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*F. W. Freeman*

## The Intellectual Background of the Vernacular Revival before Burns



Arguments favourable to the revival of literature in Scots begin in the sixteenth century and evolve over the next two centuries. For two ideas arose out of the Ancient versus Modern controversy that were to persist in different forms: namely, that national languages are the unique expression of each nation's natural genius, itself determined by climate and topography, mainly; and, second, that the language of poetry is natural and unpolished, the spoken tongue of the uneducated. On this side of the debate were the early Moderns, Nash, Puttenham, Chapman, in the sixteenth century; Daniel, Cowley, Temple, and Dennis, in the seventeenth.<sup>1</sup> Daniel, for example, in the debate concerning classical and indigenous metrics argues that

Every language hath her proper number or measure  
fitted to vse and delight, which Custome intertainage  
by the allowance of the Eare, doth indenize and make  
naturall. (*A Defence of Ryme*--1603)<sup>2</sup>

And in his appreciative essays on the natural and vigorous poetry of the Goths, "Of Heroic Virtue" and "Of Poetry," Temple stimulated an interest in ancient poetry which reached fruition in the activities of the Wartons half a century later.

With the critics were English linguists and antiquaries who applied these ideas to Scotland. The Scots tongue won recognition from 1623, the year of Sir Henry Spellman's lectureship in Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge and William L'Isle's publication of a treatise by Aelfric. This was in conjunction with the revival of Old English. Later in the century the Middle Scots poem *Christ's Kirk On The Green* was edited with *Polemo Middinia* by Edmund Gibson, Anglo-Saxon scholar and Bishop of Lincoln, who first described this unaureate folk based poetry as classic.<sup>3</sup> In his day Scottish songs and ballads too enjoyed a vogue in England, chiefly through the plays of Mrs. Behn and Tom D'Urfey, and the song collections of D'Urfey and Playford. Long before Ramsay these English song collectors and composers invented the myth of a pastoral Scotland, full of unlettered Jockys and Maggys, who spoke a pure poetic language and demonstrated the virtues of the simple life.<sup>4</sup>

In Scotland the two ideas of national and poetic language appeared quite early. In fact, G. M. Miller credits James VI with the first explicit statement in Britain of historical criticism,<sup>5</sup> though he might well have mentioned the first "Proloug" of Gavin Douglas's *Aeneis*, which proposes to give Scottis the status of the other heroic languages. Nevertheless, in "Ane Schort Treatise" (1584) James VI gives grounds for writing a work on Scottis poetry from the basis of a unique language and poetry. As he says, his second major reason for adding another treatise to the numerous treatises on the subject is,

...That as for thame that hes written in it of late, there hes never ane of thame written in our language. For albeit sindrie hes written of it in English, quhilk is lykest to our language, 3it we differ from thame in sindrie reulis of Poesie, as 3e will find be experience.<sup>6</sup>

Elsewhere in the "Treatise" he condemns imitation of foreign models since "Inuention...is ane of the cheif properteis of ane Poete" and must "come of Nature," of native descriptions and subject matter.<sup>7</sup> His directives "to frame 3our wordis and sentencis according to the mater," which he discusses in relation to all classes of poetry, make a place, however patronisingly, for a vigorous rural poetry.<sup>8</sup> Dryden's friend, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, whom he admired as the "noble wit of Scotland,"<sup>9</sup> carried on the debate for the national language in the seventeenth century in accordance with the ideas of national disposition and natural expression. In 1673 Sir George says flatly that Scots is superior to French and English; it is "like our selves, firy, abrupt, sprightly,

and bold;" and is more "natural" in pronunciation than English, as is proven in the ease with which Scotsmen learn Latin, French, Spanish, and other foreign languages.<sup>10</sup> He distinguishes further between English, an "invented" language, invented by courtiers, and Scots, a "natural" language, spoken by the "commons" and by "learned men and men of businesse."<sup>11</sup> After Mackenzie of Rosehaugh these arguments fell eventually into the hands of the earliest Revivalists: James Watson, a founding father of the Revival, who edited Mackenzie's *Works* (1716-22); and Thomas Ruddiman, Mackenzie's successor as Keeper of the Advocate's Library, and one of the chief vernacular printers.

The eighteenth-century Scottish antiquaries and poets, then, inherited the legacy of the Moderns on both sides of the border; they were to make the same assumptions while modifying them with current sympathetic literary and philosophical trends. An obvious case in point is Thomas Ruddiman, a man with a strong sense of the past and a discerning, realistic understanding of the present. In 1710 he and his colleagues produced an edition of Gavin Douglas's *Aeneis* and revived the age-old contentions of the Scottish historical school. Given Douglas's avowed linguistic purpose for Scottis, Ruddiman's choice of that makar was carefully weighed, helping him to strike the right balance between past and present. In the editorial notes to the *Aeneis*, Ruddiman maintains, with his eyes on the English antiquaries before him, that Middle Scots literature is classic; on a par with that of Chaucer and Gower; and, as a language, equal to Greek and Latin.<sup>12</sup> With Mackenzie of Rosehaugh and the early primitivists, he distinguishes between the "full Force and genuine Meaning" of Scots and the weak, diffuse quality of English.<sup>13</sup> In short, his arguments deviate little from what came before him, but with one conspicuous exception. He is among the first to suggest that the living speech of "the Vulgar" is in great part Old Scots.<sup>14</sup> This was a necessary ingredient for the literary status of the colloquial Scots used by Ramsay and his successors. And Ruddiman's suggestion was partly valid. Eighteenth-century literary Scots bears little relation to the aureate diction of the makars; least of all to the language of Douglas's *Aeneis*. But it was related to the Middle Scots of *Christ's Kirk On The Green*; some of Henryson's *Moral Faibillis* and his lighter pieces; Lyndsay's poems; and many of the traditional ballads and songs published by the eighteenth-century collectors. As we shall see, Ruddiman merely blurred the distinction for sound practical and philosophical reasons.

Sir John Clerk of Penicuik was another Scottish antiquary who built upon the old Ancient versus Modern controversy. His "An Enquiry into the Ancient Languages of Great Britain" is an

historical apology for vernacular Scots: on one hand, concerning the imposition of English upon Scotland, he cites the historical precedents that "in all ages it was a common thing for the people of the same nation to have different languages;" on the other, with regard to the history of language in Britain, he argues that the "old low Scottish language" is actually the "genuine Saxon," its purest form.<sup>15</sup> Clerk knows the background of debate, and in an admirably compressed passage states his case, judiciously interweaving the watchwords of two centuries into it: "polish," "beauty and energy" (the argument from poetic languages); "sound and gratification," "Custom" (the argument from natural national language).

We in Scotland have, no doubt, since the union of the crowns, been endeavouring to polish our language, at least to make it more conformable to that of our neighbours in England; but, if any body will take the trouble to read Blind Harry's *Life of Sir William Wallace*, or Bishop Gawin Douglas's *Virgil*, they will discover many words that have not changed for the better, and some that have a great deal more beauty and energy in them than those we find in our present poetry. But, to dip no further into the matter than merely the sound and gratification of our ears, it is impossible for me to discern more beauty in this for dis, in the for die, or that for dat; nor in the following words father, mother, brother, sister, earth, much, and such, for vader, mooder, brooder, zuster, erde, mickle & c. but it would be irksome to carry the comparison farther. Custom, as in matters of dress, gives a beauty to words, yet such as cannot be supported by the best reasons.<sup>16</sup>

The opinions of Dr. Alexander Geddes, vernacular poet and antiquary, were generally known decades before his valuable contributions to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, entitled "Three Scottish Poems, with a previous Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect."<sup>17</sup> His is perhaps a more fully developed statement of Revivalist thought than of Ruddiman or Clerk of Penicuik, in that he carries the previous inferences of the antiquaries to their logical conclusions. Like Clerk of Penicuik he begins with an historical approach to language in Britain and arrives at various questions regarding the nature of poetry and poetic language. But there is a crucial difference in his conclusion. Scoto-Saxon, he affirms, was at the Union of the Crowns "in some respects superior to the Anglo-Saxon dialect," especially in its "richness, energy, and harmony;" the variety of its inflections, the boldness of its

gutteral ch sounds, the harmony of its vowels, the brilliance of its economy. How, then, he ponders, could our forefathers have discarded their tongue for an "inferior language?" For, above all, Scotto-Saxon was the language of poetry, particularly of epic and tragedy, of "confessed superiority."<sup>18</sup> At this point Geddes begins to come out with what the others implied, and mentions, as if to create the second premise of a syllogistic defence, that despite the loss of Scots among the learned, it yet lives on in its "native purity" in the dialects of the common folk: "Amang the uncorruptit poor."<sup>19</sup> The reader is prepared for the final deduction that a modern Scots poet might use vernacular words for greater linguistic effect than would be produced "by their English equivalents," and that a modern Scots epic on Fergus II might be composed from a conflation of Scottish dialects.<sup>20</sup> The epic aside, this was no more nor less than a defense of vernacular poetry as it had been written throughout the century.

There was another group in Scotland that supported, at least as much as they opposed, the Vernacular Revival; and that was the literati. The two seminal ideas of the Moderns had impressed themselves upon them in a different form, with the rise throughout Europe of full-blown primitivist and genetic, or culturally relativist, theories of history. These theories encouraged the patronage of a national "folk" literature. And, from where the literati stood, direct patronage it was. Hume and Smith were patrons of native poets like Hamilton of Bangour and Dr. William Wilkie, both of whom contributed to the Revival.<sup>21</sup> Smith actually wrote the preface to Bangour's *Poems On Several Occasions* (1748). Beattie, a veritable Jekyll and Hyde on the question of Scots language, aided Alexander Ross in the publication of his works and composed a dedicatory epistle in Scots to Ross's *Helanore*. William and his son Alexander Fraser Tytler took an unusual interest in several vernacular poets: Ramsay, John Mayne, John Black, William Tennant, and Burns.<sup>22</sup> There were at times substantial contributions made to the Scots Revival in the literati's own hand. The Tytlers helped with Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, and published the *Poetical Remains of James the First, King of Scotland* (William Tytler, 1783) and "Remarks on the Genius and Writings of Allan Ramsay" (Alexander Fraser Tytler in Ramsay's *Poems*, 1800).<sup>23</sup> Lord Hailes too edited *Ancient Scottish Poems* (1770), sent specimens of a projected *Scottish Glossary* to antiquaries in Scotland, and offered Boswell help with his own projected Scots dictionary.<sup>24</sup> Privately and publicly the literati agreed with the critical opinions of Ruddiman, Clerk of Penicuik, and the others. For the interested, all the general contentions about Scots language, its comparability with Greek and Latin, its purity and boldness, its poetic merit, can be

found in Adam Smith's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, Boswell's "French Theme" on a Scots dictionary; and in several comments of Lord Monboddo in *Of The Origin and Progress of Language*.<sup>25</sup> They are most amusingly recast by Smollett, in *Humphry Clinker*, through the character of Lismahago. No doubt they were arguments familiar enough in their day to place before the reading public.

He [Lismahago] proceeded to explain his assertion that the English language was spoken with greater propriety at Edinburgh than in London.--He said, what we generally called the Scottish dialect was, in fact, true, genuine old English, with a mixture of some French terms and idioms, adopted in a long intercourse betwixt the French and Scotch nations; that the modern English, from affectation and false refinement, had weakened, and even corrupted their language, by throwing out the guttural sounds, altering the pronunciation and the quantity, and disusing many words and terms of great significance. In consequence of these innovations, the works of our best poets, such as Chaucer, Spenser, and even Shakespeare, were become, in many parts, unintelligible to the natives of South Britain, whereas the Scots, who retain the ancient language, understand them without the help of a glossary.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, with Alexander Geddes the literati were prepared to support the use of Scots for pastoral poetry. They were especially pleased with Ramsay's use of it. No less unlikely a proponent than Henry Mackenzie, in a letter to Elizabeth Rose of Kilvarock, writes that *The Gentle Shepherd* is the finest modern pastoral; remarks on its "Simplicity" and "Force," and laments the passing of its language; presently "one of its Beauties."<sup>27</sup> Boswell places Ramsay in the great tradition of Scottish poetry; and in his *Life of Johnson* mentions a conversation with Johnson and Goldsmith where he (Boswell)

spoke of Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," in the Scottish dialect, as the best pastoral that had ever been written; not only abounding with beautiful rural imagery, and just and pleasing sentiments, but being a real picture of manners...<sup>28</sup>

Hugh Blair's lecture "Pastoral Poetry--Lyric Poetry" from his *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, the bible of Enlightenment criticism, is proof that this opinion had become orthodox among the literati. In the lecture Blair dismisses

Pope's and Philip's pastorals for "barrenness" of genius while comparing Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* with "any Composition of its kind, in any Language," despite its unique local setting.<sup>29</sup>

Of interest as much for the psychologist as for the literary scholar are the arguments of those who took no part in the Vernacular Revival and those who opposed it strongly. Dr. William Robertson, who consciously weeded out Scotticisms from his English prose, falls into the first category. In his *History of Scotland* Robertson, as one would expect of an historicist, justly describes as arbitrary the English linguistic standard applied to Scots after the withdrawal of the court in 1603. The English, he writes, naturally became the sole judges of language and merely rejected "every form of speech to which their ear was not accustomed."<sup>30</sup> The Scots tongue at the end of the sixteenth century was, in his estimation, not inferior in "elegance" or "purity" to English; even at the time of Union (1707), he observes, members of the Scots Parliament expressed themselves with "energy" and "elegance."<sup>31</sup> His relativist approach also leads him to speculate, somewhat longingly, upon a great linguistic tradition where the various Scots dialects would have been compared to the dialects of Greek,<sup>32</sup> and upon a great literary tradition that might have flourished to the present day.<sup>33</sup> In the second category were the committed Anglicisers. Often their arguments too represent mixed feelings. In *Propriety Ascertained In Her Picture*, written in a quasi-phonetic spelling, James Elphinston, Edinburgh educationalist and grammarian, sets out to represent Scots as a thing of the past. But, in the tugging of emotions on two sides, his attempt is abortive, and he ends up in a recapitulation of the antiquarians' defense of the language. He commends the English for venerating Douglas and Ramsay with Chaucer and Spenser; he admires Scotland's new-found ability to do justice to her "wonce melodious and expressive, dho now passing, dialect;" having lost his original point, he says, complacently, now the vernacular "may be regularly and effectually trezzured" with the dialects of Spain, with Provençal and French, Latin, Greek, and Gallic."<sup>34</sup> Sir John Sinclair's pleas against Scots reveal the same divisiveness. To their patent discredit they begin where Ruddiman left off in his observations of 1710 on the *Aeneis*, and they ineffectually attempt to reverse popular linguistic theories regarding the barrenness of modern language.

That the Scots should indulge a strong partiality in favour of their own dialect, is the less to be wondered at, when we consider how many words are now condemned as Scotticisms, which were formerly admired for their strength and beauty, and may still

be found in the writings of Chaucer, of Spenser, of Shakespeare, and other celebrated English authors. Indeed, many words in the Old English or Scottish dialects, are so emphatical and significant, that, as Ruddiman observes, it is difficult to find words in the modern English capable of expressing their full force, and genuine meaning. But what our language has lost in strength, it has gained in elegance and correctness.<sup>35</sup>

And so the arguments ran. Several ideas branched from the two seminal ones of the sixteenth century. Scots, with Old English, literature was accepted as classic. Scottis was taken to be the purest Saxon and was placed beside ancient Greek and Latin; as a forceful, energetic tongue it took on northern poetic associations, and was thought superior to English in strength and economy.<sup>36</sup> Custom, from nature, was its source and philosophical justification, as its validity resided in its suitability for the people that created it. Its possibilities for literature were as unlimited as the genius of the artist.

If the ideas that promoted vernacular language were centuries old, they were at the same time quite modern. The Revival, it appears, is a matter of new forces supporting old tendencies: it both continues from the past and looks forward with the times. Those old forces of primitivism and historicism gained momentum in the eighteenth century, were taken up by the Enlightenment, and, more than ever, continued to influence literary taste.

#### PRIMITIVISM

In her commendable work on primitivism and eighteenth-century literature, Lois Whitney discerns a firm link between philosopher and literator in their reaction to the new theories of Hobbes and Mandeville upholding the utility of luxury. She says,

In the value set on simplicity, propaganda against luxury (in this case "a literature of primitivism") joins hands with one of the leading ideas of the philosophy of the Enlightenment.<sup>37</sup>

This becomes clearer as we examine some of the implications of primitivism and also, in this connection, the influence of Rousseau, in particular, upon Scottish philosophy. Rousseau and the literati found the modern commercial state sadly wanting; it produced non-citizens; it was overly acquisitive; its

practices corrupted the masses, and disqualified everyone from democratic government; still worse, it debilitated the mind of the individual, confined and segregated it within the habits of specialised thinking.<sup>38</sup> The typical reaction to this in Edinburgh was to muster up opposing examples of primitives who possessed those elusive qualities valued by the moderns, and brought together in a national epic like *Ossian*.<sup>39</sup> But Rousseau, it may be argued, altered the course of Scottish primitivism, and changed the reaction in a meaningful way. He enlarged its frame of reference to include the rustics and peasants of the present day.<sup>40</sup> He superimposed the ideally conceived rural past upon the rural present; simply, made the present the past; and his modern rustics primitives. In the country, he says,

We forget the age we live in, and the vices of our contemporaries, and are transported in imagination to the time of the patriarchs...<sup>41</sup>

His romanticised farmers are, moreover, the true citizens of modern society, in close communion with nature and the natural social order.

Now Rousseau did talk of farmers in a vague, general way, though, as a proud Swiss, he often found it useful to speak of his farmers as citizens of his own nation; sometimes to conceive of his nation as essentially rural and traditional. His primitivism was in great measure bound up with the preservation of a unique Swiss culture. The Swiss, says he, somewhat defiantly,

know how to live; not in the sense these words would be taken in France, where it would be understood they had adopted certain customs and manners in vogue...<sup>42</sup>

It is this side of Rousseau that is worth taking note of; it has its parallels in Scotland in the works of Hutcheson, Millar, Kames, Smith, and Reid.<sup>43</sup> Their primitivism too had a distinctly nationalistic bent, and often they tended to domesticate their arguments. Kames was quick to discover vigorous men, of the Ossianic variety admired by Smith and Hume, in several areas of Scotland. And Smith taught his pupils at Glasgow University that the peasants of Scotland were superior, in the idealistic sense, to their counterparts in England and Holland.<sup>44</sup>

These notions were certainly favourable to the Revival; but there were related ideas of greater bearing upon the movement that had adopted a literary "folk self" and that used the

language of contemporary rustics.<sup>45</sup> Rousseau's ideas must be considered of primary importance here. He is himself a bit of a vernacular revivalist when he censures ignorance of the native tongue and asserts that the language of the commonality is that of liberty and continued independence. When he attacks learning for obliterating the people's dialects and producing monotonous speech; when he commends the peasants' language of "plain spoken goodness," its force and directness; when he protests that literary languages "lose in power what they gain in clarity," he speaks for vernacular movements throughout Europe.<sup>46</sup> Linguistically the Scottish Enlightenment was with him, at least in so far as it accepted his beliefs about the vitality and purity of primitive (in the wider sense) languages. They almost unanimously allowed that refinement brought artificial language; "dull and lifeless articulations of unmeaning sounds;" a definite deterioration of verbal power.<sup>47</sup> Poetically they stood with men like Diderot who placed the most barbarous people highest on his scale of the poetically spirited.<sup>48</sup> In his course of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at Glasgow University, Smith made the same claims for Scots poetry, ancient and modern. "Hardyknute," "The Cherry and the Slae," "Three Died in Lochaber," "Wallace Wight" were in fact poems he once chose as examples of the "most excellent" poetry of "barbarous, least civilised nations."<sup>49</sup>

European philosophy, this includes Scottish, then, supplied real props for the Vernacular Revival through the equation of rural with primitive. Hoxie Fairchild rightly underlines the Arcadian status Collins accords "not to Indians, or Lapps, but to Scotch peasants" in "Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland."<sup>50</sup> For this is a typical example of the equation applied to literature, as it often was in the numerous revivals that sprang up in Europe.<sup>51</sup>

In England different manifestations of primitivism were conducive to the Scots Revival. English antiquarianism for one followed up its early interest in Middle Scots literature through the efforts of the first literary historians. They gave special attention to Douglas, Dunbar, and Lyndsay, and to Scots song and balladry; they also made some attempt to influence the Scots to write a history of their own poetry.<sup>52</sup> In a more general way English primitivist beliefs about untaught poets<sup>53</sup> naturally reflected upon the Scots Revival, as is evident in Lloyd and Colman's burlesque of "The Bard" by Gray.

Shall not applauding critics hail the vogue?  
Whether the Muse the style of Cambria's sons,  
Or the rude gabble of the Huns,  
Or the broader dialect  
Of Caledonia she affect... ("Two Odes--Ode I")<sup>54</sup>

Lloyd and Colman were quite right; Gray's notions did entail the acceptance of vernacular poetry. One interesting, and virtually unknown, example of an English poet's even writing in Scots was a poem composed by Collins, and circulated in Scotland among the literati.<sup>55</sup> Another manifestation of primitivism was English pastoral theory, one strain of which tended to a "hard" primitivism and called for a "rude and uncultivated" language. To the Englishman, Scots was better suited for pastoral than his own provincial dialects; it was just that bit exotic.<sup>56</sup> Shenstone was one of the pastoralists who found in the language of Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* "an admirable Kind of Doric;" John Langhorne was another, who drew comparisons between the Greek language and poetry of Theocritus's idylls and a broad Scots doric and pastoral poetry.<sup>57</sup> The extent to which these opinions were in the air and affected the Scots vernacular movement from its beginning may be measured by Ramsay's first "Preface" to his works (1721). In it he quotes at length from Dr. Sewel, the London editor of one of his pastorals, who ranks him among "our old *English Poets*" and classifies his "*Scotticisms*" with the "*Doric Dialect of Theocritus*."<sup>58</sup> By 1772 John Aikin could speak objectively of the unmistakable "advantage" Ramsay had gained by writing in Scots.<sup>59</sup>

Primitivism was obviously beneficial to the vernacular movement, such that the movement gained much through emphasizing its rural and Theocritean associations. That the emphasis was conscious is hardly a matter of conjecture.

#### HISTORICISM

A theory of national art forms and national standards of taste naturally evolved with the eighteenth century comparative and genetic approach to history. Legal historians like Montesquieu based his thesis of the "general spirit" of a people, in *The Spirit of Laws*, upon variations of climate, soil, and topography; and additionally attributed to the variations a nation's character of mind and their passions of heart. It was necessary, then, he contended, for government and laws to be "relative" to these differences that citizens might follow the bent of their "natural genius."<sup>60</sup> In short, he would perpetuate national individuality on the basis of law alone. It was not difficult to take this further than law, as Montesquieu and his followers, especially Voltaire, were quick to do. In Voltaire's scheme of things, each nation possessed a unique, and irreplaceable, "genie," manifested in its customs, manners, and language.<sup>61</sup> From this assumption he argued for relative aesthetics and national standards of taste. If nature remains everywhere the same, nations, however, he

avers, naturally and legitimately differ; it is wrong to judge of one culture by the criteria of another.<sup>62</sup> In his popular treatise on the subject of taste, *The Temple of Taste*, Voltaire expounds this theory with specific relation to the "peculiar genius" of each national language. In a defense of French song for Frenchmen he exclaims, through the character of Cardinal de Polignac, that "Nature, which is fertile, ingenious, and wise, speaks to all mankind; but with different accents; thus every people has its distinct Language, as well as Genius, its sounds, and its accents, suited to its organs of speech; marked out, with exactness, by the hand of nature herself: the difference is very sensible to a fine and judicious ear."<sup>63</sup> It followed that each country also had a "distinct literary expression" to compliment its language: hence, literature was conceived as local and national.<sup>64</sup> And no argument of provinciality could be levelled against it.

In Europe these ideas bred a strong reaction, mainly to France as it was the dominant culture of the day. Paul Hazard describes the massive countermovement in his work on European thought of the period.

Resistance here; rebellion there; fierce endeavor to bring down France from her envied throne; different languages, literature and philosophies all directed to the task of giving utterance to an upsurge of national feeling that gathers strength with every day that passes...<sup>65</sup>

In Switzerland, one of France's cultural conquests, Rousseau was busy carrying out the resistance Hazard describes; and in the Scandinavian countries men like Syv, Reenberg, Fasting, and Abrahamson made up vernacular revivals which mark obvious parallels with the one in Scotland.<sup>66</sup>

In England and Scotland historical mindedness led to the formation of a school of British Historicist Criticism. At the end of the seventeenth century, the seeds of it existed in Sir William Temple's concept of national "humour," the oddity and eccentricity of a country which he found desirable to cultivate.<sup>67</sup> By the time of Edward Young's *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759) Temple's notion had reached full fruition; for Young's *Conjectures* was one of the chief manifestos of historicist criticism. His main point, discussed in relation to the old Ancient versus Modern controversy, is that a modern poet should not imitate either his predecessors or contemporaries abroad if he is to equal the achievement of the Ancients. If he does so, he merely provides lesser duplicates of past models, or transplants the laurels of his nation on foreign soil. "Inventive genius," he protests, "may safely

stay at home;" for a genuine poet, like Shakespeare, uses his own "native powers;" writes in his own tongue and relies upon his own "knowledge innate."<sup>68</sup> Goldsmith, who was of the same mind, enunciated a system of historicist criticism in *An Enquiry Into The Present State of Polite Learning In Europe* (1759), in part a linguistic survey of Europe. In the survey Goldsmith criticises the polite learning of Holland for lacking national character, borrowing its taste from neighbouring nations and its language from France; and blames Germany for the same faults.<sup>69</sup> He is not xenophobic in that he supports the Berlin Academy's inclusion of foreigners; he is, rather, uneasy lest the adoption of the French language leave it "artificially supported" and destined to failure. For success in polite learning, Goldsmith assumes, having digested his Montesquieu and Voltaire, depends upon a national language formed out of the manners of the nation.<sup>70</sup> Subsequently, of all the nations he examines, Sweden wins his applause. Unlike the others it attempts polite learning in the native tongue, a rude, Scots-like vernacular, alluring for a man of primitivist leanings as well.<sup>71</sup> Goldsmith's comments on poetry and literary criticism resemble those on polite learning and language. Success in poetry, he says, depends too upon a flourishing vernacular encouraged by criticism; that is, a "national system of criticism," whose rules accommodate "the genius and temper" of the nation it wishes to refine.<sup>72</sup> It is no coincidence that Goldsmith, whose education was typically Scottish, Edinburgh followed by Leyden, should have held these critical opinions. Scotland had, as we saw earlier, a long, unbroken tradition of historicist criticism from the sixteenth century, and it was not to be left without an exponent in the eighteenth.

Thomas Blackwell, who was associated with Aberdeen University from 1718-1757 as a student, professor, and principal, notably at a time when many vernacular figures were under that University's influence, was that man. He produced *An Enquiry Into The Life And Writings Of Homer* (1735), a work that, in its popularity throughout Britain, necessarily influenced Goldsmith a good deal. Indeed, it reads like Young and Goldsmith with a strong colouring of Montesquieu and Voltaire mixed in. Blackwell begins with climate and its effect upon national manners, and advances, much as the others, a theory of national genius; the necessity of the modern poet, who would equal Homer's achievement, "to adapt his Inventions to the State and Temper of his Age and Nation." In his theory of imitation, character and setting are to be taken from real life; and all things are to be represented exactly as they are, almost exactly as the poet hears them talked of, and in his own language and dialect.<sup>73</sup> His maxim for an original writer is,

That a Poet describes nothing so happily, as what he has seen; nor talks masterly, but in his native language, and proper Idiom; nor mimicks truly other Manners, than those whose Originals he has practised and known.<sup>74</sup>

Like his Scottish predecessors, James VI or Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, Blackwell is somewhat defensive where dialects are concerned and seems to have an axe to grind with relation to English. Though he does not mention Scots specifically, he claims that a poet cannot excel in imitating another's way, "tho' perhaps preferable both in Language and Gesture to his own."<sup>75</sup> Another related point he makes, which harks back to the statements of the Scots antiquaries, is that "*a polished Language* is not fit for a great poet;" it interferes with the force of words and prevents true representation, thereby descending to mere imitation.<sup>76</sup> Whether thinking of Scots or not, Blackwell's theories belong to a context of Scottish argument of which he was well aware, and must be taken as an implicit defense of his own language.

The effect of the historical critics in England and Scotland is apparent in pastoral theory and poetry from the Pope-Philips controversy onwards, after which it moved away from neoclassical imitation and towards a more native practice. British pastoralism of the period should actually be regarded as another species of literary historicism. Its theorists, men like Tickell, Purney, even Johnson, to a degree, in England; A. F. Tytler, Aikin, and Blair in Scotland called for a rationalist pastoral upon differences which comprised historicist critical theories, those of climate, custom, and language.<sup>77</sup> Its poetic exemplars were men like Philips, Purney, and Gay, south of the border; Ramsay, Ross, Nicol, and Ferguson in the north.<sup>78</sup> Matthew McDiarmid is quite right when he sets eighteenth-century Scots poetry against the wider background of the pastoral vogue in Britain.<sup>79</sup>

We must widen our horizontal a little more to reassess what the Scots vernacular poets said and to place it in its context. Naturally they took their lead from the antiquaries who promoted their movement; or, perhaps, as William Geddie believes, they acted with the antiquaries; they were two segments of the same movement.<sup>80</sup> One detects this in the way they, as the English and Scottish antiquaries had done for them, insinuated themselves into what had become the great, classic tradition of Middle Scots literature. The "ancient" tongue, so often looked upon as a Theocritean doric, was deliberately equated with "our provincial dialects," and thus with the language of vernacular poetry.<sup>81</sup> It followed that Ramsay, who adopted the pseudonym Gawin Douglas in the Easy

Club, and used it on the first poem he ever composed,<sup>82</sup> should prophesise his own coming "twa Centries pas" to resurrect the poetry of the makars.<sup>83</sup> Beattie did as much for Ramsay in his dedication to Alexander Ross, listing "Ramsay gay" among Douglas, James I, Montgomery, Dunbar, Scot, and Drummond. And Pennicuik, or a "Friend," grouped himself with Drummond, Buchanan, Douglas, King James, and Crawford.<sup>84</sup> The Revivalist poets presented themselves to the literary world as neo-ancients, and, by all accounts of the literary historians and critics in Britain, were accepted as such.

Philosophically, it behooved them to be primitivists; to follow the example of Rousseau, and equate their rustics with the forefathers of a lost golden past. One finds this in the poets' dedications which usually begin with the equation, obviously meant as an implied philosophical justification of what is to follow. We see this at work in Ramsay's dedication to *A Collection of Scots Proverbs*, where his Scots farmers are "the Storekeepers of Heaven's Bountiths," and identified with the "Spirit of their bauld Forbears;" in Hamilton of Bangour's dedication to *The Gentle Shepherd* which prepares the reader for a drama on the "Innocence the World has lost," inspired by the "home-bred Muse" clad "in ancient Garb;" or in Ross's prefatory observations to *Helonore* on the "innocent simplicity and honest meaning among the lower ranks of people in remote parts of the country," the subjects of his pastoral.<sup>85</sup> Sometimes, as in Fergusson's "Caller Water," the poet transforms the Scottish landscape into Eden and Scottish rustics into its occupants.<sup>86</sup> The Revivalists's defense of their language and poetry also owed much to Rousseau, or, perhaps, to French pastoralists, like St. Lambert, who endowed his peasants with a natural poetic sense. The Scots poets made it clear that theirs was an untaught, north country language of poetry. In a footnote to "Fable XVI," Dr. William Wilkie, teacher and close friend of Robert Fergusson, would have his readers believe that his Scottish peasants, from whom he borrows the language of his fable, unconsciously speak natural poetry.

Thinkin) Thinking. When polysyllables terminate in ing, the Scotch almost always neglect the g, which softens the sound. Thistle) Thistle.

The Scotch, though they commonly affect soft sounds, and throw out consonants and take in vowels in order to obtain them, yet in some cases, of which this is an example, they do the very reverse: and bring in superfluous consonants to roughen the sound, when such sounds are more agreeable to the roughness of the thing represented.<sup>87</sup>

And David Herd prefaces his *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs* with the assumption about Scotland that

...the romantic face of the country, and the vacant pastoral life of a great part of its inhabitants; [are] circumstances, no doubt, highly favourable to poetry and song.<sup>88</sup>

It was in keeping with this that from Ramsay onwards vernacular poets assumed unlettered, rural personae. They sold themselves to the literary world as heaven taught ploughmen, who "only copied from Nature;" who had only to invoke the hamely muse and have before them "All nature's stores in their pure artless bed."<sup>89</sup> This was primitivism with a practical motive in mind.

Like Temple, Young, and Goldsmith in England; Blackwell in Scotland; Montesquieu and Voltaire in France, they were historicists and, in their awareness of these and other writers, not narrow nationalists. No question but that David Herd, for example, Scots antiquary and ballad collector, friend and fellow member of the Cape Club with Fergusson, had digested his Voltaire thoroughly before writing his prefatory defense of Scots song in the *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs*. "Every nation," he says,

at least every ancient and unmixed nation, hath its peculiar style of musical expression, its peculiar mode of melody; modulated by the joint influence of climate and government, character and situation, as well as by the formation of the organs. Thus each of the states of Greece had its characteristic style of music, the Doric, the Phrygian, the Lydian mood, etc., and thus the moderns have their distinct national styles, the Italian, the Spanish, the Irish, and the Scottish.<sup>90</sup>

What is more he goes on to say that the topography and life style of Scotland are particularly favourable to the "peculiar genius and spirit" of its poetry and song.<sup>91</sup> For the vernacular poet, who often expressed himself in the same terms, the inferences were obvious: the onus was on the bard to compose a national literature.

As many as the stars that gild the sky,  
As many as the flow'rs that paint the ground,  
In number like the insect tribes that fly,  
The various forms of beauty are found...

Therefore each land should freely entertain  
The hints which pleasing fancy gives at will...<sup>92</sup>

Ramsay, for instance, was acutely aware of the literary forces of the moment when he prefaced his collection of poetry of 1721 with the maxim, "Pursue your own natural Manner, and be an Original," and quoted from Dr. Young on the title page of his second volume of 1728.<sup>93</sup> The poets, then, were not, as is often claimed, xenophobic, or backward looking narrow nationalists.<sup>94</sup> They were indeed exemplars of a school of historicist criticism that was Scottish, British, and European. Anyone who doubts this assertion might look at a poem by a minor figure of the Revival: Alexander Nicol, a self-educated packman turned schoolmaster, in Collace. Nicol's "Epistle to Mr. P\_\_\_\_, one of his Majesty's Officers of Excise, on ridiculing my Verses" demonstrates the extent to which literary historicism pervaded the Vernacular Revival, and influenced the most remote of its contributors. For the "Epistle," a forty-three line defense of his poetry, is a neat recapitulation of Blackwell's *Homer*, the main argument being that

Though you who have poetic art survey'd,  
The Latin tongue, and many authors read,  
Compose fine numbers in heroic style;  
'Tis but mere imitation all the while.  
But new invention, such as Homer had,  
And in their mother-tongue, as Horace did:  
Purely they wrote, each as dame Nature taught;  
Their works new wit, new fancy, and new thought.<sup>95</sup>

In Fergusson's words, decrying the English elocutionists, it was not a matter of xenophobia but of "Throwing such barriers in the way/Of those who genius display."<sup>96</sup> The imposition of English language or, for that matter, French and Italian song, threatened to stifle the Scottish genius.<sup>97</sup> There is admittedly a paradox here: Scots poets looking outward to Europe for the support of a national cause. Yet it is undoubtedly correct to say that in their provincial activities they were, as Paul Hazard concedes, very European indeed.<sup>98</sup>

One naturally wonders why the men of the Scots Vernacular Revival were so attuned to the philosophical and literary opinions coming from across the English Channel. In the first place, eighteenth-century Scotland as a whole enjoyed its closest association with the Continent, to a degree that necessarily affected literary and antiquarian thought.<sup>99</sup> But more than this, there was a European-mindedness among the Revivalists which saw Scotland as a nation of Europe.<sup>100</sup> This was due to many factors: a long past history of continental alli-

ances; educational ties; and the Scot's natural propensity to travel and, occasionally, to settle abroad.

Certainly the educational ties were very strong and very important; insularity was not a symptom of whatever was taking place during the early Revival. Ramsay and Ruddiman's close friends, Dr. Archibald Pitcairne and Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, spent many fruitful years abroad studying at Paris and Leyden, respectively; and in the case of Pitcairne taking a professorial chair of Physic at Leyden. Both Clerk of Penicuik and Hamilton of Bangour had several years of the Grand Tour. One of the unforeseen benefits of Bangour's banishment as a Jacobite was, as it was for several others, years of further living abroad, in Sweden, Paris, Rouen, and Boulogne, and the exposure that goes with it. There were other educational ties, such as the Scots colleges on the Continent, which were normal stopping places for those on the Grand Tour. But members of the college themselves returned to Scotland and constituted a different type of Scottish Continental influence. One such influential member from the Scots College at Paris was Dr. Alexander Geddes, antiquary, scholar, linguist, and vernacular poet. Geddes who had studied at Navarre and the Sorbonne, where he refused the offer of a post, returned to Scotland in 1764. His achievements were rewarded with an honorary doctorate from Aberdeen some years later. Incidentally, the European connection made the Scots more aware of other battles for the vernacular, where they usually sided with the underdog.<sup>101</sup> In Scotland itself it was the universities that brought the men of the Revival into the sphere of contemporary European thought. For the Scottish universities, which provided the educational backgrounds and the lifetime affiliations of the printers, poets, and antiquaries, were imbued with Continental Philosophy. Montesquieu and Voltaire were in fact part of the set lectures, and the lecturers themselves actively debated over the works of the philosophes in their clubs and societies.<sup>102</sup>

Unlettered--the Revivalists were not. A cross-section of the university-educated includes the printers and antiquaries, Clerk of Penicuik, Robert Freebairn, James Watson, and Thomas Ruddiman; and the poets, Fergusson, Ross, Skinner, and Robert Forbes. Most of these men were M.A. though it was common in those days not to finish the degree course. Few members of the Revival had not attended university, and they were to a man avid self-educators. Ramsay is the most striking example. The founder of Britain's first circulating library, a charter member of the Academy of St. Luke, a man of wide reading, he ran a book shop that was the rendez-vous of the Edinburgh wits. Pitcairne, Clerk of Penicuik, Ruddiman, Professor John Ker, James Thomson, and David Mallet were numbered among his friends.

And friendships in this, as in all instances, must be taken into account. Surely it is worth our attention that Alexander Ross was published under the auspices of James Beattie, who lectured on Montesquieu in Aberdeen, wrote about Voltaire, and led debates at the Aberdeen Philosophical Society on Rousseau; and Robert Fergusson was edited by his friend Arthur Masson, who carried recommendatory certificates from Diderot and d'Al-embert.

It is similarly enlightening to look among the books in the library of David Herd, a not untypical figure of the movement. Judging from his books, he had an extensive knowledge of classical literature, travel literature, English and Scottish history, theology, linguistics, philosophy, and world literature, Grotius, Machiavelli, Puffendorf, Voltaire, and Montesquieu are a few of the authors in his collection of continental works.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, it is enlightening to look at the following books by members of the circle of vernacular writers, publishers, and friends: an edition of Montesquieu's *The Spirit of Laws* by Thomas Ruddiman; Voltaire's *The History of the Misfortunes of John Calas* by Peter Williamson, tavern keeper and associate of Robert Fergusson; Martin and Witherspoon's, who were Cape Club members and Herd's publishers, projected publication of *The Works of Voltaire*; *The Sentimental Sailor* (Edinburgh, 1772) by Thomas Mercer, Cape Club member and friend of Fergusson, with a dedication:

To John James Rousseau, Whose Writings Are An Honour,  
Whose Misfortunes, A Shame to Europe; Whom Posterity  
Will Amply Compensate For The Injuries Of His Co-  
Temporaries; Whom Geneva Had Once The Honour To  
Account Her Citizen; The Following Poem (In Gratitude  
For Pleasure Received From the Perusal Of His Works)

In addition, there was *The Poetical Works Of The Ingenious and Learned William Meston* (Edinburgh, 1767), sometime Professor of Philosophy at Marischal College, minor vernacular poet who attracted the attentions of, and was published by, the Ruddimans, with a dedication

To  
Mess. Courayer and Voltaire.

This and more was published by people allegedly opposed to, and unaffected by, the European Enlightenment.

We must conclude, then, that the Scots Vernacular Revival was a conscious literary effort, intersecting at several crucial points with the Enlightenment, and wholly in keeping

with the mainstream of European thought. It is high time that it be examined in the larger context to which it belongs.

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NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See the discussion of the Moderns in G. M. Miller, *The Historical Point of View in English Literary Criticism from 1570-1770* (Heidelberg, 1913), pp. 1-101.

<sup>2</sup> In G. Gregory Smith, *Elizabethan Critical Essays* (2 vols., Oxford, 1904), II, 359.

<sup>3</sup> See William Geddie, *A Bibliography of Middle Scots Poets* (STS, Edinburgh and London, 1912), p. lvi.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., "The Scotch Lasses Song," in Thom. D'Urfey, *Wit and Mirth* (6 vols., London, 1719-30), II, 159. For a fuller discussion of this see the excellent chapter on "Scottish Song" in Ann W. Green, "The Song As A Form In The Eighteenth Century: With particular reference to the work of Charles Dibdin, Senior" (unpublished Oxford B. Litt. thesis, 1967).

<sup>5</sup> *The Historical Point of View*, pp. 50-1.

<sup>6</sup> In *The Poems of James VI of Scotland*, ed. James Craigie (2 vols., STS, Edinburgh and London, 1955-8), I, 67.

<sup>7</sup> *Poems*, I, 78-9.

<sup>8</sup> *Poems*, I, 75-6.

<sup>9</sup> See "Essay on Satire," *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Sir Walter Scott (2nd edn., 18 vols., Edinburgh, 1821), XIII, 111.

<sup>10</sup> *Pleadings, In some remarkable Cases...* (Edinburgh), pp. 17-8. Cf. Dr. Archibald Pitcairne's "Preface" to *The Assembly...* (*Done from the Original Manuscript, written in the Year 1692*) (Edinburgh, 1766), p. iii.

<sup>11</sup> *Pleadings*, p. 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Aeneis* (Edinburgh), pp. 2, 487.

<sup>13</sup> *Aeneis*, p. 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Aeneis*, pp. 2-3. Sir Robert Sibbald suggests this in *The History...of Fife and Kinross* (Edinburgh, 1710), pp. 13, 15-6.

<sup>15</sup> "An Enquiry...; being the copy of a paper intended for the Philosophical Society at Edinburgh by Sir John Clerk, 1742," in *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica* (London, 1790), pp. 378, 382-3.

<sup>16</sup> "An Enquiry," pp. 382-3.

<sup>17</sup> See John M. Good, *Memoirs Of The Life and Writing Of The Reverend Alexander Geddes, LL.D.* (London, 1803), pp. 37, 55.

<sup>18</sup> "Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect," *Transactions Of The Society Of The Antiquaries Of Scotland*, (1792), pp. 404, 416, 417, 420-1.

<sup>19</sup> "Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect," pp. 417, 439; "Epistle To The President," p. 444.

<sup>20</sup> "Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect," pp. 420-1; "Epistle To The President," p. 454.

<sup>21</sup> See especially Ernest C. Mossner, *The Forgotten Hume* (New York, 1943), p. 66. The work contains a good deal on Hume's literary patronage.

<sup>22</sup> See Claire Lamont, "William Tytler, his son Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee), and the encouragement of literature in late eighteenth-century Edinburgh" (unpublished Oxford University B. Litt. dissertation, 1968), pp. 78, 127, 192.

<sup>23</sup> See Lamont, "Tytler," pp. 76-7.

<sup>24</sup> See R. H. Carnie, "A Biographical And Critical Study Of The Life And Writings Of Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes" (unpublished St. Andrews University Ph.D. dissertation, 1954), pp. 83, 136.

<sup>25</sup> Smith, *Lectures*, ed. John M. Lothian (London and Edinburgh, 1963), p. 131; *Boswell In Holland 1763-1764*, ed. F. A. Pottle (New York, 1952), pp. 164-5; Monboddo, *Language* (6 vols., Edinburgh, 1773-92), I, 485; II, 237-8; IV, 107, 170-1.

<sup>26</sup> Ed. Angus Ross (Bungay, 1975), p. 235.

<sup>27</sup> *Letters To Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock*, ed. Horst W. Drescher (Edinburgh and London, 1967), pp. 86-7, 176.

<sup>28</sup> *Holland*, p. 165; *Johnson*, ed. George B. Hill, revised by L. F. Powell (6 vols., Oxford, 1934-50), II, 220.

<sup>29</sup> (London, 1839), pp. 536-7.

<sup>30</sup> (2 vols., London, 1759), II, 258.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Of course they were compared to the Greek dialects by both the literati and the Revivalists.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> (2 vols., London, 1787), II, 273.

<sup>35</sup> *Observations On The Scottish Dialect* (London, 1782), pp. 78-9.

<sup>36</sup> Note that the word "Dialect" in general came to suggest the four dialects of Ancient Greece, "each of which was a perfect language in its kind,..." *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (3 vols., Edinburgh, 1771), II, 431.

<sup>37</sup> *Primitivism And The Idea of Progress In English Popular Literature Of The Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, 1934), p. 51. See also, pp. 68, 81.

<sup>38</sup> See Rousseau, "A Discourse On The Arts and Sciences," *The Social Contract and Discourses*, trans. G. D. H. Cole, J. H. Brumfitt, and J. C. Hall (London, 1973), pp. 5, 10, 16; Smith, *An Inquiry Into The Nature And Causes Of The Wealth Of Nations* (4th edn., London, 1874), pp. 76, 322; Ferguson, *An Essay On The History Of Civil Society 1767*, ed. Duncan Forbes (Edinburgh, 1966), pp. 56, 162, 186-7, 239, 254; Kames, *Sketches Of The History Of Man* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1774), I, 243, 306; Gilbert Stuart, *A View of Society in Europe* (2nd edn., Edinburgh, 1792), pp. 8, 15; Hume, "Of the Populousness Of Ancient Nations," *David Hume: Writings on Economics*, ed. Eugene Rotwein (Edinburgh, 1955), p. 134.

<sup>39</sup> See especially Hume's letter to Lord Hailes of August 16, 1760. *The Letters of David Hume*, ed. J. Y. T. Greig (2 vols., London, 1969), I, 330-1.

<sup>40</sup> See Hoxie Fairchild, *The Noble Savage* (New York, 1928), p. 64.

<sup>41</sup> *Eloisa... To Which Is Now First Added, The Sequel of Julia...* (4 vols., London, 1784), IV, 30. See also Kennedy P. Roche, *Rousseau: Stoic and Romantic* (London, 1974), p. 52.

<sup>42</sup> *Eloisa*, III, 220.

<sup>43</sup> For example Hutcheson, *A System Of Moral Philosophy* (2 vols., London, 1755), I, 197; Reid, *The Philosophy Of The Active And Moral Powers Of Man*, ed. Sir William Hamilton (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1877), II, 147.

<sup>44</sup> Kames, *Sketches*, I, 104-5; *Smith Lectures On Justice, Police, Revenue and Arms*, ed. Edwin Cannan (Oxford, 1896), p. 256.

<sup>45</sup> See Matthew P. McDiarmid's discussion of this in *The Poems Of Robert Fergusson* (2 vols., STS, Edinburgh and London, 1954-6), I, 128.

<sup>46</sup> *On The Origin Of Language*, trans. J. H. Moran (New York, 1966) pp. 24, 27-8, 73; *Emile*, trans. Barbara Foxley (London, 1957) pp. 39-40, 289.

<sup>47</sup> For example Thomas Reid, *An Inquiry Into The Human Mind*, ed. Timothy Duggan (Chicago, 1970), p. 57.

<sup>48</sup> See René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism 1750-1950*, (5 vols., London, 1955-66), I, 48, 50.

<sup>49</sup> *Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, p. 131.

<sup>50</sup> *The Noble Savage* (New York, 1928), pp. 64, 432-3.

<sup>51</sup> For an informed discussion of the Scandinavian revivals see Sigurd B. Hustvedt, *Ballad Criticism In Scandinavia And Great Britain During The Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1916).

<sup>52</sup> See for example Thomas Warton, *The Union or Select Scots and English Poems* (London, 1753); *The History of English*

*Poetry* (3 vols., London, 1774-81), II, 334-5. Percy and Gray, particularly in his "Observations on English Metre," must be borne in mind here.

<sup>53</sup> For a discussion of this in relation to Gray see Chauncey B. Tinker, *Nature's Simple Plan* (London, 1922), pp. 63-4, 91.

<sup>54</sup> *Poems by Robert Lloyd, A.M.* (London, 1762), p. 102.

<sup>55</sup> See *T.L.S.* (26 June 1943).

<sup>56</sup> See Richard F. Jones, "Eclogue Types in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century," *JEGP*, 24 (1925), p. 51.

<sup>57</sup> "To Mr. MacGowan, late of Edinburgh, Sept. 24, 1761," in *The Letters of William Shenstone* (Oxford, 1939), p. 597. See also J. E. Conington, *Theories of Pastoral Poetry in England 1684-1798* (New York, 1968), p. 273; Langhorne "The Monthly Review for March 1762," in *The Monthly Review: or, Literary Journal*, 26 (1762), p. 189.

<sup>58</sup> *The Works of Allan Ramsay*, ed. B. Martin, J. W. Oliver, A. M. Kinghorn, A. Law (6 vols., STS, Edinburgh and London, 1951-74), I, xix.

<sup>59</sup> "Essay on Ballads and Pastoral Songs," *Essays on Song-Writing* (London, 1772), p. 33.

<sup>60</sup> (4th edn., 2 vols., Glasgow, 1768), I, 7-8, 290, 386-7.

<sup>61</sup> *The Philosophical Dictionary* (Glasgow, 1766), p. 190. See also Ira O. Wade, *The Intellectual Development of Voltaire* (Princeton, 1969) pp. 127, 158, 165.

<sup>62</sup> See for example *The Philosophy Of History* (Glasgow, 1766) pp. 210-1; *Philosophical Dictionary*, p. 161.

<sup>63</sup> (Glasgow, 1751) pp. 28-9. Cf. the following chapter title from a very influential work on taste: "That the words of our own native language make a greater impression upon us, than those of a foreign tongue," Abbé Du Bos, *Critical Reflections On Poetry, Painting, and Music*, trans. T. Nugent (3 vols., London, 1748), I.

<sup>64</sup> See Wade, *Voltaire*, pp. 164, 206; Wellek, *Modern Criticism*, I, 75.

<sup>65</sup> *European Thought In The Eighteenth Century: From Montesquieu to Lessing*, trans. J. Lewis May (London, 1954), p. 465.

<sup>66</sup> See especially *Eloisa*, III, 220, 257; IV, 128. It is worth noticing here that Rousseau opposed the 1707 Union of Scotland and England on these grounds, and said so to Boswell. See *Boswell On The Grand Tour: Germany And Switzerland 1764*, ed. F. A. Pottle (New York, 1953) pp. 223-4; see Hustvedt, *Ballad Criticism* for a comprehensive discussion of the Scandinavian revivals.

<sup>67</sup> See *Observations Upon The United Provinces Of The Netherlands* (8th edn., Edinburgh, 1747) pp. 13-4. See also "Of Poetry" in *Five Miscellaneous Essays by Sir William Temple*, ed. Samuel H. Monk (Ann Arbor, 1963) pp. 198-9.

<sup>68</sup> Ed. Edith J. Morley (Facsimile of 2nd end., London, 1759; Manchester, 1918) pp. 7-11, 14-5, 17, 20.

<sup>69</sup> In *Collected Works Of Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. Arthur Friedman (5 vols., Oxford, 1966), I, 278, 282.

<sup>70</sup> *An Enquiry*, I, 281, 304, 306. Goldsmith was no doubt influenced too by the English grammarians and linguists who anticipated his historicist statements on language. See for example James Harris, *Hermes* (Scholar Press Facsimile of 1751 edn.; Menston, 1968) p. 407; Robert Lowth, *Lectures On The Sacred Poetry Of The Hebrews* (1753), trans. from Latin by G. Gregory (2 vols., London, 1787), I, 101.

<sup>71</sup> *An Enquiry*, I, 283. Goldsmith is not exceptional in his partiality for northern tongues. See also Montesquieu *Spirit of Laws*, I, 160, 294, 346, 353; Voltaire *Philosophical Dictionary*, p. 189.

<sup>72</sup> *An Enquiry*, I, 287, 294-7.

<sup>73</sup> *Homer*, pp. 11-2, 32, 69, 111, 223, 278.

<sup>74</sup> *Homer*, p. 29.

<sup>75</sup> *Homer*, pp. 30-1. Elsewhere he praises Greece for maintaining its language against the imposition of Latin (p. 46). Cf. also Ferguson, *Civil Society*, pp. 173-4.

<sup>76</sup> *Homer*, pp. 56, 58-9.

<sup>77</sup> See for example Tickell, *Guardian No. 30*. For a full account of rationalist pastoral theory see Congleton, *Pastoral Poetry*.

<sup>78</sup> Such was the self-awareness of belonging to British pastoralism that it is often mentioned by the vernacular poets in their works. See for example Ramsay "Epistle To Mr. John Gay" in *Works*, II; or especially Francis Douglas, *The Birth-Day* (Glasgow, 1782), p. 10.

<sup>79</sup> *Robert Fergusson*, I, 150-9. McDiarmid's essay is the most well-informed introduction to eighteenth-century Scots literature.

<sup>80</sup> *Middle Scots Poets*, p. lxvi.

<sup>81</sup> See for example Ross's "Advertisement" to *Helanore* in *The Scottish Works of Alexander Ross*, ed. Margaret Wattie (STS, Edinburgh and London, 1938), p. 4. I use the word deliberately as, despite assertions to the contrary, the distinction between Middle Scots and vernacular Scots was known. See Hailes, *Ancient Scottish Poems* (Edinburgh, 1770).

<sup>82</sup> "A Poem To the Memory of the Famous Archibald Pitcairn, M.D." (recently discovered by myself in the Edinburgh Room at the Edinburgh Central Public Library).

<sup>83</sup> "Postscript" to Dunbar's "Lament for the Makaris" in Ramsay, *Works*, III, 97.

<sup>84</sup> "To My honour'd Friend Dr. P\_\_\_\_\_k," Alexander Penecuik, Gent., *Streams from Helicon* (2nd edn., Edinburgh, 1720).

<sup>85</sup> Ramsay, *Works*, II, 208; V, 62; Ross, *Works*, p. 3.

<sup>86</sup> *Poems*, II, 106. Significantly, in support of the Gaelic Revival, a parallel movement also in Scotland, the poet Alexander MacDonald has Adam and Eve speaking Gaelic in his defense of the language. "The Resurrection of the Old Scottish Tongue," *The Poems of Alexander MacDonald*, ed. and trans. Rev. A. MacDonald (Inverness, 1924), p. 5.

<sup>87</sup> *Fables* (London, 1768), pp. 122-3.

<sup>88</sup> (Reprint 1776, 2 vols., Edinburgh and London, 1973) I, x. Cf. Thomas Mercer, "Arthur's Seat," *Poems. By the Author of the Sentimental Sailor* (London, 1774), p. 27.

<sup>89</sup> Ramsay, "Preface" (1721) and "To my Unknown Correspondent in Ireland" (1726), *Works*, I, xx; III, 198; Ross, *The Fortunate Shepherd*, *Works*, pp. 173-4.

<sup>90</sup> I, ix-x.

<sup>91</sup> I, x-xi.

<sup>92</sup> Dr. William Wilkie, "A Dream," *The Epigoniad...To Which is Added, A Dream, In the Manner of Spenser* (2nd edn., London, 1759), p. 224.

<sup>93</sup> *Works*, I, xviii; II, xiii.

<sup>94</sup> Yet another paper perpetuates these misguided notions in its own limited handling of the subject. Ian Ross and Stephen Scobie, "Patriotic Publishing as a Response to the Union," *The Union of 1707: Its Impact on Scotland*, ed. T. I. Rae (Glasgow and London, 1974).

<sup>95</sup> *Poems On Several Subjects* (Edinburgh, 1763), p. 53.

<sup>96</sup> "A Tavern Elegy," *Poems*, II, 64.

<sup>97</sup> It was generally allowed by the Revivalists that English and other foreign traditions had a place in Scotland, but not to the exclusion of the national culture. See for example Ramsay, "Preface" to *The Evergreen*, *Works*, IV, 237.

<sup>98</sup> See *The European Mind*, pp. 388-9.

<sup>99</sup> See especially P. Hume Brown, "Intellectual Influences Of Scotland On The Continent," *Surveys Of Scottish Literature* (Glasgow, 1919) p. 131; H. W. Meikle, "Voltaire and Scotland," *Etudes Anglaises*, 11 (1958), 193.

<sup>100</sup> For example Ramsay, "Answer I," *Works*, I, 120; Mackenzie, *Pleadings*, pp. 17-8.

<sup>101</sup> For example Boswell and Clerk of Penicuik defended the Dutch language while in Holland; Smollett in Nice angrily sought in vain "some pieces in the ancient Provencal;" Dr. John Moore, friend of Burns, remonstrated at the treatment of German

as a "vulgar and provincial dialect" during a stay in Germany. *Boswell In Holland*, pp. 109, 133; *Memoirs Of The Life Of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, Baronet*, ed. John M. Gray (SHS, Edinburgh, 1892), pp. 16, 36; Smollett, *Travels Through France And Italy* (2 vols., London, 1766), I, 334-5; Moore, *A View of Society And Manners In France, Switzerland, And Germany* (2 vols., London, 1779), I, 426-8.

<sup>102</sup> See John Lough, "L'Esprit Des Lois In A Scottish University In The Eighteenth Century," *Comparative Literature Studies*, 13 (1944), 13, 16; "The Relations Of The Aberdeen Philosophical Society (1758-73) With France," *The Aberdeen University Review*, 30, (1942-44), 146; Meikle, "Voltaire and Scotland," p. 200. Outside the universities French Philosophy was unusually popular in Scotland. With 19 editions of Montesquieu's works, 11 of Rousseau's, 50 of Voltaire's, published before 1801, a large percentage of the population read it. See A. K. Howard, "Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau In Eighteenth-Century Scotland...", *Bibliothek*, 2 (1959), 40-63; Keith Marshall, "France and the Scottish Press, 1700-1800," *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 13 (1978), 1-14.

<sup>103</sup> See *Catalogue of a Valuable Collection of Books...Which Belonged to the Late David Herd, Writer, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1810).