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# Editorial

Despite the obstacles to research in universities imposed by circumstances since 2020, the articles in the present volume provide ample evidence of steady development in the field of Scottish ethnology. Contributions are from younger as well as more mature scholars and are wide-ranging geographically and chronologically. Considerable range and diversity is also evident in the subject matter: international representation of Scottish traditions; their impacts on world literature; vernacular song composition; emigrant traditions; the contribution of sound archives to genre description; and evidence for early cultural Gaelic-Scots contacts in traditional narrative.

From the late eighteenth century, Scotland's cultures from Macpherson's *Ossian* to Lowland ballads and European travellers' accounts have attracted wide international interest. One notable result had been wider representations during the latter half of the nineteenth century at events where 'Scottish arts and industries had already been regularly exhibited at international exhibitions overseas'. Christina Baird, in her study focussing on the Scottish contribution to the Vienna World Exhibition/*Weltausstellung* Wien, 1873, explores the scope, diversity and success of Scottish arts and industries as presented at this and previous exhibitions. Also situated within a wide cultural context is Karen Bek-Pedersen's study of the witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, called 'wayward sisters' and their relation to 'weird' sisters of Scottish tradition.

The Gaelic traditions of Scotland from the perspectives of song, tales and society are prominently featured in the present issue. Ronald Black provides a detailed and informed discussion of the history and development of the fundamental Gaelic song collection *Sàr Obair nam Bàrd Gàidhealach* and the life and background of its compiler John MacKenzie. The songs of a bard featured in MacKenzie's collected work, Rob Donn MacKay from Sutherland, are the focus of a study by Ellen Beard providing a welcome perspective on long-standing questions regarding processes of vernacular Gaelic song composition, with due reference to airs. The value of sound archives in informing song classification is highlighted in Meg Hyland's work on the Gaelic song tradition of female herring gutters, making effective use of archived field recordings, and a new genre of Gaelic song is proposed from the evidence. In the area of traditional narrative, using a comparative approach drawing on written and oral sources amassed over four centuries, Emily Lyle and John Shaw examine the likely origins of a passage in the 16<sup>th</sup> century work by Gavin Douglas, *The Palice of Honour*, which, when placed within its Scots and Pan-Gaelic storytelling contexts, suggests the early existence of the international tale 'Henny-Penny' in Scotland. Further afield, the focus of Alasdair Roberts' work is on the society and religion of Highland settlers, Catholic and Presbyterian, in eastern Nova Scotia during the most active period of immigration, and the enduring friendship between the Bard MacLean and Fr Colin Grant, crossing traditional sectarian boundaries and 'reflecting a period of shared Gaelic culture when clergy were in short supply'.

In keeping with the editorial policy initiated in its tribute to the late Gaelic ethnologist John MacInnes (vol. 37), *Scottish Studies* continues to encourage the submission of articles in Scottish Gaelic.

Following the publication of the present volume (39) of *Scottish Studies*, Dr Virginia Blankenhorn will become the new editor of the journal. Dr Blankenhorn, a long-time contributor, edited *Craobh nan Ubhal*, the bilingual Festschrift for the late John MacInnes that appeared as vol. 37 in 2018