Harvesting near Bettyhill.

THE STRATHNAVER CLEARANCES IN MODERN SCOTTISH FICTION: HISTORY, LITERARY PERCEPTION & MEMORY

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BACKGROUND

Of the many novels which have evoked the Clearances period, the most widely cited and analysed are those which could be labelled the 'Strathnaver novels'. *Butcher's Broom* by Neil M. Gunn (1934), *And the Cock Crew* by Fionn MacColla (published in 1945 but started a decade earlier) and *Consider the Lilies* by Iain Crichton Smith (1968) all use the evictions implemented in Strathnaver by the Sutherland Estate in 1814 as the factual reference of their narratives.

The shadow of the Sutherland clearances looms large in Clearances 'records', whether in terms of scale, extensiveness, swiftness or the density of writing that they provoked. From Strathnaver, hundreds of families were removed in various stages between 1807 and 1822 (see Bangor-Jones, this volume),[1] but the 1814 evictions in particular provide the writer of fiction with ample material for dramatisation. They are steeped in controversy, notably with allegations of violence fuelled by the trial for arson and culpable homicide of the factor, Patrick Sellar, and his subsequent acquittal in 1816. That the name of Patrick Sellar and the 'Year of the Burnings' now rank high in Clearances demonology owes much to the retrospective and searing denunciation of a local and often quoted witness, Donald Macleod, but also to the nature of the evidence collected in Sutherland by the Napier Commission.[2] Beyond such testimonies based on recollection, the human dimension has left but little trace in contemporary documents, so that 'the human details must perforce reside mainly in the historical or literary imagination'.[3]

As a process, the Clearances in historical narratives have been inserted in analyses of agrarian revolution or economic change:[4] if the concept of a revolution is now phased out,[5] the period of the Clearances is still one marking the transformation of the Highlands, be it in terms of class formation, land use, ecology, demography or culture. The semantics of historical discourse on the period are laden with expressions connoting change or new birth.[6] Whatever the nature of the object of the analysis or the theoretical framework favoured, the Clearances clearly belong to those phases of the history of a place regarded as formative. Of those events, the philosopher Paul Ricoeur, in a study of the inter-twining of history and fiction, says that:

> they draw their specific significance from their power to foster or reinforce the sense of identity of a community, its narrative identity as well as the identity of its members. Those events generate feelings of considerable ethic intensity – in the register of fervent commemoration, or execration, indignation, lament, compassion or even call for forgiveness. The historian, as such, is supposed to refrain from those feelings ... .

Later on he turns to the power of fiction, which he sees as creating an illusion of 'being'. 'Fiction gives the horrified narrator eyes, eyes to see and weep'.[7]

Indignation and outrage were the prime movers for such 19th-century polemical writers as Donald MacLeod, David Stewart of Garth or Alexander Mackenzie[8] – feelings shared this century by the popular historians, John Prebble and Ian Grimble. The treatment of the latters' work alongside a mention of historical fiction – Gunn and Smith – in Eric Richards's historiographical survey, points towards the existence of a fuzzy area where the notional boundary between history and fiction becomes unstable. History can bear the traits of fiction in its elaboration, readers' appeal and impact. This interchangeable quality surfaced in 1934 in the review of Gunn's *Butcher's Broom* by Edwin Muir: 'all the part of the book which deals with the actual clearances is both historically exact and intensely moving'.[9] If F.R. Hart entitles his literary presentation of the three Strathnaver novels 'the tragedy of the Clearances',[10] 'historical imagination' has appropriated from literary tradition this referential category and the events which affected the Highlands in the 19th century have been defined as 'tragic' by some socio-economic historians, although in substance their work may well abstain from ethical judgment.[11] At those intermittent crossroads between fiction and history emerges the essence of the image of the Clearances in popular representations: a social tragedy and a moral scandal.[12]

The purpose of this study is to examine the three Strathnaver novels in their role as signifiers of aspects of Highland identity, and to bring to light the different facets which intermingle in what are considered fictional representations of the Clearances. Hence the study will leave aside discussions of the notion of historical novel or historicity of the novels' content, but will, on the one hand, give pride of place to the nature of the image of the Clearances reconstructed, and on the other, to the process of appropriation of the Clearances by novelists as a text which can be read and explained in different ways and with different aims.

THE IMAGE OF THE CLEARANCES IN LITERATURE

The Strathnaver clearances have much to offer a fictional writer, but none of these three novels can be reduced to straightforward accounts of the clearances in Sutherland; and in the label 'clearances novels' lies the danger of simplifying the authors' aims and ironing out the variety between the narratives.

In Gunn's words, 'there is little of the clearances in *Butcher's Broom*. The tragedy is the destruction of a way of life, and the book is more about what is destroyed.'[13] Hence, central to the novel is the changing life of the Riasgan – a small Highland township – and its community before, during and after the evictions. *And the Cock Crew* and *Consider the Lilies*, by contrast, both have smaller casts. *And the Cock Crew* explores the spiritual dilemma of a minister whose congregation is faced with the prospect of eviction – are the clearances the mark of divine judgment as his fellow ministers assert, or are they the mark of landlord oppression and tyranny? *Consider The Lilies* presents the psychological study of a religious old woman, Mrs Scott, about to be evicted by Patrick Sellar. If the clearances filter through the narrative by means of identifiable images for *And the Cock Crew* and *Consider the Lilies*, in *Butcher's Broom* they give the novel its narrative structure. But through those three novels echoes, with remarkable coherence, a string of clearances motifs which can be grouped in three categories: themes, thematic imagery and characters.

Themes

Defining both time and setting, life before the evictions is contrasted to a life of poverty and near starvation in resettlement areas; a sense of loss and decline pervades such evocations. Yet 'former days' are not simply idealised in frozen pictures of perfect bliss; the vulnerability of the Highlanders' conditions of living, at times verging on destitution, is not toned down. Hence the 'golden age' of the community is encapsulated in the security of a glen, the perennial nature of a life following nature's seasonal rhythms and the reassuring intimacy of a close-knit and cohesive social group – the very representation of an order, a society and a culture.

Made powerful by the evocation of an old order is the major theme of betrayal which runs through each narrative. The people are betrayed both by their former chief, whose wish it is to turn the land they occupy into more lucrative sheep-runs, and by their venal religious leaders who terrorise them into acceptance through threatening visions of hell-fire. Although the double betrayal epitomised by the collusion of church and estate leaders is present in each novel, it is paramount in *And the Cock Crew* where betrayal is also manifold; it has infiltrated the community through one of its members, Lachlan, and is at the heart of the moral predicament of the minister, Maighstir Sachairi.

What places these three novels squarely under the umbrella terms of 'clearances novels' is the threat of evictions hanging over the three stories and, for *Butcher's Broom* and *And the Cock Crew*, actual scenes of evictions inserted in the main story lines. Both Gunn and MacColla resorted to a similar range of lurid details – terror of those evicted, wanton cruelty and violence, drunkenness of the evicting parties – to conjure up visions of horror and apocalypse.[14]

Thematic Imagery

In the three novels, the theme of eviction is explicitly equated with destruction, and more concretely with the use of fire and the burning of houses. Fire and related images also function at another level of meaning as they interconnect with visions of hell and hell-fire, thereby imposing on the Clearances process and its agents a reading not only dramatic but also inherently condemnatory.

Uniformly in the three novels the 'evil' of the policy or its perpetrators is intimated. In *Butcher's Broom* it is all-pervasive, starting with the factor's name changed to 'Heller', and maintained through a network of motifs where sheep carry infernal connotations. *And the Cock Crew* has the factor, Byars, 'a devil's servant', on many occasions identified with satanic forces. The association with evil in *Consider the Lilies* also crystallises in the character of the factor-evictor Patrick Sellar, described in a Gaelic poem quoted to him as 'roasting in hell like a herring'.[15] Such religious images of hell achieve their full impact in *Butcher's Broom* and *And the Cock Crew*, in eviction scenes where flames and fire rage.

But underneath these symbolic parallels lies the ambivalence of religious motifs which are at the core of interpretations of the Clearances. It is ironically exploited by all three novelists, although to varying degrees. If evictions represent figuratively hell on earth, they are also presented in the mouths of those of the ministers who connived at the schemes as God's punishment on the inhabitants for their sins; factors therefore become the human expression of God's will, and any resistance to their acts and decisions is deemed sinful or even 'satanic'. Critical distance consistently saturates such dogmatic positions in the novels but, in *And the Cock Crew*, the ambivalence of the vision constitutes the kernel of the narrative, fully explored by the novelist who centres on the crisis tormenting the conscience of the truly dedicated Sachairi.

Sheep are another aspect of the imagery of the novels which offer a variety of associations. At a literal level in the context of the Strathnaver Clearances, sheep replace men in the glens and are the mark of a basic change in land exploitation. In its religious sense, the image provides another reading which is often inverted – explicitly in *Butcher's Broom* and more implicitly in *And the Cock Crew* and *Consider the Lilies* – thereby giving an ironic commentary on the process envisaged. The ministers act as guides to their human 'flock', yet by their frightening sermons, they have turned them into 'sheep' who meekly bow to the move imposed on them, and it is like 'sheep' that the inhabitants stream out of the glens to the coasts to make room for their animal counterparts. Underpinning the image is a scathing assessment of the force of Calvinism.

Finally, though distinctive in terms of characterisation and point of view, the three novels display a similar range of characters epitomising specific values and ideas. This aspect of the narrative brings to light one of the greatest difficulties faced by novelists who choose to tackle, even as a

backdrop, an historical event such as the Clearances: how to 'realise comprehensiveness in time, place and culture and still manage the novelist's focus on individual lives and relationships'.[16] Of the three novels, *Butcher's Broom* is the only one to present a wide-angle view of the situation, including substantial segments focusing on the 'improvers' and their ethos – landlords and estate managers. The function and importance of the characters represented are always subordinated in the end to the thematic purpose of the novelist, and they are most eloquent when reduced to a single idea or dogmatic position.

Factors are amongst such characters. They are unanimously portrayed with extreme disparagement, verging in the case of *And the Cock Crew* on caricature. Responsible for the practicality of the evictions, they range from the calculating and devious Patrick Sellar in *Consider the Lilies*; through the more complex Heller who stands for improvement and materialism, but also wanton destruction in the eviction scene of *Butcher's Broom*; and on to the oversimplified Byars in *And the Cock Crew*, whose cruelty and hatred of the Gaels borders on sadism.

The same range of nuances applies to religious characters and to what could be best defined as 'clearances victims'. However secondary or underdeveloped ministers or elders may be, they personify the same idea: the repressive role of the church. This pervades all three novels and is not only demonstrated through the ministers' acting as the corrupt lackeys of estate management – with the obvious exception of MacColla's Sachairi – but most of all through the impact of their creed on Gaelic culture and spirit. Although 'clearances victims' are not always among the main characters, they are all depicted as powerless before the law, desperately trying to save their few possessions. Standing prominent amongst those victims are female figures, old women like Mrs Scott or Dark Mairi in *Butcher's Broom*. Other characters embody the distressing experience of expulsion and are recurring features in the novels;[17] the repetition of such illustrations of the worst human consequences of the evictions in Clearances writing, both contemporary and modern, have virtually created archetypes whose fictional representations both re-create and strengthen.

Images of the Clearances: Some Initial Conclusions

Such then is the texture of the representation of the Strathnaver Clearances in fiction. Several points may be stressed as a preliminary conclusion .

What heightens the significance and amplitude of the motifs outlined is their repetition and consistency – their unity. Such unity endows this vision with a symbolic weight which has turned the grim features of the Strathnaver evictions into 'clearances paradigms', frequently introduced as part of indictments on the process. And indeed, underpinning the three narratives is a common moral assessment of the policy – an indictment of its aims, implementation and results. Feelings of such 'ethic intensity' as described by

Paul Ricoeur suffuse and impel the narratives, and reviewers were quick to point them out, along with their impact. Of *Butcher's Broom*, it was said that parts of the novel were difficult to read 'simply because of the strength of the anger and indignation they develop [in the reader] at this terrible betrayal of the Highland people',[18] while *And the Cock Crew* aroused a 'feeling of profound pity bring[ing] out the tragedy and inhumanity of the clearances'.[19] The novels' emphasis is on a vision of the Sutherland Clearances as a piece of social engineering, stimulated by the attraction of quick profit and disregarding the painful human consequences that such a mass expulsion entailed. This approach meant that novelists engaged with some of the most contentious issues in the historiography of the events: namely the question of greed as the prime motive behind clearances, the brutality of the methods used during eviction – in particular the use of fire – and the process as a fall from a timeless peasant golden age.[20] In the end, analyses of causation pale into insignificance, and what is retained is the practical and human impact of the change.

Twentieth-century fiction around the Clearances no doubt helps to perpetuate such images, which the very process of re-telling also reinforces. These two characteristics – retrospection and reiteration – make 20th-century fiction a legitimising vehicle which contributes to shaping the narrative identity of the Highlands, and eventually bolsters the place of the Clearances as a central landmark in the region's chronology. Yet initially essential in constructing and sustaining the memory of the Clearances, were those contemporary accounts which form the constituting origins of later narratives. Looking at the sources consulted by novelists, a few loom large. Amongst those, Donald MacLeod's *Gloomy Memories* and Alexander Mackenzie's *History of the Highland Clearances* are the most obvious. Polemical in style and purpose,[21] their tone and standpoint percolate through the three Strathnaver novels, perhaps most obviously in *Consider the Lilies* where Donald MacLeod is a major character. Of course, the time of writing conditioned the range and type of material available to novelists, and in the 1930s, research on the period had not witnessed the development it was to see after the second World War. Studies of the Clearances by economic historians for instance were embryonic. In the preface to *Consider the Lilies*, Smith refers those of his readers interested in the historical background of the clearances to the work of Ian Grimble and John Prebble, while Gunn 'waded through every last word that the Sutherland had had written for him anent his burning ploy to make sure [he] even had his side of the story'.[22] In the end, no matter the range of material sifted, the authors' own predilections and priorities gave the narratives their particular emphases: a focus on the plight of the peasantry and a critique of improvers. The process of selecting sources itself is a telling indicator of the novelists' ideological position, but more eloquent still are the narratives themselves.

It is, therefore, essential to consider the use of the Clearances as part of wider discourses on the Highlands and their history, and to examine their insertion in 'commentaries' from the authors. This will bring to light the

different values attached to, and the use made of, the process in the three narratives, and implies a study of each novel in relation to its cultural and socio-political context.

IDEOLOGY AND THE NOVELS

In terms of the novels' dialectical content, they all hinge on antithetical oppositions, epitomised by central characters or groups.

In *Butcher's Broom*, tradition and humanism are opposed to improvement or 'Progress', and are given material form by setting the Riasgan community against the improvers; in *And the Cock Crew* the theological vision of the Highland situation is defended by Maighstir Sachairi against Fearchar the poet's historico-political understanding. *Consider the Lilies* functions on several levels of opposition: on the one hand the Calvinistic dogmatism of Mrs Scott is contrasted to and conquered by Donald MacLeod's free thinking; on the other, whilst Patrick Sellar sees the clearances as one aspect of the inexorable movement of history and of the progress of civilisation, Donald MacLeod's main concern is for the human beings uprooted.

Butcher's Broom and *And the Cock Crew* were cited by Kurt Wittig in 1958 as illustrations of 'a new attitude towards the Clearances' approached 'as the buried root of contemporary Highland difficulties, and as the immediate cause of the crofting problem ... . History is here regarded as the matrix of the present.'[23] The crofting problem, or more widely the Highland problem, was no new concept; but long-standing social and economic malaise tightened its grip around the region in the late 1920s and 1930s, exacerbated by more widespread economic crisis. The situation of the Highlands became a focus of interest and research for economists, politicians and intellectuals alike. In 1938 the Hilleary Report was produced, two years after the establishment of the Scottish Economic Committee; it made a series of recommendations to boost the economy of the crofting areas and create employment. At about the same time, research on the Highland problem was carried out individually by the economist Adam Collier and the ecologist Frank Fraser Darling, in an attempt to assess the circumstances of the region and their origins, and to examine its future prospects.[24] The outcome of their work appeared in both cases in the early 1950s; Collier's *The Crofting Problem* was posthumously published in 1953, and Fraser Darling's *West Highland Survey* in 1955. Both set a high premium on cultural and human values, and on an anthropological approach to the Highland problem. Evaluating the Highland 'problem', Adam Collier asserts that it 'really arises out of a clash of social philosophies'[25] and Fraser Darling that it:

> has continued to deepen through periods of increasing differences between the simple social culture and primitive agriculture of the Highlands and Islands on the one hand, and the highly urbanised, commercial civilisation of the rest of Great Britain on the other.[26]

Considered from the angle of a dominant culture imposing its socio-economic values on a more confined, albeit deeply-rooted and resistant one, the Clearances come to represent the paradigmatic example of such cultural infiltration.

A similar note was struck by nationalist activists who commented on the Highlands in the inter-war years, although with a different agenda in mind.[27] Among them was Gunn, whose involvement in the nationalist movement peaked then.[28] He had joined the National Party of Scotland in 1929 at a mass meeting in Inverness, and had become a co-founder of the local branch. In 1932 he was elected to the National Council of the Party and this involvement with party administration was to last until 1942, when he decided to devote his time and effort to his literary career; his contribution to the nationalist ideal would, henceforth, be through his writings. In an article in 1939 he suggested a direct link between the plethora of inquiries examining Scottish conditions and 'the re-awakened interest in self-government'.[29]

Butcher's Broom

It would be a bold step, nonetheless, to leap from this type of statement and impose on *Butcher's Broom* a nationalist layer of meaning which the narrative might not sustain. What the novel does attempt to render and celebrate is a Gaelic spirit, culture and vision of the world which Gunn identifies with the Highlands: the Clearances are deplored as one link in the chain of cultural subjection which eroded such cultural integrity and strength. Extracts from articles written in the early 1930s may be read in parallel with, and shed light on the author's perception of the Highlands, the place of the Clearances in the region's history, as well as the conception of the novel. He defined the Clearances as:

> ... the era throughout the whole of the Highlands of the creation of the large sheep farm, and of the dispossession of the people, frequently by means so ruthless and brutal that they may not bear retelling easily, and always with a sorrow and hopelessness that finally broke the Gaelic spirit. What the disaster of 1745 and the penal enactments of 1747 began, the clearances finished.[30]

The cultural dimension is even more explicitly stated in an earlier article where he argues that 'the language, tradition and nurture of the Gael' were 'interfered with from outside'.[31] The idea of the outsiders' lack of empathy with a different way of life and values, of their pre-conceptions leading to the production of distorted and derogatory images – Gaels' laziness and squalor – is echoed in *Butcher's Broom*, which is constructed around the opposition of 'insider versus outsider'.

The sense of tragedy surrounding the little community of the Riasgan springs from the clash between two visions of the Highlands which the novelist chose to convey through changes in the focus of narration, letting

the reader into the thoughts of a large number of characters. For instance, although Mr Heller's mental world is explored, not least when he meets the Staffords at their home in London, the author's sympathy clearly does not lie with the improvers; it emerges through ironic distance, or more explicitly through narratorial interventions taking the form of quasi-didactic sections where, for short interludes, the story gives precedence to ideological, political and philosophical 'commentaries'.[32] The clash between two mind-sets is exposed both at the level of the story itself and through the narrator's own words. How then is it defined?:

> For the cleavage between the desires of the people and the desires of the landlords was fundamental and could never be bridged. On the people's part there was love of the land ... (*Broom* p. 267)[33]

At the core of the cleavage is the value of land, since what prevails for the landlord is its financial value. The stark terms of this opposition, money versus love, conceal the socio-cultural significance of the land which the novel contains. 'Love of the land' for the Riasgan community is not limited to a strong sense of place; it encompasses traditional social structures revolving around loyalty and kinship – implicit agreements and beliefs which constitute the basis of their way of life and have shaped their perception of their environment and society.

More specifically, those conflicting perceptions are expressed through a series of antithetical expectations and notional points of reference which give rise to the acute sense of betrayal experienced by the dispossessed. For the Riasgan, 'the land and all it contains is the common heritage' (*Broom* p. 71), 'fought for, increased and held' by the clansmen (*Broom* p. 213), while for the Stafford family and the estate managers, their relationship to the land is envisaged in terms of single ownership. The semantics of 'possession' dominate their discourse, as does the word 'law'. But the law which governs the Riasgan – oral, based on trust and largely around military enrollment – is a non-existent concept in the improvers' legal world, where law is written. The legal justification of the evictions is, therefore, as alien to the Riasgan Highlanders as the inalienable rights they claim are to the improvers. As a result, the concept of poaching is not part of their mental structure: 'So ancient had been their gaming rights, that no new laws or restrictions in favour of landlord or lessee could ever convict them in their own minds of poaching' (*Broom* p. 66). Here, the element of time – or rather timelessness, where tradition defies the passing of time – is the axis of their communal references and at the same time legitimises their claim in their own eyes. 'Immemorial', 'age-old' or 'ancient' qualify indifferently traditional rights and activities, songs and stories or the Gaelic language – a common cultural heritage. It is also applied to the concept of race – Gaelic race. Notions of purity of race percolate through the novel, and are suggestive of some of the racial ideas associated with the Highlands by nationalist Celticists in the inter-war period.[34]

The Gaelic race, timelessness, sense of place and the notion of a golden

age coalesce into the vision of a community in harmony with its environment and with a rich past and a 'proud history'. This picture is in no way one of 'primitivism'. Of the Countess, the tacksman and his wife say:

> ... And she's of our blood. She was brought up in the Lowlands and in England. She lives in England. They were at the court of France. She – she hasn't it in her.' (*Broom* p. 214)

Interesting undertones of the corrupting nature of the outside world are perceptible here – an outside 'civilised' world. 'It' is defined by opposition to both the Lowlands and England. It is constructed around the antithesis 'insider versus outsider' and connotes a sense of belonging. The reader, invited inside the Riasgan community, discovers a social group where cohesion, generosity, resilience, honesty and a rich oral tradition are all-pervasive qualities – a deeply humanistic people. Yet in the eyes of the estate managers, the people fit the assumptions of laziness, ignorance and sloth, all validating a need for change. The contrast thus created is extreme, and the improvers impose on the Gaels a reading which the narrative inherently refutes as it does the ideology of Improvement – or Progress.

As championed by Heller, 'Progress' encompasses more than purely agricultural aims; it also includes reforming the Gaels – their way of life, language and working habits – following values from the south. 'The greatness of the schemes' for Heller, lies in 'improving the estate and introducing civilisation into the Highlands; essentially a work of sanitation!' (*Broom* p. 302). 'Civilisation' and 'sanitation', in the eviction scene of Part Three, take the shape of frenzied destruction and inhumanity. The process of land rationalisation, spurred on by industrial transformation, urbanisation and the impact of the Napoleonic Wars – the economic rationale behind the Clearances – which Lord Stafford expounds, is similarly reduced to ruthless calculation and absence of human considerations. The narrative itself, therefore, produces its own reversal of the concept of 'civilisation'.

The ideology of improvement has disastrous consequences on the community's living conditions and, beyond material loss, it deals a damaging blow at the core of the community which, broken-spirited and its cohesion gone, drifts into depression and fatalism. The Riasgan is shown as annihilated by the distant forces of 'political power', mastered by the estate management and wielded at the level of 'much humbler affairs' (*Broom* p. 264-5). The novel contains an attack on those political forces which sanction such a culturally destructive process as the Clearances, and on those individuals and institutions which partake in the course of action.

> But while Mr Heller – and his name may be taken to represent (or shield) superiors and underlings – was driving on his clear-sighted course, the great bulk of his victims were dumb in the grip of their Church, their chief, and his law. (*Broom* p. 268)

Power in the narrative is, at one point in Heller's thoughts, identified with England, but the novel does not rail against English imperialism; what the

author decries most of all is the cultural and human cost on small communities of the pressures of a remote power system.

In its assessment of the past, the novel stands as a commentary on the situation of the Highlands at the time of its writing, and as an analysis of the reasons for their condition. The topic was one to which Gunn kept returning in essays and articles, particularly in the 1930s, with descriptions of the depressed state of the Highland economy: depopulation, abandoned crofts, dying fishing villages. The novel mirrors the author's assessment of the role of tourism in the region – an economic prop which he fears might prove more harmful than redeeming:

> The Highlands, of course, may yet become a popular tourist playground dependent on tourists and nothing else. After sheep, deer; and after deer, tourists. It is the ascending order of our age of progress. For those who know the deep humanism of a past age, there will be regret at the gradual passing of the human stock that was bred of it.[35]

Gunn's fiction was also a means of exploring his contemporary Scotland – an aim which he shared with many Scottish writers of the Literary Renaissance such as Lewis Grassic Gibbon[36] or Fionn MacColla. Whereas in *Butcher's Broom*, Gunn's political views are muted, in *And the Cock Crew*, MacColla's ideological reading of the Clearances and of Scottish history are central to the novel.

And the Cock Crew

When *And the Cock Crew* was first published, MacColla was praised in a short review for 'introducing political argument into his tale without leaving the suggestion that it has been forced in.'[37] If the main thrust of the novel is an illustration or, more to the point, an indictment of the effects of Calvinism on the Gaels, their culture and spirit, the key which unlocks the author's political reading of the Clearances is to be found in chapter seven where Maighstir Sachairi confronts Fearchar, the poet, in a powerful ideological duel. The words of the poet project the nationalist colour of the author's own vision of Scotland's past, as what is to befall the community of Strath Meadhonach is, in Fearchar's interpretation, only one aspect of the much wider scheme of English imperialism. MacColla's autobiographical works offer as many clues to the author's own assessment of Scottish religious life, politics and culture as they bear fruit for an understanding of the religious and political lines developed in the novel.

The bulk of MacColla's writings reveal a man outspoken in his opinions and putting his eloquence and vigour of expression to the service and defence of his own convictions. His autobiography mirrors the strength of his religious and political commitment and beliefs. Born into a family of Plymouth Brethren, he rejected their creed and later on in life became a Roman Catholic. Fascinated by Gaelic culture, he taught himself Gaelic. He

had bitter recollections of the many years he spent teaching in the Highlands and the Western Isles, abhorring a role which he describes as 'simply the de-Gaelicisation' and 'Anglicisation' of local Gaelic-speaking children.[38] 'To kill a culture ... in essence is what I was expected to do.'[39] He relentlessly launched caustic all-out attacks on such themes as the effects – past and present – of Scotland's loss of independence, the influence of the presentation of history in a people's self-perception and perception of their past, and the role of the reformation and the reformers – those 'cult-figures' or 'gnyaffs' of whom he says:

> ... if it had not been for them and their infernal 'work', Scotland would be a flourishing autonomous, culturally brilliant nation to-day.[40]

Those words encapsulate the nature of MacColla's highly individualistic brand of Scottish Nationalism. Calvinism here is equated with cultural destruction and eventual loss of independence.

In *And the Cock Crew*, the focus on the agonising self-questioning of Maighstir Sachairi eclipses polemical and pungent religious harangues found elsewhere in MacColla's fiction. Nevertheless, the author's religious views do filter through the characterisation of two ministers, Maighstir Iain and Maighstir Tormod, both frightening their congregations into submission in return for promises of land and manse, and most importantly through their and Maighstir Sachairi's position and power within those communities. Whatever their personal stand as regards evictions, what is made most significant is the effects of their role as guides not only for matters spiritual but practical and secular too – paramount in the context of impending expulsion. Hence the hub of MacColla's religious argument goes further than the controversial involvement of the Church at the time of the Clearances, and encompasses the much broader aspect of the nature of Calvinistic creed in the Highlands. The debilitating effect of Calvinistic teaching emerges in the people's attitudes to evictions, in the poet's own isolation and in the thoughts of Maighstir Sachairi. Underlying the carefully-constructed scenario is a contrast between life before the advent of Calvinistic doctrine – symbolised by the coming of Maighstir Sachairi twenty years previously and Fearchar's subsequent loss of status as leader – and the time of the narrative.

The opening chapter of the novel sets the tone, presenting a people totally 'defenceless' and fatalistic in the extreme. Their former strength and courage are repeatedly set against their god-fearing attitude, sapping their will. Meekness of spirit, passivity, but also annihilation of a rich folk culture are the attributes of this life-denying religion which, in the person of Maighstir Schairi, has deprived the community of its poet and also of its tradition of music, singing, dancing and story-telling. Calvinism in the novel, therefore, equates to cultural iconoclasm. Meanwhile, the Clearances themselves are seen as part and parcel of a process of assimilation and inserted into a political argument which finds its roots in MacColla's vision of Scotland and her past – his nationalism.

MacColla's tendency to use characters in some of his novels[41] as 'neither fully realised individuals nor representatives, but embodiments of ideas, attitudes or historical experiences [he] wishes to explore',[42] applies also to *And the Cock Crew* in the form of Byars and Fearchar; the factor is simply reduced to a quasi-genocidal hatred of the Gaels, while Fearchar provides the novel's political commentary and acts as the author's mouthpiece. When, in chapter seven, Maighstir Sachairi's strictly theological perspective of the impending events and their context is challenged by Fearchar, narratorial intervention dictates the framework in which the minister's vision is to be received by the reader.

> Maighstir Sachairi's mind by the direction given to it even in infancy, as well as by his later training and long discipline, was able to act only (as it were) on the vertical plane: he thought of '*God*,' and '*man*' or '*men*,' and understood events only as produced in the tensions between the divine and human wills; and not otherwise was he able to understand the world. Hence he was unable to think historically, for that is as it were horizontally; incapable from the very nature of his mind of recognising the validity of a view which might seek to explain events as the product of factors working out in a process that must be called historical. (*Cock Crew* pp. 127-8)

The minister's approach thus appears limited and shaped by his own background and education. This 'theological' mode of thought, explicitly presented as fettering, stands against the 'historical' mode of thought of the poet, whose guiding light is nationalist in nature. Here in a nutshell, MacColla's own perception of Scotland's – let alone the Highlands' – woes, comes to light; and many of the questions raised in his autobiography are echoed.

In his own personal quest, Scotland's fate is a cardinal feature.[43] Hence his autobiographical essay includes reflections on the power of language, of history, the process of learning and their influence on people's sense of self-definition, of belonging and ultimately of self-worth. Maighstir Sachairi's character, with his blinkered theological vision, prefigures MacColla's argument on the power of language and words in 'conditioning' minds and outlooks.[44] The argument stretches far beyond the pure linguistic plane centring on the erosion of Gaelic to incorporate the dimension of English hegemony, and is fully verbalised by Fearchar. In his long ideological address, the Clearances are the glaring sign of England's process of subjugation, pursuing her conquest with such insidious means as bribery, cultural domination and legal measures.

> And so at last she, the Enemy, understands that our nation is never to be conquered by armies and invasions. Now she is more subtle, for Cunning is her name. Now she comes with feigned friendship; and with lying promises and gold for our traitors she is able to obtain it, and our liberty is at an end! (*Cock Crew* p. 122)

Treachery and betrayal are, in the context of evictions, seen as crucial and

such words are applied to landowners, yet the censure implied is somewhat deflected by the strength of the argument around the process of cultural hegemony. Landholders epitomise such a process; their alien up-bringing in terms of place, language and values, has equipped them with a warped vision of their land and people; they reproduce the pre-conceptions absorbed through their education and are ultimately transformed into vehicles of national subjection.

> There had begun to be amongst us those that were not altogether Albannaich for they had forgotten the language of the forefathers and taken on an English language, with English ways. Now a man who speaks English and is English in his ways will begin to feel like those whose language he speaks, and it is his own countrymen that will seem like foreigners to him, for their ways are strange and he does not understand their language. (*Cock Crew* p. 124)

Assisting the process is the English law which first sanctioned the proprietorial status of former chiefs, and then enabled them to impose their will: transform their estate and dispossess tenants.

Superimposed on this scheme of Anglicisation is a racial dimension much more explicit and strident than Gunn's in *Butcher's Broom*. Gaels are being assailed yet again by Saxons, and the Clearances are the latest mark of the assault. About Byars, it is said 'here is a pig of a saxon at his old play of harrying' (*Cock Crew* p. 67). These are words redolent of the racial discourse appropriated by the Celtic nationalist faction of the National Party of Scotland in the inter-war years, in particular, Ruaraidh Erskine of Mar who founded, edited and wrote for many publications and publicised a nationalism resting largely on the racial premise of the intrinsic disparities between Celts and Saxons.[45] C.M. Grieve – Hugh MacDiarmid – was also a vocal proponent of the same stand. The strength of their personal commitment to these ideas, and their high journalistic profile, must not however obscure the fact that their position was far from dominant within the party.[46] In fact, MacDiarmid was expelled from the NPS in 1932 for his involvement in the creation of Clan Albain – a neo-fascist and paramilitary organisation which seemingly envisaged a number of spectacular actions including land raiding on the Island of Rum.[47] Both the plans and ultimate intentions of this expedition are enveloped in a thick mist on which MacColla's autobiography sheds a very personal light, mainly illuminating his role as the main instigator in the conception and organisation of the Rum raid; he also dismisses Clan Albain as 'totally imaginary'. It is worth recalling that at that point – 1930 – MacColla was a member of the NPS, having joined in 1928 after a spell with the ILP. Disillusionment with Labour's gradual volte-face on Scottish self-government, following their 1924 election to office, had brought him to the ranks of the Nationalists. MacColla's aim with the raid on Rum was to attract the attention of the press and, thereby the public, to the 'realities of Scottish history' and 'to let the large world know about the Clearances, that long-continued genocidal

episode'; politically, his objective was to compel Labour to take a stand in the Highlands leading to 'the end of the Sporting Estate system ...; the repopulation of the Highlands – and with a Gaelic population; the salvation of the language. In effect, the Clearances in reverse.'[48]

Could it be said then, with one critic, that *And the Cock Crew* is an example of 'powerful, aggressive polemics in which great historical wrongs are savoured as prelude to renewed conflict'?[49] To overlook the nationalist dimension which, in the interpretation offered, eclipses the responsibility of landlords, is unquestionably to deprive the novel of one of its fundamental components.

Consider the Lilies

For Neil Gunn and Fionn MacColla, Scottish nationalism was a political belief to which they were both committed, and which could find its way into their fiction and colour their vision of the situation of the Highlands. For Iain Crichton Smith, ideologies – be they political or religious – are the object of mistrust and frequent attacks in his work. Describing himself as a man 'not committed to any ideology', he repeatedly singles out Scottish Calvinism as 'an ideology that weakens the will'[50] in his critical, poetic or fictional exploration of the Highland and Island experience – often drawing on his own childhood on the island of Lewis. *Consider the Lilies* is consonant with this reading, as the book's probing of Mrs Scott's psyche reveals a mind strapped into the straightjacket of religious indoctrination. In its indictment of the effects of Calvinism on the Gaels, *Consider the Lilies* chimes with *And the Cock Crew* where Maighstir Sachairi's narrow, theological perspective of the world and events corresponds somewhat to Mrs Scott's stunted emotions, warped judgment and limited vision. Nowhere is her distorted perception made more obvious than in her initial assessment of Donald MacLeod:

> He was the sort of man Patrick Sellar would like, a man who wasn't interested in the church and spent most of his time in Edinburgh. In fact he might help Sellar to pull the church down. (*Lilies* p. 97)[51]

This diagnosis could not be further removed from the character of Donald MacLeod as subsequently revealed – a Donald MacLeod, active defender of the Highlanders' cause, whose related confrontation with Patrick Sellar not only contradicts Mrs Scott's feelings but conveys the author's commentary on the Clearances process and the conditions of the Highlands. Donald MacLeod then fulfills two functions; he is one of the main catalysts in Mrs Scott's mental evolution and he acts as the author's mouthpiece.

The reader is led inside Mrs Scott's uncompromising mental world as the narrative follows her meandering thoughts – streams of consciousness alternating reflections on her past life and her present situation – and follows her gradual conversion and re-appraisal of some of her values and loyalties. In the words of the author 'she was to be broken out of her ideology to see

how she could cope as a human being'.[52] And indeed Mrs Scott's mental journey is the kernel of the narrative. Yet although Mrs Scott functions as the *central* consciousness, the thoughts of Patrick Sellar and most of all Donald MacLeod are also penetrated. Regarded as one of the novel's weaknesses in evaluations of the book that prioritise the personal angle to the detriment of the more public dimension,[53] these 'lapses' in the focus of narration signify the importance of the Clearances in the novel's thematics. More than a mere backdrop to Mrs Scott's study, they are a fundamental constituent of the narrative, and it is through the character of Donald MacLeod that analyses of the Clearances, their causes, effects and interpretations, filter through to the reader, largely by-passing Mrs Scott. The words of the author himself on the historical MacLeod and his presence in the narrative – in this essential paratext which the preface is[54] – confirm the significance of his function: 'he seems to have been a wholly admirable person, with a great concern for his people and desire to *speak out* and *tell the truth.*' [My emphasis]. These words convey the essential Donald MacLeod of the text, and since he is defined – beyond his atheism – through his views of the Highlanders, the Highlands and their fate, a closer look at his role and ideas is necessary.

The dialectics surrounding the Sutherland Clearances in the novel hinge upon an opposition between materialism and humanism, vividly expressed in the confrontation between Patrick Sellar and Donald MacLeod. The two mind-sets also reflect two antithetical visions of history and its making on the one hand; and on the other, the perception and power of past events. Iain Crichton Smith introduces a reflection on the past and its re-telling, whose point of reference is the Clearances. For the author, the values of materialism are to be blamed for the disintegration of community life.

> There is no question in my mind that a society which lives by materialistic values will be destroyed by them ... . That belief in materialism is closely connected with the destruction of community is also, I am sure, a fact, for materialism depends on individuals being set over against each other.[55]

In *Consider The Lilies*, MacLeod regards the evictions and the progress of the sheep – 'the destruction of the Highlands' (*Lilies* p. 140) – as the outcome of the cupidity and extravagance of a few landowners. At the same time, what pervades Patrick Sellar's improving discourse in defense of the process, is the notion of the ineluctability of change overriding concerns of human cost – 'the movement of the age', 'the progress of civilisation [which] demands sacrifice' (*Lilies* p. 142). In this inexorable process, Patrick Sellar happens to be the lucky agent. Questioned by MacLeod on human grounds, the ideological bases attributed to the Clearances are later obscured by the scene in which he and Loch are all schemes and deceit in order to extort Mrs Scott's betrayal of MacLeod. Of the ideological veneer of the policy, little remains by then.

But what will posterity preserve of the Clearances? The exchange which opposes Patrick Sellar to Donald Macleod presents a commentary on the making and use of historical landmarks: how and for what purpose would the

Clearances be committed to history? How will the events and their main actors be immortalised? Patrick Sellar attaches little importance to the poetical propensities of the Highlanders and the force of their accounts, thereby reproducing the improvers' prejudice against the Highlands' cultural and linguistic patrimony and specificity.[56] Nevertheless, artistic creation produces abiding images, later becoming fixed in popular memory and the source of further retrospective artistic work. Such is Smith's point when, with a statement which sounds both prophetic and anachronistic but which is, in fact, based on the author's own experience and use of hindsight, he has Donald MacLeod warning Patrick Sellar about the image poets have and will popularise of him – Patrick Sellar in hell.

> You see, Mr Sellar, you will become a legend. You have become a legend. Are you flattered? Is that perhaps what you wanted? You talk about the future. Yes, true enough, you too will have a future. Children will sing in the streets in different countries, countries you will never visit. They may even recite poems about you in the schools. Yes, your name will be on people's lips. (*Lilies* p. 144)

The transition from 'agent of evictions' to 'legend' encapsulates art's power of mythic amplification; historical events and their actors find themselves elevated to the status of heroes or – more to the point in the case of Patrick Sellar – anti-heroes. The novel itself is testimony to this magnifying power of art – in this case fiction. Here, reality and the vision of reality created by art confront each other; and central to this opposition is the notion of truth. The exchange between the two men is indeed saturated by an underlying reference to 'truth'. The motivations behind MacLeod's writings are his feelings of 'anger' and his urge 'to tell the truth of what is happening' (*Lilies* pp. 133, 141), to which Sellar retorts: 'Don't you know that the day has come when the truth is what we care to make it?' (*Lilies* p. 142). Sellar's view of the process in which he partakes is one of cynical manipulation, which MacLeod tries to puncture. This vision of the construction of events, of history and of the memorialisation of past figures and acts, including here orally-transmitted poems and songs, is suggestive of the divergent representations which have made the Clearances one of the most controversial episodes in Scottish, let alone Highland history.

CONCLUSION

Commenting on a commemorative procession in 1884 which took one of the survivors of its clearance, Grizzel Claggan, back to Strathnaver, Eric Richards underlines the influence of individual memories in nourishing 'the passion associated with the Clearances' – a passion which he sees perpetuated by the fictional narratives set against the period. 'The imaginative evocation of the common people and their times may be juxtaposed with the emerging contemporary record.'[57] This points towards

two important aspects of the role of early fictional writing on the Clearances which pre-dates the emergence of a 'people's history'. Little had emerged about the life of the crofters affected by evictions in the histories written in the first half of the 20th century, beyond the acrimonious words penned by Tom Johnston.[58] Such literary production filled an historiographical silence and stands as the reflection of the 'memory of the Clearances'.

In this respect, the nature of the image of the Clearances presented in the three novels is significant. A thematic consistency which gives pride of place to cultural arguments is striking. At the same time, its inflection and colour changed with the ideological and philosophical priorities of each of the novelists considered, at times projecting the political climate in which the author evolved. In this sense, the representations of the Clearances are shaped by the environment of each of the authors concerned; the individual and the collective coalesce. Although the core of the representation remains unaltered from the 1930s to the late 1960s, its interpretation produces different tunes. In the words of Raphael Samuel, 'memory is inherently revisionist and never more chameleon than when it appears to stay the same.'[59] Most of all, memory is now regarded as a crucial element in collective identity.[60]

The importance of the three Strathnaver novels lies in their being transmitters of a memory of the Clearances – a memory encapsulated in the Strathnaver evictions and saturated with moral outrage and condemnation. Their recurrent fictionalisation in the 20th century reinforces the memory of the Clearances as a formative event having shaped a country – let alone a region. It has also become fixed in eloquent 'sites of memory':[61] commemorations and Scottish anthologies. In 1986 the Crofters' Act was celebrated in a commemorative exhibition,[62] a process echoed in the growing number of monuments built to commemorate events and figureheads of the Crofters' War.[63] More telling still are the anthologies.[64] Through a selection of literary texts written by Scots and outsiders alike, these anthologies seek to capture the essence of a place, 'to represent the foundations of Scottish reality'.[65]

In this atomisation of Scotland through its past, its landscape and people, many voices are heard; but the Clearances are one of the constant features. Here are found repeated in even more emphatic terms the themes, motifs and feelings which form the fabric of their popular image.

Notes

1. Richards, E. *A History of the Highland Clearances*. 2 vols. London. 1982-85. i. chaps. 10 & 11; Bangor-Jones, M. 'The Strathnaver Clearances', in *North Sutherland Studies*. (Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group). Glasgow. 1987: 23-37.
2. MacLeod, D. *Gloomy Memories in the Highlands of Scotland*, initially published as a series of letters in the Edinburgh *Weekly Chronicle*. 1841; also reprinted in Mackenzie, A. *History of the Highland Clearances*. Inverness. 1883; *Evidence taken by Her Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry into the Condition of the Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, 4 vols. Edinburgh. 1884, see in particular the evidence collected at Bettyhill on 24 & 25 July. ii. 1883: 1594-1662.

3. Richards *op. cit.* 307.
4. See the histories published in the first half of this century, eg Brown, P.H. *History of Scotland to the Present Time.* 3 vols. Cambridge. 1911. iii; Mackinnon, J. *The Social and Industrial History of Scotland.* London. 1921; Mackenzie, A.M. *Scotland in Modern Times, 1720-1939.* Edinburgh. 1941.
5. For studies of the period since the second World War, see in particular Gray, M. *The Highland Economy, 1750-1850.* Edinburgh. 1957; Grimble, I. *The Trial of Patrick Sellar.* London. 1962; Prebble, J. *The Highland Clearances.* London. 1963; Bumsted, J.M. *The People's Clearances, 1770-1815.* Edinburgh. 1982; Hunter, J. *The Making of the Crofting Community.* Edinburgh. 1976; Richards, E. *A History of the Highland Clearances.* 2 vols. London. 1982-85: (i) *Agrarian Transformation and the Evictions 1746-1886,* (ii) *Emigration, Protest, Reasons*; Devine, T.M. *The Great Highland Famine.* Edinburgh. 1988; Withers, C.W.J. *Gaelic Scotland.* London. 1988; Devine, T.M. *Clanship to Crofters' War.* Manchester. 1994.
6. For instance: Hunter, J. *The Making of the Crofting Community*; Withers, C.W.J. *Gaelic Scotland;The Transformation of a Culure Region*; Devine, T.M. *Clanship to Crofters' War*; or perhaps more strikingly the chapter heading 'A Society in travail' in Gray, M. *The Highland Economy 1750-1850.*
7. My translation of Paul Ricoeur, *Temps et récit.* 3 vols. (Editions du Seuil, Paris). iii. *Le temps raconté.* 1983-85: 272, 274.
8. See 2 above; David Stewart of Garth *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland.* 2 vols. Edinburgh. 1822.
9. *The Listener.* 14 November 1934: 840.
10. Hart, F.R. *The Scottish Novel.* Harvard. 1978. chap. 15.
11. See eg Gray *op. cit.* 86, 89; Richards *op.cit.* ii: 139.
12. Gouriévidis, L. *The Image of the Highland Clearances, c.1880-1990.* (Univ. of St Andrews Ph.D thesis). Unpublished. 1993.
13. Hart F.R. & Pick, J.B. *Neil MGunn: A Highland Life.* Edinburgh. 1985: 103.
14. Here Donald MacLeod's account provided the details.
15. This vision of Sellar is confirmed by the knowledge that previously Iain Crichton Smith had written a Gaelic play about Patrick Sellar's trial – in hell.
16. Hart, F.R. *The Scottish Novel.* 1978: 328.
17. The old bed-ridden woman rushed out of her house on a blanket on fire, the young woman who gives birth to a still-born baby and also characters driven to insanity are repeated example, taken from Donald MacLeod's account.
18. *Scots Magazine.* vol. XXII, no 2. December 1934.
19. *The Scotsman.* 13 December 1945.
20. Mitchison, R. 'The Clearances', in D. Daiches (ed), *A Companion to Scottish Culture.* London. 1981: 69.
21. For an assessment of their aims and effects, see James Hunter's introduction to his *The Making of the Crofting Community.* Edinburgh. 1976.
22. N.M. Gunn to Agnes Mure Mackenzie 15 December 1946, NLS. MS 9222; for details of the sources consulted see also: Hart F.R. & Pick, J.B. *Neil M. Gunn. A Highland Life.* 1985: 104; Gunn, N.M. 'Caithness and Sutherland', in A. McCleery (ed), *Landscape and Light. Essays by Neil M. Gunn.* Aberdeen. 1987: 31.
23. Wittig, K. *The Scottish Tradition in Literature.* Edinburgh. 1978 ed: 324.
24. Collier was assistant secretary of the Scottish Economic Committee and helped with the preparation of its report, *The Highlands and Islands of Scotland: A Review of the Economic Conditions with Recommendations for Improvement,* (Chairman E.L. Hilleary). Edinburgh. 1938.
25. Collier, A. *The Crofting Problem,* Cambridge. 1953: 4.
26. Darling, F.F. *West Highland Survey.* Oxford. 1955. preface.
27. Gouriévidis *op. cit.* Part iii. chap. ii & chap. iv, 4.1 & 4.2.
28. N.M. Gunn was instrumental in bringing the National Party of Scotland and the Scottish Party together to form the Scottish National Party in 1934. See Brand, J. *The National Movement in Scotland.* London. 1978: 102 & chap. 12; Finlay, R.J. *Independent and Free.* Edinburgh. 1994. chap. 3; Hart F.R. &Pick, JB. *op. cit.* chap. 8.
29. Gunn, N.M. ' ... And then Rebuild it', in McLeery A.(ed), *Landscape and Light.* 1939: 155.
30. Gunn, N.M. 'Caithness and Sutherland', in *Landscape and Light.* 1935: 31.
31. Gunn, N.M. 'The Gael Will Come Again', in *Landscape and Light.* 1931: 167-8.
32. Gérard Genette has shown the importance of the analysis of the changes in the focus of narration and the role of the narrator in his *Figures iii,* a study of Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu.* (Collection Poétique, Editions du Seuil, Paris). 1972.

33. All quotations from the 1987 edition by Souvenir Press.
34. This point will be developed below with Fionn MacColla's novel which is explicitly nationalistic in tone and nature.
35. Gunn, N.M. 'Caithness and Sutherland', in *Landscape and Light*. 1935: 34. See also '"Gentlemen – The Tourist!": The New Highland Toast', in *The Scots Magazine*. vol. XXVI. 1936-7. Also worthy of note is Gunn's later involvement in the Commission of Enquiry into Crofting Conditions set up in 1951 – the Taylor Commission – whose report came out in 1954; see Gouriévidis *op. cit.* Part iii. chap. iv: 282-302.
36. Gifford, D. *Neil M. Gunn and Lewis Grassic Gibbon*. Edinburgh. 1983: 147-9.
37. *The Scots Magazine*. Vol. XLIV. no 4. January 1946.
38. MacColla, F. *Ro Fhada Mar So A Tha Mi. Too Long in this Condition*. Caithness. 1975: 72.
39. MacColla, F. 'Mein Bumpf', in D. Morrison (ed), *Essays on Fionn MacColla*. Caithness. 1973: 27.
40. MacColla, F. *Ro Fhada ...* . 1975: 41.
41. In particular in *At the Sign of the Clenched Fist*. 1967.
42. Murray, I. 'Fionn MacColla: Pilgrim of Independence', in *Leopard Magazine*. March 1980. no 57.
43. MacColla, F. *Ro Fhada ...* . 1975: 3.
44. *Ibid.* 27, 99.
45. Gouriévidis *op. cit.* 248-251.
46. Finlay, R.J. 'Nationalism, Race, Religion and the Irish Question in Inter-war Scotland', in *The Innes Review*. vol. XLII. no 1. 1991: 46-67.
47. Marr, A. *The Battle for Scotland*. 1992: 75-84; Finlay, R.J. *Independent and Free*. chap. 3.
48. MacColla, F. *Ro Fhada ...* .1975: 88-95.
49. Reilly, P. 'Catholics and Scottish Literature 1878-1978', in *The Innes Review*. 29. 1978: 193.
50. Smith, I.C. 'Real People in a Real Place', in *Towards the Human*. Edinburgh. 1986: 53, 58.
51. All quotations from the 1981 edition, Pergamon Press.
52. Quoted in the preface to the 1987 edition of the novel, p. viii.
53. See Alan Massie's review of the novel in *The Scotsman*. 9 March 1986.
54. See Genette, G. *Seuils* (Editions du Seuil, Paris). 1987: 182-218.
55. Smith, I.C. 'Real People ... '. 1986: 56.
56. See Withers, C.W.J. *Gaelic Scotland. The Transformation of a Culture Region*, for a study of this particular aspect.
57. Richards, E. *A History of the Highland Clearances*. i. London. 1982: 359-60.
58. Johnston, T. *The History of the Working Classes in Scotland*. Glasgow. 1920. On this point see Price, R. *Neil M. Gunn. The Fabulous Matter of Fact*. Edinburgh. 1991. chap. 3.
59. Samuel, R. *Theatres of Memory*. London. 1994. preface p x.
60. Le Goff, J. *Histoire et Mémoire*. Paris. 1988.
61. Nora, P. (ed) *Les Lieux de Mémoire*. 7 vols. Paris. 1984-92.
62. A book edited by MacLean, M. & Carrell, C. *As An Fhearann. From the Land*, was published in 1986, following the exhibition; in it, the Act is commemorated as the end to a century of 'population clearance, forced evictions, and emigration under duress'. p 5.
63. On the more recent cairns designed by Will MacLean and erected in Lewis, see eg Duncan Macmillan's article in *The Scotsman*. 20 May 1996.
64. Eg Lindsay, M. *Scotland An Anthology*. London. 1974; Bruce, G. & Rennie, F. *The Land out there: A Scottish Land Anthology*. Aberdeen. 1991; Dunn, D. *Scotland An Anthology*. London. 1991.
65. Dunn, D. *Scotland An Anthology*. 1991: 9.