personal’ diplomatic relationship between the two states.

Thus, Riches’ tome is an incredibly significant addition to the ‘new diplomatic history’ and even diplomatic history as a whole. Surprisingly few books acknowledge the highly personalised nature of 17th-century diplomacy, and in doing so this book shows how these personal relationships could not only have an effect but also be successful in spite of official diplomacy. Without understanding this dimension, a key part of how the process works is lost, and thus Riches enhances our knowledge of a relationship that was to some extent defined by such activity. Indeed it was not until the end of the 17th century that, as the nature of diplomacy became more constricted, the relationship finally broke down. It is this reviewer’s hope that more
17th-century relationships will now be reassessed in the same fashion to enlighten our knowledge of how diplomacy functioned during this period.

Björn Nordgren
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THE volume entitled *The North Atlantic Frontier of Medieval Europe, Vikings and Celts* (2009) is a collection of articles originally published between 1893 and 2004. This book constitutes the third volume in the series *The Expansion of Latin Europe, 1000-1500*, edited by James Muldoon and Felipe Fernández-Armesto. This series, which will eventually contain fourteen volumes, covers large and important areas of the medieval history of Europe, from the spread of Latin Christendom to Islamic expansionism and the effects of the Mongol Empire. An overall theme is frontiers, and this volume concerns the western frontier of Europe, that of the North Atlantic, mainly focussing on Britain and Ireland. The book contains a comprehensive introduction by volume editor James Muldoon, followed by nineteen chapters that have been organised into six thematic parts, providing the book with a clear chronological framework, starting in the 9th century and stretching to the late 15th century. In Part One, the settlement and rule of the Vikings in Ireland, England and Greenland is discussed; in Part Two, the emphasis is instead placed on the extension of English power into the Celtic areas of Britain and the justifications presented for this enterprise, issues which are considered in more depth in Part Three. In Parts Four and Five, the attention is shifted slightly as these sections deal with the English domination of Ireland. In Part Four, the actual expansion into Ireland is treated while, in Part Five, the next phase, that of governing medieval Ireland, is considered. The sixth and final part contains just one article, investigating the possibility that the English ‘discovered’ America in the late 15th century.

The articles are consistently of high standard, and one of the great benefits of this book is that it provides valuable insights into scholarly discussions.
covering a large geographical area and a rather long time period, while at
the same time, due to the strict focus of the volume, explaining important
processes and events in the complex history of Britain and Ireland. This book
is therefore useful to scholars and students alike, although the great variation
in the original publication dates of the articles means that they are of course
reflecting differing views and eras of thinking. This is counterbalanced
by the Introduction, where each chapter is placed in its wider context and
more recent views are also presented. The great chronological spread does
nevertheless mean that the book at first sight seems disjointed. As soon as one
starts reading, however, it is clear that this is a false impression. The articles
have been selected with such care that the reader very quickly gains a clear
overview of issues relating to expansion, kingship and politics in medieval
Britain and Ireland. The book therefore provides an excellent starting point
for research into this part of history.

Despite the title of the volume, an area that is less well covered is the Norse
settlement in the North Atlantic, as two of the three articles on the Viking Age
concentrate on England (Laurence M. Larson, 1910) and Ireland (Jean I. Young,
1950). The only chapter that deals with the wider North Atlantic is Christian
Keller’s excellent article on Greenland (1990). One would have wished for at
least one more chapter here, focussing on the settlement of Iceland, the Faroe
Islands, or the Scottish islands. The problem with the current selection is that
the Greenland case is very specific and is not therefore representative of the
other Norse settlements in the North Atlantic. This problem is indeed reflected
in the Introduction where it is stated that in the long run the ‘Viking advance
into the Atlantic had little significance’ and the islands are described as having
‘harsh climates’, ‘difficult terrain for agriculturists’ and ‘little in the way of
merchandise for trade’ (p. xvii). All these statements are of course relative,
but it must be made clear that they cannot be applied across all the different
island groups. Indeed, in comparison to parts of the Viking homelands in
Scandinavia, even the Icelandic climate could be seen as rather mild, and,
in terms of agriculture Orkney especially provided very good opportunities.
Moreover, the potential for trade in fish and woollen cloth, in particular, was
most significantly demonstrated by the trade known to have taken place from
the late Middle Ages to the early Modern Period.

There are, however, many fascinating topics that are subject to discussion
in this volume. Among the most interesting aspects are the three articles in Part
Three, The Conquest of Britain, discussing English expansionism in different
areas of Britain and also emphasising the complicated and ever-changing
relationship between ‘the Celts’ and the English/Anglo-Normans. This can be
illustrated by an example from the article by Michael Brown (2004) where it is
argued that, although there was no Norman conquest of Scotland, by the late 13th century the Kingdom of Scotland was gradually being ‘Normanised’, gaining a political structure that resembled those of stronger European kingdoms. Brown shows how the Scottish kings in this way came into conflict with Celtic tribes on the borders of their realm. The other two chapters in Part Three, by R. R. Davies (1979) and J. G. Edwards (1956), provide detailed understandings of the problems experienced by the Anglo-Normans in their attempts to secure power over the Celtic population in Wales.

On the whole, this volume will most certainly prove popular with many readers, as it brings together key texts, produced over a long period of time, examining kingdom formation in the North Atlantic area, covering not just conflict, but also the reality of politics and the imposition of law into newly settled areas.

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