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- 1 Just over ten years ago, *Etudes Irlandaises* brought out a special issue on the Irish language: *La langue gaélique en Irlande hier et aujourd'hui*, edited by Danielle Jacquin (n° 26-2, winter 2002)¹. This issue reflected the high level of interest in France for the Irish language and for Gaelic culture in general². I would like to preface this introduction by thanking the board of *Etudes Irlandaises* for agreeing to back the idea of pursuing this interest in questions relating to language and culture in a special issue of the journal given over to an area that has received infinitely less attention in France: Ulster-Scots in Northern Ireland.
- 2 Ulster-Scots language and culture have been the object of attack on a wide variety of fronts. Significantly, criticism has been root and branch. In its most extreme form, it is alleged that there is quite simply no language and that the entire “tradition” is merely an “invention”.
- 3 Much of the debate has centred on the language question: is Ulster-Scots to be seen as a language in its own right, a dialect of Scots, a dialect of English, a “patois”, or simply, as the now classic put-down has it, “a DIY language for Orangemen”? Those interested in the terms in which the debate on language has been carried on in relation to Ulster-Scots should look at the work of Michael Montgomery³, Raymond Hickey⁴, Máiréad Nic Craith⁵ and John Kirk⁶. But they should also look at the pages of the local newspapers (particularly the *Andersonstown News* and the *News Letter*), at the responses to public consultation exercises⁷, and at the debates in the Northern Ireland Assembly. The very variety of these sources indicates that the impact of this debate goes well beyond the world of academia. It is part of a much broader political discussion that follows well-worn and relatively predictable paths. On the one hand, there are those, largely but not exclusively, in the nationalist and especially republican community who accuse Ulster-Scots of having been conjured up *ex nihilo* as a Trojan horse designed to serve the purposes of a radical unionist agenda, a lure through which to channel much-needed

funding away from the Irish language. On the other hand, there are those, again largely but not exclusively, in the unionist and loyalist community who, while often attacking Irish in the North as a front for a predominantly Sinn Féin cultural agenda, seek to defend the linguistic status of Ulster-Scots and its legitimacy as the expression of a significant cultural tradition with roots deep in the history of the region.

- 4 Discussion on the authenticity of the Ulster-Scots project as a whole has been coloured by this political framing at several levels.
- 5 It would be difficult to deny that much of the progress Ulster-Scots has made to date has been the result of pressure brought by unionist politicians during the political negotiations that have been on-going since the beginning of the 1990s. Thus, Ulster-Scots made considerable headway in terms of official recognition when it was given a passing mention in the 1998 Agreement sandwiched between a similarly laconic reference to “the languages of the various ethnic communities” present in Northern Ireland and the infinitely more detailed – and promising – clauses dealing with the Irish language⁸. This transitory appearance on the official radar was to be reinforced the following year in the “Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland establishing Implementation Bodies”, a document which defines “Ullans” as “the variety of the Scots language traditionally found in parts of Northern Ireland and Donegal”, and commits the signatories to the “promotion of greater awareness and use of Ullans and of Ulster Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the island”⁹. This resulted in the setting up of a North/South Language Body with two separate and largely autonomous all-island agencies, financed by the British and Irish governments, Foras na Gaeilge for Irish and Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch (aka The Ulster-Scots Agency) for Ulster-Scots. Within the same logic, when the UK government accorded Irish Part III status alongside Scottish Gaelic and Welsh when it ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 2001, Ulster-Scots was recognised as meeting the “Charter’s definition of a regional or minority language” and was granted the lower, Part II status¹⁰. At another key stage in the peace process, *i.e.* during the negotiations at Saint Andrews (2006) called to kick-start the stalled Northern Ireland institutions, Ulster-Scots once again re-emerged as an issue¹¹, especially with the DUP delegation, shadowing discussion on Irish which was being pushed by Sinn Féin¹².
- 6 Thus, as has been the case with Irish, political pressure has been instrumental in pushing forward the process of official recognition of Ulster-Scots. Such coupling of language and culture with political affiliation explains much of the stridency of the debate.
- 7 However, in the case of Ulster-Scots this political connexion has proved particularly problematic in terms of image. Irish has long had strong associations with a radical political agenda. Aodán Mac Póilin identifies the more explicitly political orientation adopted by Gaelic League at its AGM in 1915 as the key factor in the language movement losing what support it had within the unionist community¹³. Whereas the language was to filter into the ethos of the new state in the South as one of the foundation stones of the new status quo, the linking up of language with a radical political agenda re-surfaces among the republican prisoners in the North at the time of the hunger strikes¹⁴, a phenomenon that was to feed into Sinn Féin’s increasingly relaxed incorporation of the language as part of the broader political and cultural struggle of the modern republican movement¹⁵. In contrast, Ulster-Scots language and culture have not had the same on-going, historical relationship within unionism. The question therefore arises as to why

the issue should emerge with such force on to the political and cultural scene in Northern Ireland apparently out of the blue? When looked at from the outside, it is the suddenness of this phenomenon and the strongly political nature of much of the support that appear suspect.

Varieties of neglect

- 8 A large part of the problem stems from the fact – or so it is claimed – that no-one had ever heard of Ulster-Scots or an Ulster-Scots community before the 1990s. If, as the Ulster-Scots state, they belong to a centuries-old tradition, why has this not been charted as such on an on-going basis? If such a tradition exists, who can be seen as being responsible for the failure to register continuities? What factors contributed to this failure to produce a satisfactory discourse?
- 9 An answer to this may lie in notion of neglect. The etymology of the word – from *nec legere* – involves the idea of not (*nec*) picking – something – up, not selecting (*legere*). If Ulster-Scots has suffered neglect, the question is where does the source of this negative choice lie? Is it internal? What makes people decide “not to care for” – in both the sense of being indifferent to and of not cultivating – a given cultural phenomenon? How does that indifference manifest itself? As Sean O Faolain points out, a culture can indeed choose to neglect itself:

[T]raditions can die [...] They die, not for being interfered with but for not being interfered with. Tradition is like the soil that needs turning over, compost, change of crops. It has to be manhandled, shaken up – and sometimes given a rest. It is not those who question ritual who kill it. They get to know it better, and add to it by that knowledge, and add to it even while they rebel against it. But those who examine nothing and question nothing, end by knowing nothing and creating nothing¹⁶.
- 10 The failure to conceptualise the tradition, or, rather, as we shall see, to conceptualise the tradition in a continuum, has left it vulnerable not only to the stagnation that O Faolain envisages but also open to the accusations from without that there is in fact no tradition there in the first place.
- 11 Or does the failure to conceptualise have an external cause? In terms of a minority culture, as is the case here, there is indeed the further distinction to be drawn between the political and cultural élite on one hand and the members of the community with which the culture is associated on the other. Is there evidence that those in power have contributed to the structuring of that discursive neglect?
- 12 Further, when a tradition has gone through such a period of neglect, whether through its own omission or as the result of structural exclusion, what motivates a community to reverse that indifference, to discover or recognise worth, to repair what has fallen into disuse, to reinvest spaces, practices that have been abandoned, to commemorate a past that has fallen into abeyance? Where does the impetus for this reengagement lie?

Culture dominante / culture dominée

- 13 One possible way into the debate might be the opposition between *culture dominante* and *culture dominée*¹⁷, the former being accorded prestige status by virtue of its control of the key institutions of the State, the latter being excluded from formal public expression by

virtue of its minority status, its association with a community challenging the powers that be or as a result of a refusal to recognise any intrinsic worth as a distinct culture. Wilful neglect of indigenous cultures has been a charge regularly addressed against élites in colonial situations. It forms part of a broader strategy of containment and in the case of Ireland for example intervenes as an alternative to open attempts to anglicise by physical force or legal constraint. Active, structural neglect of the Irish language, such as what we find in the broader context of the British administrative machine in Ireland, is an illustration of this lateral strategy of exclusion which is designed to operate in the very long-term. Thus, in the 1850s after the cataclysm of the Famine, Revd M. Mullin in his poem, “The Celtic Tongue”, laments:

For, ah, though long with filial love it [Irish] clung to Motherland,
And Irishmen were Irish still, in *tongue*, and heart, and hand!
Before the Saxon tongue, alas! **Proscribed it soon became;**
And we are Irishmen today, but Irishmen in name! [...]
Through cold **neglect** [Irish is] dying, like a stranger on our shore [...] ¹⁸ (my emphasis in heavy print)

- 14 According to this reading, neglect is structured by the imperial centre and applied to a periphery in an attempt to accelerate the latter’s anglicisation. The systematic downgrading of the language and the culture it embodies involves issues of prestige which encourage users to abandon the language in preference for the *langue dominante*. It is this process of abandonment which leads inexorably to Hyde’s comment in his famous “On the necessity for de-anglicising Ireland” (1892) that, “We must arouse some spark of patriotic inspiration among the peasantry who still use the language, and put an end to the shameful state of feeling... [that] makes young men and women blush and hang their heads when overheard speaking their own language.” Hyde here is pointing to what the Occitans refer to as *vergonha*, the sense of shame that results in those who inherit the dominated culture themselves choosing to accelerate its destruction by integrating into their own consciousness the subaltern nature of that culture.
- 15 This complicity between the two levels in a diglossic equation is indeed a theme that emerges across Europe in the 20th century in the wake of decolonisation with regard to the indigenous minority cultures and languages present in the territories of the former colonial powers. Robert Lafont, writing in 1980¹⁹, points to mechanisms that explain how the speakers of lesser-used languages assimilate their second-class status, thus ensuring that the negative effects of the neglect by the authorities are reinforced by the alienation of those who should be the language’s most ardent supporters but who are loath to challenge the position of the *langue dominante* on what has become its home ground, the intellectual, the scientific, the administrative life of the community:

You must always bear in mind that diglossia reproduces its structures within the very consciousness of those who defend the dominated language. Thus, when the Limousin speaker is confronted with a standardised version of Limousin, he will regard the terms that make his Limousin “more sophisticated” as alien [...] As a general rule he will validate the lower status of everyday speech by attributing ideological value to it. All dominated languages are languages of “the heart”, or “the guts”; they are the pretext for a populist attack against intellectuality. It is through this tortuous route that domination is ensured. The standardisation of languages is a battle that takes place within the diglossic consciousness²⁰.
- 16 In Spain we find similar preoccupations, as in Joan Fuster’s seminal *Nosaltres els Valencians* (1962), when he talks about the inferiority complex that results from what he refers to as the *sucularisme* of the peripheral, dependent culture. Fuster, writing in Valencian on the

effects produced on “provincial” culture, points to the frustration and resentment that this artificially engineered linguistic and cultural hierarchy engenders, notably with regard to the sensation of being at a remove (“ex-centric”) and incomplete²¹.

- 17 It is clear that Ulster-Scots culture could easily see itself as fitting in to these patterns. Historically, it has been the object of total indifference by the organs of State, whether the British State apparatus in London or Dublin (up to 1921) or the unionist élite in Stormont in charge of the devolved institutions which systematically showed its (class?) preference for “metropolitan” culture. The low prestige associated with any non-standard form of expression ensured that the Ulster-Scots community – almost exclusively rural based – was encouraged to abandon a “culture” which, if less visible or subversive than Irish, was seen as backward-looking, peripheral, and – ultimately – embarrassing.
- 18 The question remains as to why, faced with this situation, the Ulster-Scots themselves failed to defend their culture more effectively, to do what Raymond Williams called “tending”. An explanation for this should perhaps be sought in relation to the political ambiguities of the Scots’ experience in Ireland.

The triangular model

- 19 Anyone looking at Ireland from the beginning of the twentieth century up until today would be only too familiar with the “two traditions” model which identifies two often antagonistic composite identities, a majority “Irish Ireland”, closely associated with Catholicism and Gaelic culture, and a minority “British Ireland”, closely associated with Protestantism, and of which most Ulster-Scots today would consider themselves to be an integral part. However, as everyone knows, this straightforward, binary opposition is a relatively recent phenomenon. Historically in Ireland, and in particular in Ulster since the Plantation at the beginning of the 17th century, we had a triangular arrangement of cultures – Irish, English and Scottish – directly associated with each of their respective principal religious communities – Catholicism, Anglicanism and Presbyterianism. However, the triangle in question was anything but equilateral in terms of access to power and expression.
- 20 The “English” component, had constant access to public expression and recognition through the administration of the State, through the Anglican Church of Ireland as by law established, and through the army. This predominance is felt especially in the language field in transactions between the individual and the State, and is particularly intense in the school system which is put in place in the early 19th century as a means to accelerate the processes of anglicisation. This “dominant” culture was made all the stronger by virtue of its colonial reach, its local Anglo-Irish manifestation being merely one facet of a global trans-national norm.
- 21 In Ireland, this dominant Anglo-centric culture co-existed alongside the indigenous Gaelic Irish culture, which although it reflected the cultural preferences of the majority population, remained, as we have seen, largely excluded from official public expression, being limited to the private domain. However, this *culture dominée* was very conscious that this marginalisation was the result not of any natural process of cultural decline but rather of conscious Anglo-centric political decisions that formed part of a broad policy applied throughout the British Isles and the Empire. The (sometimes idealised) memory

of a dynamic, original culture in terms of literary expression and indigenous political and ecclesiastical institutions fuelled what was ultimately to prove to be a successful separatist constitutional agenda at the end of the 19th century.

- 22 The Anglo-centric culture also excluded a second *culture dominée*, the Scottish Presbyterian tradition. It had at times suffered similar, if less pronounced, political and cultural marginalisation and neglect to that experienced by the Irish Catholic tradition; however, its relationship with the dominant culture, and its relationship to Ireland – its *terre d'accueil* – were infinitely more complex.
- 23 Whereas after the Plantation of Ulster, Presbyterianism, the principal nucleus of Ulster-Scots culture, quickly emerged as one of the largest of the non-Catholic communities in Ireland, it was looked on as a suspect community by the Anglo-centric state apparatus and for a time excluded from power by the dominant if minority episcopalian Church of Ireland. Indeed, the triangular reality of political, cultural and religious life in Ireland involved much more intricate relationships than those that would have been the norm in a straightforward binary, colonial setting. Here, the Scots (as members of the catch-all “British” community) were at once an essential player in the dominant colonial project in Ireland while at the same time being the victims of sporadic Anglican discrimination. Concretely, this meant that, in times of political crisis, the Scots community in Ulster could “go either way”, a perfect illustration of what Fuster calls *instabilitat ‘nacional’*. Whereas demographically and in terms of territory, the Scottish component could never hope to challenge the position of the Catholic Irish, politically it could never hope to rival the Anglo-Irish establishment. Its strategy consisted in seeking out security in a constantly changing and profoundly complex environment.
- 24 A reading of the autobiographies and personal accounts of the experiences of the early Presbyterian ministers in Ulster in the 1620s and 1630s, people like the Reverend Robert Blair, minister in Bangor, or the Reverend John Livingstone, minister in Killinchy, shows the levels of tension that existed as a result of their non-conformity, and the depth of insecurity vis-à-vis the decision-makers in Edinburgh, Dublin and London. The tension between the Scots in Ulster and the various power centres, be they of the English Church, the Scottish Church or the British State, on the one hand, and the omnipresent indigenous Irish community on the other, was to be a permanent feature of the realities of the life of the community. Despite the fact that the Presbyterians finally came into the British fold (in the course of the 19th century), the historical ambiguities are an essential feature of the collective identity of the Scots community in Ulster; they lie at the heart of the way it assesses its position on an on-going basis and in the ways in which it is perceived by the two competing “others”. Concretely, it means that they have been absorbed into one or other narrative according to the circumstances of the moment, presented either as British Protestants as at the time of the Plantation and during the siege of Derry or as Irish republicans as during the Rising in 1798. But each time they are presented as second fiddles, contributing to a strategy that has been worked out elsewhere and for purposes that go beyond what are seen as their limited, and ultimately “provincial” interests. Thus, they find themselves in the marginalia and footnotes of histories that present national narratives of which they are never the centre.

The need to counteract neglect

- 25 When therefore do we find evidence in the Scots community in Ulster of reaction against this situation of *sucursalisme* that Fuster conceptualises? When does the pressure to counter neglect express itself and how?
- 26 Basically we have two fundamental frames: one which involves violence, one which prefers narrative.
- 27 The first is visible within the revolutionary context of the 1790s, the culmination of the alienation resulting from the post-Williamite period of anti-Presbyterian discrimination by the State that led to the first major waves of emigration to America. In the “Turn Oot” in 1798, (sections of) the Scottish Presbyterian community chose to resolve the issue of their subservient ex-centricity through a break with the imperial centre. Their decision to side with the Catholic, Irish majority was designed to place the community within a new Irish frame where a new plural narrative of an Irish nation would emerge, one of the strands of which would be that of the Scots Presbyterian community in Ulster.
- 28 The second stimulus to radical cultural re-examination is also essentially in reaction to the policies of the imperial centre. It emerges when it becomes conceivable that the centre might not hold, *i.e.* when the catch-all “Britishness” that the Ulster-Scots had bought into during the 19th century might be under threat, not so much from Irish rebels, as from a fundamental re-think of Britishness by elements within the British establishment itself. This is the case at the time of the Home Rule debate – especially from the 1880s and up to the stabilisation represented by Partition –, and again in the 1990s under the influence of “cultural traditions” theory put in place under the auspices of the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985. On each occasion, we find elements of the Ulster-Scots community self-consciously turning to their multiple history – in Scotland, in Ireland and in North America – to construct a cohesive narrative from the fragments of their past. On each occasion we get a flurry of activity designed to trace a third way in the form of a metanarrative that sought to prove that a large section of the population in the North of Ireland does not see itself as Irish at all and that it would be a mistake to include it in a cultural and political project for which it has no sympathy. Significantly, an essential strand of the resistance to both the Home Rule project²² and to the North-South logic of the AIA²³ consists in isolating and celebrating what is distinctly Scots about Ulster, as if the English component of “Britishness” were already seen as being too lukewarm, too ambiguous, too contaminated by misplaced liberal idealism. In this way, members of the community who had casually neglected to develop any coherent political reading of their community suddenly find themselves forced to reconsider the wisdom of that position.
- 29 The Ulster-Scots tradition therefore only comes into focus at times of crisis. Although writing on Ulster-Scots themes continued sporadically through the twentieth century, this activity is never given any particular prominence – never being integrated into the school system, for example. In any case, at no point under Stormont do the Northern Ireland authorities ever seek to produce a metanarrative similar to what had been set in motion at the time of the Home Rule crisis: narratives remained firmly unionist narratives. Indeed, at key moments during the twentieth century, it was clearly preferable not to produce an alternative Ulster-Scots reading of events. During World War Two for example – and in its aftermath – the pressure was on to present a united front within “British Ulster”; clear blue water had to be placed between it and de Valera’s

neutral Ireland. Nobody needed what could in effect be read as a divisive, potentially separatist discourse. Reference to Ulster-Scots emigration, for example, should emphasise how those involved illustrated the intrepid nature of the frontier spirit; it should not focus too much attention on the reason for the emigration in the first place, *i.e.* that it represented a flight from an intolerant, exclusive, Anglican State that was afraid lest Presbyterian church democracy might spill over into the political arena. In any case, as with Cooke's analysis in Hillsborough of inter-Protestant rivalries under Wentworth, these tensions were to be seen as having taken place *in illo tempore* and as having been resolved by more recent solidarities in the face of much more pressing threats. Nevertheless, any historiography foregrounding the role of the Ulster-Scot had self-consciously to maintain a series of delicate balances. Thus, in a text like *Ulster Sails West*, published during the Second World War to emphasise the strength of the links that existed between (Protestant) Ulster and the American GIs arriving in Northern Ireland in preparation for D-Day, although Marshall identifies those emigrating to America in the early 18th century as the "people of the Scottish nation in Ulster", he is quick to emphasise "who had given their strength and substance and lives to uphold the British connection there", a factor which, he claims, explains their "great indignation" at being misrepresented in America as "a parcel of Irish²⁴". Clearly, historical narrative with an Ulster-Scots spin could be used on occasion to score points on a number of frames simultaneously.

- 30 However, this points to a fundamental dilemma at the base of the Ulster-Scots project. When the community – at least since the 19th century – opts to construct a narrative of itself, it takes the risk of opening up divisions within the "British" community in the North²⁵. When it chooses to throw in its lot with a broader British agenda, its own identity – indeed, the very basis on which it constructs its claim to that identity – disappears in the (increasingly suspect) gaps in the narrative.
- 31 The phase that we are in at the moment and one that is reflected in the articles in this volume can be seen as the most recent stage in the process of cultural construction, or rather re-construction, a process which implies distance and imposing a structured, coherent and cohesive overview on a multiplicity of phenomena that had not necessarily been brought together under a specific Ulster-Scots brand-name. The process involves a double movement which consists in extracting what is recognizably Ulster-Scots from a range of contexts that have sought or been allowed to assimilate various individuals or events into their own narratives, while at the same time using those heterogeneous and hitherto scattered units to construct what is a specifically Ulster-Scots narrative. It is fundamentally about acts of identification, re-branding and classification. Such cultural taxonomy is a necessary phase in the stabilisation of a narrative, which is itself a necessary pre-requisite to having a frame through which to view an on-going collective reality.
- 32 However, it involves more than simply cataloguing what has been done in the past. It is about more than simply filling in the gaps. It also involves carrying the process on into, and beyond, the present. It is precisely this aspect that interests us in the present volume.

The contents of the issue

- 33 The issue has been put together with two main criteria in mind. The first has to do with content frame which is primarily concerned with issues of culture and community, rather

than language. The second has to do with the spatial frame of the contributions. The issue looks exclusively at what is going on inside Northern Ireland. All of the contributions come from individuals based in Northern Ireland and who, at one level or another, have been closely, personally involved in one or other aspect of this on-going and wide-ranging debate. The idea therefore was to seek out material which would provide insight into the internal workings of the processes by which the Ulster-Scots cultural agenda is being put in place on the ground and how it is in the process of becoming an integral part of the cultural landscape in Northern Ireland²⁶.

- 34 It goes without saying that representations of Ulster-Scots culture go well beyond the six-county frame to include a series of other spaces and communities – Scotland, the Ulster-Scots community in the border areas in the Republic, Canada, the United States. While being only too conscious of the vital contribution that these spaces have made to the consolidation of the emerging image of Ulster-Scots and to the internal dynamic of the Ulster-Scots community, it was felt preferable to limit the content of the issue in this way so as to concentrate on what is clearly the epicentre of the overall project. There is, however, clearly enough material for a second volume of essays on the Ulster-Scots diaspora!
- 35 The issue is divided into three sections.
- 36 The opening section features four articles centred on aspects of Ulster-Scots literature and publishing.
- 37 Anne Smyth, in her article entitled “Publishing the ‘invisible’ language – some influences on Ulster-Scots publishing in the modern revival period”, looks at one of the main areas that have contributed to the recent revival of interest in Ulster-Scots. The Ulster-Scots Language Society, of which she is chair, is responsible for *Ullans*, first published in 1993, a magazine which has played a major role in bringing to the attention of the public the considerable body of work that exists within the Ulster-Scots tradition. This has involved locating and reediting material much of which has long been out of print. But as importantly, the Society has been involved in encouraging the publication of new writing in Ulster-Scots. Smyth’s article points to the need to establish a benchmark for the quality of material in and on Ulster-Scots. Some of this material initially selected by *Ullans* features in the selection of Ulster-Scots writing at the end of the present volume.
- 38 Ivan Herbison, in his article, “Beyond the Rhyming Weavers”, looks at what is unquestionably one of the fundamental bodies of writing in Ulster-Scots – the work of the “weaver poets”. In this essay, Herbison reconsiders the position of John Hewitt whose *The Rhyming Weavers* (1974), is widely seen as having played a seminal role in drawing attention to the intrinsic interest of this literary tradition. Herbison argues that Hewitt’s time frame is too restrictive and suggests that the tradition should be seen as continuing to function well into the twentieth century.
- 39 Caroline Baraniuk’s paper, “Poetic justice: ensuring a place for Ulster-Scots literature within the school curriculum in the north of Ireland”, examines the way in which the lively tradition of poetry in Ulster-Scots which Herbison discusses has failed to find any place in the education system in Northern Ireland. She questions the exclusion of this literary tradition from the classroom and calls for a re-think on the part of those designing the curriculum in order that pupils might have access to this material which forms such an integral part of their cultural heritage.

- 40 Philip Robinson, in his essay entitled “Ulster-Scots Psalmody: A consideration”, addresses what historically has been another area of fundamental importance to the literary tradition of the mainstream Ulster-Scots community: the place of religious texts and in particular the significance of the Psalms. Robinson’s own work as an author is impregnated with a deep knowledge of the significance of the Bible as a means by which to access the inner workings of the community he foregrounds in his novels. In this paper, he explores the intimate nature of the latter’s relationship with the Psalms and explains the complex issues involved in translating them and the Scriptures in general into Ulster-Scots.
- 41 The second section of the issue looks at the presence of Ulster-Scots culture in the broader community.
- 42 Laura Spence, in her “Broadcasting Ulster-Scots: Ulster-Scots media provision in the modern revival period”, offers a broad overview of how television and radio have responded to the demand within Northern Ireland for material in and on Ulster-Scots. Speaking from first-hand experience as a producer with BBC Northern Ireland, she gives a very precise idea of the considerable diversity of material that has been put out – ranging from adaptations of literary works to programmes on history and language. As with publishing and the school curriculum, television and the radio are key indicators of the extent to which minority cultures succeed in penetrating the public sphere and in establishing their presence as part of the cultural mainstream.
- 43 Spence’s paper is followed by two papers on what is undoubtedly one of the most important areas of popular involvement with Ulster-Scots-related activity: music. Willie Drennan, himself a traditional musician, in his article, “Fiddles, Flutes, Drums and Fifes”, gives what he sees as an identikit image of Ulster-Scots music. He goes on to give a first-hand account of his experience of the music scene in Northern Ireland as someone who has actively promoted Ulster-Scots material. Once again, his direct, personal experience – he founded and headed the Ulster-Scots Youth Orchestra and currently publishes the paper *Ulster Folk* – allows him to give an invaluable assessment of the many difficulties facing the Ulster-Scots music scene.
- 44 Gordon Ramsey’s paper, “The Ulster-Scots Musical Revival: Transforming Tradition in a Post-Conflict Environment”, comes at the issue of Ulster-Scots music from the totally different perspective of the anthropologist. In this paper, Ramsey explores what distinguishes the Ulster-Scots music scene from that of Irish traditional music not only in terms of style, but also in terms of the social make-up and expectations of the performers and the audiences.
- 45 The last three papers look at various aspects of the connections between Ulster-Scots and political and religious affiliation. Once again, each of the articles on what is a particularly sensitive area comes from someone with a recognizable “voice” in Northern Ireland.
- 46 Ian Parsley, Chairman of the Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund, in his essay, “Language and Politics in Ireland – a Constructive or Destructive Interconnection?” looks at what he sees as the damage that can result from too close an association between a minority language and a political agenda and calls for more work to be done to reinforce the language component of the Ulster-Scots equation. Liam Logan, a presenter with the BBC’s flagship radio programme on Ulster-Scots, *A Kist o Wurds*, in his, “The Irish Ulster Scot”, gives us the perspective of an Ulster-Scots enthusiast who comes from the Catholic nationalist community. Whereas a considerable body of material is now available on Protestant

commitment to the Irish language, little or nothing exists on the theme of Catholic involvement in Ulster-Scots. In the concluding essay, “Common Identity”, Dr. Ian Adamson, founder of the Ullans Academy, looks at the ways in which Ulster-Scots can contribute to moving debate on language and cultural issues away from the confrontational frame in which it has been so often contained and towards a shared, dialogic position. The article shows some of the surprising connections discussion on Ulster-Scots issues can stimulate within sectors of the community which are frequently excluded from cultural debate.

- 47 The final section of the issue presents a small selection of Ulster-Scots texts designed to give readers a taste of the kind of material available. The selection includes material from the beginning of the 19th century until today.

Conclusion

- 48 O’Faolain talks in the passage quoted above of the need for a tradition to be “manhandled, shaken up”, and points out that questioning rituals, far from destabilising them, can result in their being strengthened. There are clear signs in work by people like Fenton, Robinson, Davison and others that there are those within the Ulster-Scots community today who are prepared to challenge the familiar paradigms and to move beyond the reassuring patterns of the past. The next phase in the process should continue to push further in that direction.

NOTES

1. <<http://www.pur-editions.fr/detail.php?idOuv=2010>>
2. As evidence of this interest, see for example the high level of demand for Irish classes at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris. These classes are given under the auspices of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth as part of the Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge programme.
3. For example, Michael Montgomery, *From Ulster to America: The Scotch-Irish Heritage of American English*, Belfast, Ulster Historical Foundation, 2006, and Anne Smyth, Michael Montgomery and Philip Robinson (ed.), *The Academic Study of Ulster-Scots: Essays for and by Robert J. Gregg*, Belfast, National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland, 2006.
4. For example, Raymond Hickey, “Ulster Scots in present-day Ireland”, in Raymond Hickey (ed.), *Researching the Languages of Ireland*, Uppsala, Uppsala University, 2011, p. 291-323.
5. For example, Máiréad Nic Craith, *Culture and Identity Politics in Northern Ireland*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, especially Chapter 4, p. 70-94.
6. For example, his work as editor in the remarkable Belfast Studies in Language, Culture and Politics series published by Cló Ollscoil na Banríona, Queen’s University, Belfast.

7. For example, the Public Consultation on Proposals for An Ulster-Scots Academy organised by DCAL in 2008.
8. The Agreement, Agreement reached in the multi-party negotiations, Economic, social and cultural issues, paragraph 3.
9. See North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, Schedule 1, "Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland establishing Implementation Bodies" available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/1999/859/schedule/1/made>
10. Even though Irish in Northern Ireland obtained Part III status under the Charter, the Irish language lobby considers that the British government has taken a minimalist approach to their commitments. For an explanation of this position, see: <http://www.pobal.org/english/europeancharter.php> See also Aodán Mac Póilin, *Towards an Irish Language Strategy for Northern Ireland*, Belfast, Ultach, 2012.
11. St. Andrews Agreement, Annex B, "Human rights, equality, victims and other issues": "The Government firmly believes in the need to enhance and develop the Ulster Scots language, heritage and culture and will support the incoming Executive in taking this forward".
12. The terminology used in the text is strikingly similar. Compare: "enhance and develop the Ulster Scots language, heritage and culture" with "enhance and protect the development of the Irish language". The British governments' commitment on this occasion to bring forward an Irish Language Act (*Acht na Gaeilge*) has yet to be fulfilled.
13. See Aodan Mac Poilin, "Plus ça change : The Irish language and politics", in Aodan Mac Poilin (ed.), *The Irish Language in Northern Ireland*, Belfast, Ultach Trust, 1997, p. 31-48 : "The 1915 meeting was the moment when the language movement was subsumed into the nationalist political movement" (p. 42-43).
14. See Diarmait Mac Giolla Chriost, *Jailtacht: The Irish Language, Symbolic Power and Political Violence in Northern Ireland, 1972-2008*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2012.
15. This is not to say that the republican movement has a monopoly of control on the language in the North. As with Ulster-Scots, Irish is a house of many mansions. Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that the republican movement has maintained a particularly high profile in defence of the language.
16. Sean O'Faolain, "1916-1941: Tradition and Creation", *The Bell*, vol. 2, n° 1 (April 1941), p. 7 and p. 11, quoted in François Sablayrolles, "La Biographie historique et son influence sur la fiction réaliste de l'entre-deux-guerres en Irlande : L'exemple de Sean O'Faolain", doctoral thesis, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle-Paris 3, 2013, p. 60.
17. See *Langue dominante, langues dominées*, Paris, Edilig, 1982. This is a collection of essays which had originally appeared in the review, *Pourquoi?*, with an introduction by Robert Lafont.
18. Revd M. Mullin, "The Celtic Tongue", in Tony Crowley, *The Politics of Language in Ireland, 1366-1922: A Sourcebook*, London, Routledge, 2000, p. 168.
19. Lafont argued that the notion of diglossia could be extended beyond its initial definition and applied to the (conflictual) relationship between two languages present on the same territory, French and Occitan, for example.
20. « Il faut toujours tenir compte du fait que la diglossie se structure en reproduction dans la conscience même des défenseurs de la langue dominée. Ainsi, le parleur limousin, devant un

limousin normalisé, va juger étrangers les termes qui complètent son vocabulaire limousin “vers le haut” [...] Il va généralement entériner l’infériorité des registres d’usage en les valorisant idéologiquement. Toutes les langues dominées sont des langues “du cœur”, ou “des tripes”; elles sont l’occasion d’une charge populiste contre l’intellectualité. Tel est le détour où s’assure la domination. La normalisation des langues est un combat à l’intérieur de la conscience diglossique . » Robert Lafont, “La privation d’avenir ou le crime contre les cultures”, *Langue dominante, langues dominées*, Paris, Edilig, 1982, p. 28 (my translation).

21. “Es tracta d’una sensació d’instabilitat ‘nacional’, que no és fàcil de guarir. El província és ‘provincià’: ex-cèntric. Vaga pels afores de l’Estat i pels afores de la mitologia estatal. Ha intentat d’assimilar-s’hi, i ho ha aconseguit en part. Però els fets de cada dia li demonstren que l’altra part d’ell seguix inassimilada: inassimilable. No li val res d’apropriar-se la llengua, la cultura, l’estil que li brinda el centre; ni l’abandó ‘sucursalista’ no li val de res. Mentre viurà a la província i formarà en la seva societat, sera un provincià”. Joan Fuster, *Nosaltres els Valencians* [1962], Barcelona, El Cangur, 2001, p. 247-248.

22. See for example the profusion of material that emerges on both sides of the Atlantic when it becomes clear that the Liberal Party had become committed to Home Rule. Thus, texts such as Charles A. Hanna’s two volume, *The Scotch-Irish*, 1902, Henry Jones Ford’s, *The Scotch-Irish in America*, 1915, John Harrison’s, *The Scot in Ulster: Sketch of the History of the Scottish Population of Ulster*, 1888, and William Reid’s, *The Scot in America and The Ulster Scot*, 1912, testify to the intensity of interest in the Ulster-Scot enterprise at the time.

23. It is interesting to note that David Trimble organised the conference that was to lead to the setting up of the Ulster Society in September 1985, a few weeks before the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, and that one of the papers presented at that conference and printed in *Ulster – An Ethnic Nation?* concerned the issue of language as an essential element of this “nation”; see John Braidwood, “The Ulster Dialect – A Distinctive Speech of a Distinctive People”, *Ulster – An Ethnic Nation?*, Lurgan, The Ulster Society, 1986, p. 24-40.

24. W.F. Marshall, *Ulster Sails West* [1943], Belfast, Century Services, 1976, p. 14.

25. Indeed, the sometimes delicate identity balances Ulster-Scots writing has sought to maintain may come under even greater pressure as a result of next year’s referendum in Scotland.

26. The issue does not claim to be exhaustive. For example, it does not feature targeted material on what is clearly one of the primary routes through which many experience Ulster-Scots branded activities: Scottish country and Highland dancing. See for example, the booklet aimed at school children and young people, *An Introduction to Scottish Country Dancing: 6 Dances for Beginners*, published by the Ulster-Scots Community Network in Belfast, or the material on dance that appears regularly in the pages of *The Ulster Scot*.

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