

Thirteen Ways of Glossing 'To a Haggis': Disputing the Borders of Robert Burns' Paratexts

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'We have read Burns too much through glossaries and not enough through dictionaries' announced Murray Pittock at the *Robert Burns Conference* in January 2009.^[1] In his paper, Pittock drew attention to the multiple meanings of the Scots words in Burns' 'To a Louse', arguing that – by relying too frequently on glossaries – critics and readers have shut themselves off from the poem's rich polysemy. Pittock's statements are of considerable importance for the future of Burns studies, given that he is one of the main authorities involved in the construction of the new Burns critical edition and a key player in recent calls to put Burns at the centre of the British literary canon. But they are also of significance for their recognition of the key role played by the glossary in mediating between reader and Burns' text.

From the glossary Burns himself created for his debut 1786 Kilmarnock edition onwards, his poetry has frequently been accompanied by a paratextual lexicon, translating his Scots into English: from John Cuthbertson's eccentric, encyclopaedic 1886 *Complete Glossary*; to James Kinsley's careful annotations to the 1968 critical edition; to Clark McGinn's verse translation of 'To a Haggis' in his 2008 *The Ultimate Guide to Being Scottish*. As I will show, while readers are likely to consult only one glossed version of the poem, their reading experience can differ depending on the edition they choose. Importantly, as soon as Burns' first collection was published, reviewers claimed the glossary was an essential aid for English and even Scottish readers struggling with Burns' Scots. In his famous 1786 review, the Edinburgh writer and reviewer Henry Mackenzie reported that '[e]ven in Scotland, the provincial dialect which ... [Burns has] used, is now read with a difficulty which greatly damps the pleasure of the reader; in England it cannot be read at all, without ... a constant reference to a glossary'^[2]. As I will show, by translating Scots into English, the glossary also negotiates the relationship between Scots and English culture.

In this article, I seek to challenge Pittock's claim that the glossary restricts Burns, and demonstrate the vital avenue it can offer for inventive appropriations and creative interventions. But, more importantly, I wish to use his comments as a starting point for a discussion of the complex and ambivalent role played by the glossary in Burns' reception and dissemination. In one sense, the fluid nature of the glossary renders Burns' work vulnerable to quasi-colonial editorial interventions. But in another, it enables the poet and his readers to cross cultural and linguistic boundaries in ways that transcend and evade editors' narrow interpretative parameters.

Crucially, Gérard Genette omits glossaries from *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1987: trans 2001), his study of those elements of the book – such as titles, forewords, epigraphs and footnotes – that mediate between reader and text. I argue that considering the glossary as a paratext can enrich and complicate Genette's model. I will make frequent reference to Burns' editors' additional paratexts – especially dedications, introductions and prefaces – in order to show how they use their glossaries as part of co-ordinated campaigns to frame his work within a specific reading. But I have chosen to focus on the glossary because it enables editors to go one step further, and intervene directly within reading process. In so doing, I seek to show how the example of Burns' glossaries challenges Genette's insistence that 'the implicit creed and spontaneous ideology of the paratext' is always 'the authorial point of view'. On the contrary, this example demonstrates that, far from being 'an undisputed territory',^[3] the paratext is a zone of often confrontational transactions between different forms of textual and political authority. At the same time, Burns and his editors' translations of Scots terms into English highlights the important role paratexts play in negotiating power-relations between different cultures.

In recent years, scholars working in a variety of periods have drawn attention to the key role played by paratexts in literature written in Scotland. Susan Manning has investigated how Scott interrupts the linear narrative of the *Waverley* novels with antiquarian annotation, claiming: 'Scott's novels used notes deliberately to "withdraw" the reader's sympathetic engagement from the narrative towards competing arts of narration and sources of authority'.^[4] Kevin Halliwell has highlighted the nineteenth-century novelist John Galt's use of paratexts to provide 'a veneer of authentication' within his novels about North America, *Lawrie Todd* (1830) and *Bogle Corbet* (1831).^[5] And Glyn White has explored the footnotes created by the fictional annotator Sidney Workman in the 'Epilogue' of Alasdair Gray's experimental novel *Lanark* (1981), describing this section as 'a typographical crescendo, in which the established layout of the text is altered, gradually and progressively, as descriptive running heads, footnotes and marginal notes enclose the linear narrative'.^[6] In this article, I wish to switch the focus of this discussion, from questions of authentication and narration to issues of cultural translation. At the same time, I seek to demonstrate how an attention to this paratextual apparatus can complicate the idea of a 'Scottish' literature.

In the first section, I will provide an account of how different editors have utilised their own versions of Burns' glossary to enclose his work within different nationalist and imperialist ideologies. In the second, I will return to Burns, and show how the glossary highlights aspects of the poet's work that have been obscured by his editors' efforts to position him as Scotland's National Bard. I have chosen to present my examination of editorial glossaries before my exploration of Burns because – as I will show – this discussion provides a lens through which we can better appreciate the complexities of Burns' broader paratextual practice.

In particular, my claims draw on a close inspection of thirteen different versions of Burns' 1787 poem 'To a Haggis'. I have chosen this poem because, as I will show, its position within the Burns Supper exemplifies the same egalitarianism and openness to creative participation that marks not only Burns' glossary, but his work and legacy as a whole. Moreover, the fact that it was not printed in Burns' first edition means that it usefully highlights the changes Burns made to the glossary when he revised the collection for its second publication. Given that Burns wrote a huge number of poems, and that there are over two thousand editions of the poet in existence, this is obviously a small aspect of Burns' textual history. I have deliberately kept my focus limited, because I wish to demonstrate how these glossaries offer a revealing case-study in how even the tiniest nooks and crannies of texts bear the traces of struggles between individuals and discourses. In order to engage with the major editorial developments, I have inspected the key critical editions of Burns' work. I have also consulted a number of popular versions, so as to sketch some of the alternative ways in which his work has been glossed.[\[7\]](#)

Marginalising Scots: Editorial Interventions in Burns' Glossary

The glossary can be an extremely subtle form of editorial intervention. Editors tend to follow the model of the glossary Burns himself placed at the back of his debut collection (see Illustration One), which is neatly arranged into two columns, with Scots terms printed alongside mostly one-word English entries:



G L O S S A R Y.

Words that are universally known, and those that differ from the English only by the elision of letters by apostrophes, or by varying the termination of the verb, are not inserted. The terminations may be thus known; the participle present, instead of *ing*, ends, in the Scotch Dialect, in *an* or *in*; in *an*, particularly, when the verb is composed of the participle present, and any of the tenses of the auxiliary, *to be*. The past time and participle past are usually made by shortening the *ed* into *'t*.

A	B
A BACK, behind, away	Baw't, having a white stripe down the face
Absigh, at a distance	Ben, <i>bat and ben</i> , the country kitchen and parlour
Ae, one	Belly, bellows
Ayky, wide of the aim	Ben, <i>to be ben</i> , to leave in quiet
Aver, an old horse	Eggie, a building
Awie, a red amber	Field, shelter
Awe, one, an	Hidlet, workless
Aik, alas	Blither, the bladder
Ave, at all, of all	Blisk, a glance, an amorous look, a short space of time
Awa, the beard of oats, &c.	Blype, a flood of cloth, &c.
	Boat, beched
	Brash, a folded itself
B AIRAN, having	Brat, a worn flood of cloth
Basie, busy	Bränge, to draw unsteadily

Illustration One: Robert Burns, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Kilmarnock, 1786), p. 236.

Frequently, editors repeat Burns' exact phrasing. For example, Burns' use of the English phrase 'by and by' (p. 346) to translate 'belyve' (line 21) is also deployed in five other editions.^[8]

Nonetheless, if we place the glossaries alongside one another, differences in layout and content quickly emerge. In the recent Canongate edition, we can see that Andrew Noble and Patrick Scott Hogg place 'To a Haggis' within a line-by-line gloss. And Sydney Goodsir Smith opts to save the reader the trouble of flipping to the back of the volume by presenting definitions at the bottom of the page. In the glossary provided in the *Burns Country* website 'sonsie' is cheerful and easy-going: 'pleasant, good-natured, jolly'^[9]; in the Edinburgh edition it is twinklingly flirtatious: 'having sweet, engaging looks'^[10] Moreover, while forty-four of the terms in 'To a Haggis' appear in the glossary in Burns' Edinburgh edition, sixty-two of the Scots terms in the poem were glossed at least once in the volumes I have consulted.

In keeping with the often-elusive nature of these mediations, Burns' editors tend to represent their glosses as innocuous attempts to alleviate the difficulties of Burns' Scots. John Cuthbertson claims he is 'removing a single stumbling-block from the path of the readers of the Ayrshire Bard'.^[11] Or as Clark McGinn put it, when I interviewed him earlier this year: 'The gloss is only an apparatus. We're not saying Burns is incomprehensible or that you need a beastly ministrations between him and people. By and large people get by – they just need a little help to get started'.^[12] By presenting such interventions as impartial activities, such editors obscure the extent to which they inevitably engage in interpretation and appropriation.

For instance, if we compare James Kinsley's 1968 critical edition with the more recent Canongate version, we can recognise how different glossaries present divergent readings. James Kinsley provides an exhaustive glossary of 'Scots words', 'English words which are obsolete', 'terms of art peculiar to Scotland', 'Scottish forms and spellings of English words', 'colloquialisms' and 'cant terms'.^[13] And in his commentary on 'To a Haggis', Kinsley also presents extracts from eighteenth-century recipes and later Burns biographies as evidence for his claim that the haggis 'owed its status ... to the complexities of its preparation, and to the limited supply of livers and sheep-stomachs ... on small farms'.^[14] In contrast, as well as providing a line-by-line gloss, Noble and Hogg add a long endnote to the poem in which they claim that 'Burns portrays the haggis as causative of the virility of the Scottish common people'.^[15] While Kinsley locates Burns' work as an artefact of philological and ethnographic interest, Noble and Hogg present the poem as an example of Burns' robust democratic nationalist sensibility.

Such differences become more marked if we place them within Noble and Hogg's broader editorial framework. In the brief 'Editor's Preface', Noble describes Kinsley as 'a conservative eighteenth-century scholar with neither patience nor understanding of Romantic radical poetics'.^[16] In so doing, he positions the Canongate edition as reclaiming Burns as a strikingly modern 'radically dissenting democratic poet'.^[17] In the conclusion, I will return to the political and national significance of Noble and Hogg's framing. For the moment, I wish to focus on how they use these strident, polemical interventions to further set their version in opposition to what they see as the sedate traditionalism of Kinsley's edition.

As many Burns specialists have noted,^[18] an important problem with the Canongate edition is that its editors eschew Kinsley's carefulness as well as his conservatism. Noble accuses Kinsley of producing 'overladen commentary' in order to demonstrate his 'exhibitionist erudition'.^[19] However, not only does the Canongate contain significant textual errors, but the sheer size and acrimonious tone of the editors' annotation and glosses have the effect of eliding the boundary between text and paratext. As Burns' recent biographer Robert Crawford comments, 'in the Noble and Hogg version the hierarchy between poem and commentary tends to blur: the sometimes

senseless prose boxes in the poems, and at other times even bullies them'.^[20] The Canongate edition therefore shows that the glossary acts as a clandestine site of conflict, in which different editors advance competing versions of Burns to assert the primacy of their own edition. But it also reveals how the glossary enables such editorial warfare to trespass into the text itself.

Such rivalry approaches its apogee in the 1835 edition edited by James Hogg and the Glasgow poet and ballad collector William Motherwell. In the 'Preface' to the edition, the duties of each editor are clearly separated: Hogg is to provide literary criticism ('Critical Comments and Elucidations') and Motherwell contextual material ('literary, biographical and anecdotal information').^[21] The two editors write notes individually, marking them with their initials ('H' for 'Hogg; 'M' for 'Motherwell').

But there is an obvious struggle between them. Motherwell emphasises Burns' 'powers of imagination',^[22] portraying him as an isolated Romantic genius that the readers can only fully appreciate by familiarising themselves with his biography. Hogg instead stresses Burns' local peasant origins in order to draw a direct line of continuation between 'the Ayrshire bard'^[23] and himself, the Ettrick Shepherd. Each adopts a contrasting image of Burns that places their partner on the periphery and their own contributions at the centre. On several occasions, these different approaches burst into battle. In his note to Burns' anti-kirk satire 'The Holy Fair', Motherwell quotes approvingly Currie's claim that the poem 'degenerates into personal satire'.^[24] Hogg instead takes the edge off Burns' vituperation, celebrating the poem as 'singularly ludicrous and laughable', and defending its harsh tone by claiming that 'Burns knew not the power of his own whip-hand'.^[25] Such competing views disprove the assertion that editorial commentary simply provides impartial explanation, revealing the extent to which it is the product of professional rivalry.

Moreover, the apparent ideological neutrality of the glossary also provides editors with an opportunity to enforce a specific construction of Burns' political and literary identity – at the same time as concealing that they are doing so. As we saw with the Canongate edition, the gloss can form a discrete part of a co-ordinated campaign within an editor's paratexts. Similarly, in the first critical edition of Burns, the four-volume 1800 version, the physician and author James Currie scarcely alters Burns' original gloss, except to add a few variations of Scots taken from his own first-hand encounters with people and places in Ayrshire. For instance, as well as including Burns' definition of 'feckless' ('puny, weak, silly'), Currie adds 'Feck' and 'Feckfu' ('many, plenty' and 'large, brainy stout').^[26] When considered in isolation, such additions appear insignificant. But when read alongside the lengthy 'Dedication' and 'Prefatory Remarks' Currie presents at the opening of the first volume, we can recognise their broader importance.

In these introductory paratexts, Currie presents a quasi-anthropological image of Burns as 'a Scottish peasant'.^[27] In so doing, he seeks to render the radical poet innocuous for polite readers, announcing: 'to secure the suffrage of...[generous] minds, all topics are omitted...that have a tendency to awake the animosity of party'.^[28] Far from depoliticising Burns, however, Currie's image of the peasant poet enables him to frame the poet's work within a conservative image of rural Southern Scotland. Currie informs us that '[t]he information and the religious education of the peasantry of Scotland, promote sedateness of conduct, and habits of thought and reflection'.^[29] Currie's Lowlands is not only a praiseworthy model of religious piety and political passivity, but a society undergoing cultural dissolution:

Since the Union ... their manners and dialect are undergoing a rapid change. Even the farmers of the present day appear to have less of the peculiarities of their country in their speech, than the men of letters of the last generation.^[30]

In his references to 'manners and dialect', Currie utilises the language of anthropology to legitimise the Lowlands' disintegration. According to him, the disappearance of a distinctive way of life is a necessary standardisation of 'peculiarities': an inevitable part of the beneficial process by which the Union has brought modernity to Scotland.

In keeping with this analysis, Currie categorises Burns' poetry as the elegiac expression of a dying Scotland: 'a monument ... to the expiring generation of an ancient and once independent nation'.^[31] In Currie's view, Burns' poetry is, at once, the most intense cultural expression of Scottish national identity and the marker of its necessary absorption within a broader Britishness. And Currie deploys this construction to suggest that the poet's radicalism and Jacobite sympathies can be safely overlooked because they no longer have any relevance to the present. As such, Currie's edition offers a vivid illustration of the fact that the representation of Burns as an exemplar of a Scottish literary tradition need not be wedded to either a Scottish nationalist politics or a broader sympathy with marginalised societies – a point I will return to in the conclusion. Given that Currie's edition arguably remained the dominant version until James Kinsley's version,^[32] his critical construction has had an enormous influence on Burns' reception. While the glossary plays a small part in Currie's broader paratextual manoeuvres, we can recognise that its apparently neutral interventions form part of Currie's deliberate attempt to frame Burns within an ethnographic gaze and thereby contain the poet within a conservative British nationalist ideology.

Other editors deploy the glossary in a more overtly ideological manner. In his *Complete Glossary*, Cuthbertson places Burns at the centre of the English canon, glossing him beside parallel passages from Chaucer, Shakespeare and Swift, and extracts from both dictionaries of middle and old English and glossaries of provincial English dialects. He claims: '[m]y endeavour has

been to show to English readers that by far the greater number of the poet's words for which a glossary is generally consulted are to be found in their own authors'.^[33] By demonstrating the continued life of Burns' language within modern English, Cuthbertson could be said to challenge Currie's representation of Burns' work as the dying words of a Scottish tradition. However, such a suggestion is countered by Cuthbertson's exclusive focus on older and provincial forms of English. In so doing, he locates Scots culture in a peripheral location at a pre-modern stage of history, paving the way for its absorption within Britishness. As a result, Cuthbertson goes even further than Currie in breaking the links between Burns and his original culture.

Indeed, it is possible to argue that, in the very act of placing Scots terms in a glossary, writers and editors remove it from social reality, reducing a living language into a museum relic. For instance, by printing the English definitions in normal type – but italicising the Scots – Goodsir Smith could be said to present Scots as the exception to the English norm. And by displaying their gloss alongside the poem, Noble and Hogg subtly signal to readers the words they should and should not know, increasing their reliance upon editorial mediations and distancing them from Burns' Scots. And interestingly *none* of the glossaries I have examined choose to gloss the French terms Burns uses in the poem – 'ragoût' (25); 'olio' (26) and 'fricassé' (27) – each presuming that their readers are more likely to be familiar with aspects of French culture than Scots.

Certainly, many of Burns' editors led efforts to ostracise Scots as a vulgar tongue. James Currie, for instance, compared the 'dislike' we supposedly feel at hearing Burns' Scots to 'the species of disgust which we feel at seeing a female of high birth in the dress of a rustic'.^[34] Here Currie places Scots as a peripheral, subordinate culture, which breaks through the gaze of the dominant English spectator, only to be dismissed with a shrug. In a similar fashion, Henley and Henderson introduce their glossary by portraying Scots as an obscure language, hardly known even by its speakers, speculating that 'there are Scotsmen, all the world over, who will not disclaim such help ... in ... realising ... words which, mayhap, they have forgotten, and of others which, mayhap, they never rightly knew'. Far from seeking to stir interest in Scots, Henley and Henderson join Currie in presenting Burns as the final hot embers of a burnt-out Scots tradition, labelling the poet '*ultimus Scotorum*, the last expression of the old Scots world'.^[35]

Moreover, it is easy to see that glossators frequently overlook the singularity and strangeness of Burns' Scots. For instance, in line thirty-three of 'To A Haggis', Burns refers to the 'spindle shank' of the 'auld Guidman' he addressed earlier in line twenty-three. If we glance at the *Dictionary of the Scots Language*, we can see that Burns uses the noun 'shank' to refer to the lower part of a person's leg, between the knee and ankle. But his usage is shadowed and enriched by the additional meanings of this term – as the leg of an animal or insect; a tree trunk; a stocking; the straight part of a nail; and the shaft of a column or pillar. This nexus of meanings evokes the

mindset of an agricultural society, in which the boundaries between human and animal, private and public, are fluid and interchangeable. Moreover, by adding the adjectival noun 'spindle', Burns likens this part of the man's legs to the rod that twists wool into thread, creating a vivid, cartoon-like image of them as angular stalks, spinning and revolving in a sprightly manner. However, none of the glosses I have encountered draw any attention to this metaphor. Most do not even translate the phrase – and those that do drain it of its visual and visceral power, rendering it prosaically as 'thin leg' in the 1896 Chambers^[36] and the Canongate,^[37] or 'skinny legs' in McGinn's translation.^[38]

However, one powerful *defence* of the glossary is provided by looking at those editions that *omit* it, such as the 1861 *Works of Robert Burns*. The approach of this version is neatly encapsulated in the illustration presented on the title-page (see Illustration Two) which presents Burns on the lower left, as an ethereal Shelleyan spirit, resting his head on the lap of his dog Coila, with Tam' O Shanter behind him. Facing him are William Wallace and Robert the Bruce – who are now transformed into loyal knights of the British crown. Such an image robs Burns of his regional specificity and democratic resonance, reducing his poems to medievalist fantasies. In the 'Preface', the editor even goes so far as to present Burns as an English-language writer, claiming that 'the name of ROBERT BURNS is now familiar to all, but his memory is cherished with affectionate enthusiasm not by his countrymen alone, but by the generous-hearted of all nations, wherever the English language has penetrated, or British literature is cultivated'.^[39] By presenting Burns' work as an example of the excellence of English literature, this edition suppresses Burns' Scottish origins, deploying his work to advance the spread of English, the global ascendancy of Anglophone culture and British imperial ambitions.

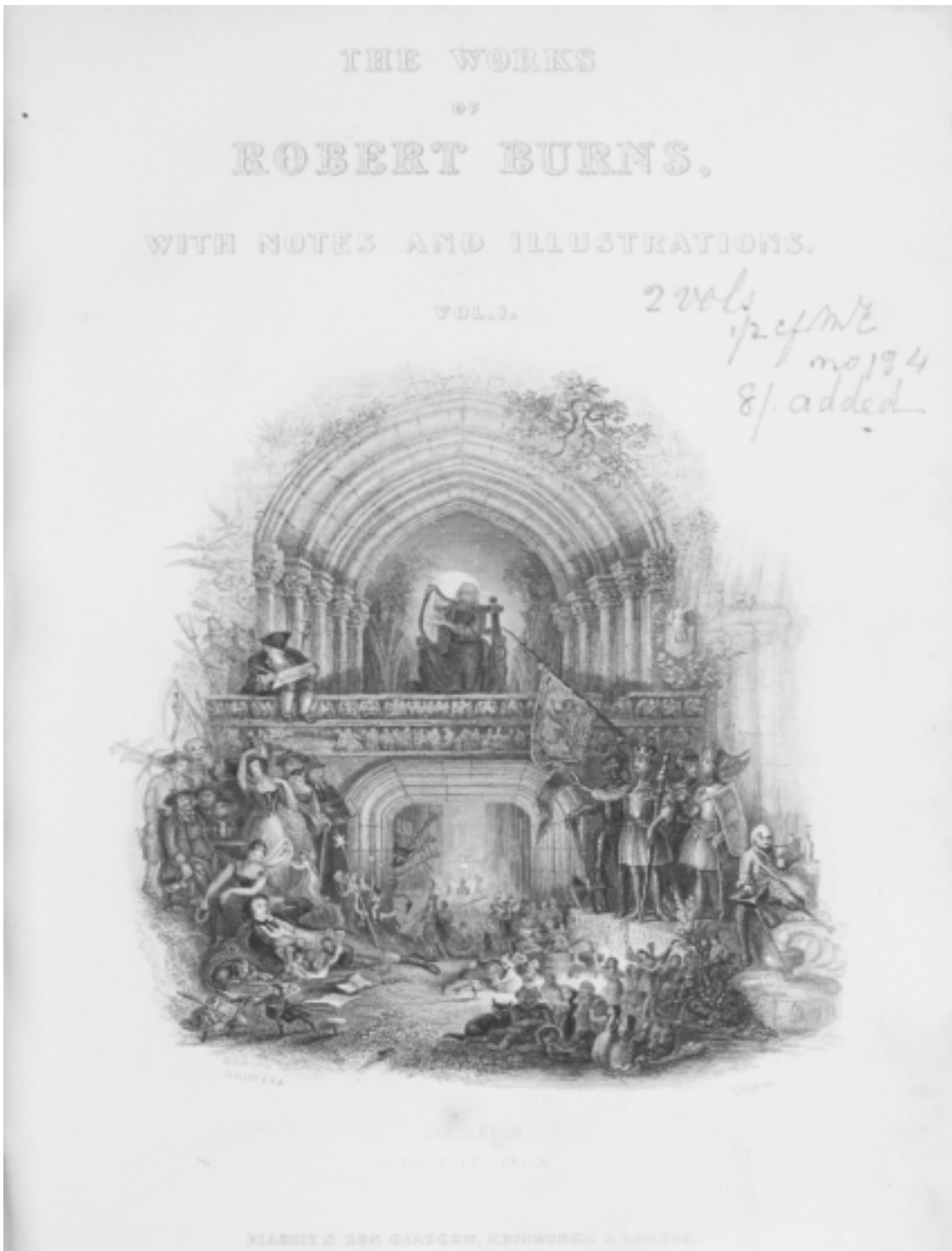


Illustration Two: Robert Burns, *The Work of Robert Burns, with notes and illustrations* (Glasgow, Edinburgh and London: Blackie and Son, 1861), p. iii.

Similarly, not only does the Hogg and Motherwell edition omit the glossary, Hogg even goes so far as to claim certain terms are utterly untranslatable. In his note to Burns' 'Address to the Deil', Hogg cheekily goads the English reader: "'Spairges' is the best Scots word in its place I ever saw. An Englishman can have no idea of the kind of ludicrous image it conveys'.[\[40\]](#)

Importantly, Hogg's stress on the irreducible singularity of specific Scots terms is by no means wedded to an egalitarian politics. Instead, Hogg reduces Burns' radicalism either to mawkishness – 'the kind feeling heart for any thing that is suffering' – or resentment: 'Burns' jealousy of the rich and great ... indicate a bitter, scornful, malignant spirit'.[\[41\]](#) Hogg's insistence on the distinctiveness of Scots effectively suppresses both Scots culture and the politics that underscore Burns' depiction of it.

The examples of Hogg and other nineteenth-century editors complicate Murray Pittock's argument by demonstrating that the elimination of the gloss limits, rather than liberates, the reader. On the other hand, we have seen that Pittock is right to argue that this apparatus can impose restrictions on interpretation. If both the presence *and* the absence of the glossary have the effect of marginalising important aspects of the poetry, are there any options left for readers and editors? In order to answer this question, we must now return to Burns.

In the next section, I challenge recent critical attempts to position Burns at the centre of a Scottish national canon. For instance, in his recent biography of the poet, Robert Crawford depicts him as the Scottish equivalent to Shakespeare: 'Scotland's bard'.[\[42\]](#) Likewise, Hogg and Noble announce '[i]t is the primary impulse behind this edition...to make Burns available to a contemporary Scottish consciousness'.[\[43\]](#) I argue that such an approach breaks Burns out of one limiting interpretative paradigm, only to confine him in another. Instead, I show how there are two countervailing trends in Burns' paratexts. On the one hand, in his main paratexts, such as the 'Preface' to the Kilmarnock edition and the 'Dedication' in the Edinburgh version, Burns asserts himself as a peasant poet whose work is the expression of a Scottish 'native' culture. On the other, in more marginal locations, such as his footnotes and glossaries, Burns presents a more complex identity, as a broker between Scots and English, existing on the margins between both. As I will show in the conclusion, recovering this marginal Burns draws our attention to aspects of the poet that complicate the very idea of 'nation'. As such, Burns is not only of importance to Scotland, but to the world.

The Poet in the Paratext: The Marginal Burns

As with many of the critical editions we have inspected, Burns' glossary is part of a collection of paratexts, which included the 'Preface' to the Kilmarnock edition, the 'Dedication to the Noblemen

and Gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt' in the Edinburgh version, and the epigraphs and footnotes in both editions. The scrupulousness Burns took in proofreading both of these editions suggests he also prepared these paratexts with great care.^[44] Between the two editions, the most marked change Burns made was to expand the glossary considerably, from five pages to twenty-five, at the insistence of his regular correspondent Mrs. Frances Anna Dunlop.^[45] This enlargement demonstrates the poet's increased ambition to reach a wider English-speaking audience. At the same time, Dunlop's involvement alerts us to the fact that Burns' paratexts are not straightforward declarations of his authorial intention, but the results of contingency and collaboration.

Burns uses the paratexts he places at the front of the volume to fashion a literary identity as a peasant poet. In the epigraph, he announces himself as 'a Simple Bard, unbroke by rules of Art' (A1). In the 'Preface', Burns consolidates and embellishes this image, declaring '[u]nacquainted with the necessary requisites for commencing Poet by rule, he sings the sentiments and manners, he felt and saw in himself and his rustic compeers around him, in his and their native language'. And in the 'Dedication' to the Edinburgh edition, Burns appears to develop the nationalist implications of this reference to a 'native language', describing himself as '[a] Scottish Bard, whose highest ambition is to sing his Country's service' (i). Burns uses these paratexts to create the taste in which he might be read. And the success of this strategy has been noted by critics and biographers. James MacKay for instance observes: '[t]he "Preface" ... created the myth of the "Heaven-taught ploughman"'.^[46] Far from being a naïve rhymmer, however, Burns deploys these paratexts to market himself, associating his work with the eighteenth-century vogue for primitive rural purity and ingratiating himself with powerful patrons: he dedicated the edition to an association of Edinburgh noblemen and country gentlemen who had all been subscribers.^[47]

Yet, if we examine the more marginal paratexts, an alternative Burns comes into view. Burns creates a series of quasi-ethnographic footnotes, which detail local language and social practices. For instance, in his notes for 'Halloween', he takes the reader through the ceremonies detailed in the poem, explaining each of the dialect terms he uses: '*tocher*, or fortune', '*yird*, or earth', '*custoc*, that is, the heart of the stem' (123). Such notes are remarkable for the intricacy and enthusiasm with which Burns describes local customs. For example, when describing the ceremony in which young men and women pick a '*Stock*, or plant of kail', he informs us '[t]hey must go out, hand in hand, with eyes shut, and pull the first they meet with: its being big or little, straight or crooked, is prophetic of the size and shape of the grand object of all their Spells – the husband or wife' (103). By presenting these linguistic and anthropological details, Burns enables the reader to view the landscape and events of the poems from the perspective of a member of the rural community in question.

As with the notes, Burns uses the glossary to take the reader inside an alternative view of reality: he informs us a '[b]reef' is an 'invulnerable charm' (237) while 'water-kelpies' are 'mischievous spirits ... that haunt fords' (240). As his placing of the latter definition within its geographical setting suggests, Burns uses these entries to indicate how intimately Scots is implicated in its regional location and the agricultural labors of its inhabitants: 'Hoddan', for instance, is 'the motion of a sage country farmer on an old cart horse' (238). Here Burns' use of adjectives shows that he is not simply providing literal translations but striving to paint a vivid picture of local existence. His particular choices – 'old' and 'sage' – present the Lowlands as the embodiment of a vanishing way of life. By providing readers with an entry-point into rural mentalities, Burns seeks to contest England's growing cultural hegemony. In the margins of the text, he renegotiates the relationship between Scots and English, rural margin and metropolitan centre.

Importantly, Burns is writing twenty years before the publication of the first full Scots lexicon: Reverend John Jamieson's *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1808). His glossary answers to this absence. Burns formalises conventions of Scots grammar, informing us in his entry for 'mark' that '*this and several other nouns, which in English require an s to form the plural, are in Scotch like the words sheep, deer, the same in both numbers*'.^[48] In so doing, Burns participates in a tradition of Scots writers providing lexicographical glossaries to translate and legitimise their language. Robert Fergusson's 1773 *Poems* featured a nine-page glossary; and Allan Ramsay's 1729 *Poems* included a still-more elaborate appendage, with lengthy sections on Scots spelling and pronunciation and on the connections between Scots and English. The frequency of such paratexts underline the sense in which to be a Scots poet in the eighteenth century was to live a bilingual existence, on the margins between Scotland and England. While such poets used these paratexts to disseminate information about Scots to a largely English audience, they also created an important record of a culture that was undergoing unprecedented transformation.

By aggregating the scattered details of Scots dialects and demonstrating their grammatical coherence, then, Burns presents Scots as a living archive of a disappearing society. In his 1996 work *Archive Fever*, Jacques Derrida claims that a 'spectral messianicity' – or intangible belief in a future to come – is 'at work in the concept of the archive'.^[49] Similarly, by establishing this archive, Burns provides a foundation for a future in which the inhabitants of the Lowlands can recover their vanishing language and history and relate to the world as one among equivalent entities. His marginal paratexts constitute what the postcolonial theorist Homi Bhaba calls an 'interstitial space': a liminal location in which a minority group can reconstruct their communal identity and relation to the nation.^[50]

What is crucial, however, about Burns' approach is that he urges English readers to participate in the rural practices he describes. In one, for instance, he instructs us animatedly to '[t]ake a candle, and, go, alone, to a looking-glass: eat an apple before it ... the face of your conjugal partner, *to be*, will be seen in the glass' (109). We can grasp the importance of Burns' technique if we compare his notes with those of other Romantic-period writers. For instance, in the footnotes Robert Southey creates for his Oriental poetic epic *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801), Southey distances himself from the fantastical details he provides, by interposing a commentary within them, in which he rejects them as superstitions. Southey, for instance, reproduces a series of snippets from Camillus Leonardus' hermetic textbook, *The Mirror of Stones* (1502) which states that *Alectorica* – a small, crystalline stone – may 'render him who carries it invisible ... makes a woman agreeable to her husband ... helps to regain a lost Kingdom, and acquire a foreign one' (3: 112). Southey promptly dismisses these ideas as 'a few specimens of the absurd ideas once prevalent respecting precious stones' (3: 111). In contrast, Burns asks his reader to embrace the superstitious aspects of Scots culture.

Importantly, Murray Pittock has recently argued that Burns is singular and exemplary among Romantic poets because these other writers located the alien outside themselves – in the form of Ancient Mariners, Grecian Urns, Leech-gatherers and the like. In contrast, for Burns 'the familiar and alien were comprised in himself as a subject, not located in the objects of his gaze'.^[51] Burns' notes and glossary play a key role in this reorientation of the reader's sympathies. In them, Burns reverses the ethnographic gaze, speaking as a representative from *within* Scots society, *not* an observer looking upon it: referring, for instance, to Scots as 'our country-dialect' (117). In so doing, Burns decentres the English metropolitan reader, confronting them with their lack of cultural competence in an alien environment. Yet, far from excluding such readers, he seeks to involve them directly in Lowland customs. Such an approach keeps alive the friction between the two cultures, while enabling a process of mutual translation.

Burns extends these endeavours in his epigraphs for the poems, creating a dialogue between English literature and Scots traditions. For instance, he places the following lines below the title of *The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer*: 'Dearest of Distillation! Last and best!— / —How art thou lost!—' (33). This short passage is a pastiche of lines from Milton's *Paradise Lost*: '[o]f fairest of Creation, last and best ... [h]ow thou art lost, how on a sudden lost'.^[52] And Burns underlines this by titling them 'PARODY ON MILTON' (33). In one sense, Burns' epigraph answers to an 'anxiety of influence': Harold Bloom's term for the battle poets conduct with their predecessors in order to shake off their influence and create original work. By transforming Milton's lines into a snippet of a drinking-song, Burns performs what Bloom calls a 'daemonisation': a movement against a precursor's poem, towards an opposing personal voice.^[53]

But Burns performs a subversive shift on English literary culture, as well as one of its greatest poets. He moves Milton from the polite world of English letters to the popular world of Scots song; and from the private scene of the printed page to the communal space of the public house. By placing Milton within a concept of poetry as a collective experience, Burns demonstrates an approach to literature that is startlingly different to the later Romantic emphasis on the private nature of the lyric voice – a point I will return to in the conclusion. In so doing, Burns also reverses the channels of cultural appropriation between English and Scots: the centre is rewritten from the margins. Yet, far from resisting English literature as an oppressive dominant force, Burns embraces it as a space for playful subversion.

In other epigraphs, the Ayrshire Orpheus places his work within an Anglophone literary tradition, comparing his own lines with parallel passages in Milton, Pope and Gray. Such actions were not lost on early respondents. In a review of 1787, John Logan remarked: 'Robert Burns, though he has been represented as an ordinary ploughman ... is better acquainted with the English poets than most English authors that have come under review'.^[54] As Logan points out, Burns' wider engagement with the English literary canon punctures the myth of the peasant poet. While, in Bloom's lexicon, Burns may 'daemonise' English culture, he does not demonise it. The margins reveal him to participate within it, thereby complicating critical or editorial attempts to position him as the central voice of an opposing Scottish tradition.

Instead, the complexity of Burns' position is highlighted by Burns' title: *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. This paratext demonstrates the important role titles have as markers of affiliation across literary generations: not only does Burns use it to announce his continuity with Scots writers such as Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson, but other writers and editors have in turn alluded to it to associate themselves with him: from Ebenezer Picken in *Poems and epistles, mostly in the Scottish dialect* (1788) to Robert Crawford in this recent edited collection *New Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (2009).^[55] At first glance, Burns' emphatic use of the definite article appears to position Scots as a national tongue. But this is complicated by his categorisation of Scots as a 'dialect'. In one sense, Burns could be said to subordinate Scots to English. But he could also be seen as placing himself in opposition to Scottish intellectuals who sought to eradicate Scots such as Adam Smith, David Hume and Hugh Blair.^[56] With the title, Burns engages in a complex act of poetic self-construction: it has the declarative force of a statement, yet it leaves open the question of the status of Scots.

The intricacy of Burns' paratextual negotiations is in part necessitated by his complicated linguistic situation. He was part of a 'diglossic' society: a term the linguist Charles A. Ferguson coined to refer to a community that uses two languages – one a low-status mother tongue used as an everyday vernacular (Scots), the other held in high esteem and deployed for written and

formal communication (English).^[57] Yet, as we have seen, far from opposing Scots and English, Burns highlights their inter-relation and presents them as part of a continuum. Moreover, as scholars such as Thomas Crawford and Carol McQuirk have pointed out, Burns' diction is, in fact, a synthesis of a variety of different archaic and vernacular strains of Scots and English.^[58] By singing in a mixed tongue, Burns contests the linguistic divide that perpetuated the social inequality between Scots and English. This is why his title for the collection is in many ways deceptive: rather than create a separate Scots in opposition to English, he draws different languages together. In so doing, as I will show in the final section, Burns creates an important legacy for current investigations of the role of paratexts in colonialism and for contemporary understandings of global cultural politics.

Burns and the Politics of Marginality

How might we respond to Pittock's claim that 'We have read Burns too much through glossaries and not enough through dictionaries'? In the first place, Pittock's statement leaves open the question of audience: does 'we' refer to the audience for his paper; the readers of the *International Journal of Scottish Literature*; the academic Burns industry; Burns' readers in Scotland, Britain, or the World? Secondly, we might also query whether we simply 'read' Burns – what about his manifestations in performance, song, or translation? Furthermore, we could take issue with Pittock's assumption that glossaries are more likely to limit interpretation than dictionaries, by pointing to the many creative responses the glossary has engendered, and to the invaluable entry-point it offers into Burns' world. Moreover, we may observe that Pittock's claim rests on a myth of textual purity that locates Burns within an essentialist model of national identity. On the contrary, as we have seen, the juxtaposition of Scots and English in Burns' glossary is a crucial aspect of the poet's cultural and linguistic heterogeneity.

Burns' blend of languages reveals a fluid sense of selfhood that contrasts with the fixity of national identity. We can recognise this more clearly if we turn to his well-known declaration of his poetic vocation in his *Commonplace Book*:

However I am pleased with the works of our Scotch Poets ... I am hurt to see other places of Scotland, their towns, rivers, woods, haughs, &c. immortalised in such celebrated performances, whilst my dear country [is neglected] ... we never had one Scotch Poet ... to make the fertile banks of Irvine, the romantic woodlands and sequestered scenes on Aire, and the healthy, mountainous source, and winding sweep of Doon emulate Tay, Forth, Ettrick, Tweed, &c. this is a complaint I would gladly remedy.^[59]

When we first inspect this passage, it might appear that Burns is announcing his ambition to be a national poet of Scotland. Indeed, Burns *does* claim the poet creates a sense of place by providing a means of imaginatively inhabiting the landscape. But his understanding of geographical identity is quite different to that inscribed within modern conceptions of nationhood. Firstly, he uses the noun 'country' to refer to a region, not a nation – even differentiating his own area to other parts of Scotland. Secondly, Burns builds his sense of the local scene by establishing its affinities with other places, pointing out how the Doon emulates the Tay and how local poets might imitate their regional counterparts. In contrast, national identities are forged in opposition to other communities. For instance, in her classic study *Britons*, Linda Colley claims that, in the eighteenth century, the British gained a sense that they were a single people due to their perception that they were 'different from their prime enemy, France'.^[60] While the nation casts its members as subordinate parts of a bigger whole, Burns begins with the personal encounter with the local scene and builds upward. It is for this reason that his declaration of his ambition 'to sing his Country's service' (i) is more complex than it might appear. Far from being 'the archetypal national Bard'^[61] – as Robert Crawford has it in his recent biography – Burns resists the exclusionism implicit in the idea of nation, proposing a model of identity that is fluid, composite and hybridic.

Importantly, in his earlier work *Devolving English Literature*, Crawford argues that, by mixing languages, Burns deliberately adopted a position of marginality, observing aptly: '[i]nsisting on the importance of his local vernacular, writing a deliberately impure language, deeply inscribing himself in a culture outside the prevailing metropolitan one, Burns marginalized himself'. For Crawford, Burns' cultural distinctiveness and diversity enabled him to embody a similar multicultural ideal at the heart of Britishness: 'it is because he is a Scottish writer that he exemplifies the development of a fully British literature'.^[62] While Crawford's image of a multivalent British literature is inviting, we have seen that, in actual practice, Britishness was deployed to marginalise Scots aspects of Burns' work and the language and culture of the Lowlands.

Indeed, we might go further and recognise how Burns in fact contests the mono-lingualism that is central to modern conceptions of nationhood. Johann Gottfried Herder, the major theorist of Romantic nationalism, for instance asked: 'Has a nation anything more precious than the language of its fathers? In it dwell the entire world of tradition, history, religion, principle of existence, its whole heart and soul'.^[63]

While Burns shares Herder's view of language as a repository of histories and values, he departs from his claim that this inheritance is the exclusive possession of a particular group. Instead Burns' creolisation of English and Scots resists the linguistic totalitarianism that is a key aspect of

both eighteenth-century attempts to enforce English as a universal tongue within Britain and the concept of nationhood itself.

Reading Burns' margins, therefore, shows us that his language constitutes what the theorist Édouard Glissant calls a 'métissage': a site for writing in the interval between languages and cultures; and a means of uncovering the heterogeneous nature of geopolitical identities. Likewise, Burns' paratexts are profoundly dialogic documents: forged in collaboration, addressing the desires of influential patrons and specific audiences, and establishing connections across cultures. While Liam McIlvanney is right to draw attention to Burns' status as '[t]he radical bard of the democratic revolution', he is wrong to dismiss Edwin Muir's description of Burns as a [p]rotean figure'[\[64\]](#) as a 'trite proposition'.[\[65\]](#) Rather, what Don Paterson also refers to as Burns 'furious shapeshifting'[\[66\]](#) is a key component of the poet's complex geopolitical identity.

As such, Burns' glossary and notes draw our attention to the key role paratexts play in negotiating questions of cultural marginality. We might compare editors' use of Burns' with the 'paratextual domination'[\[67\]](#) Beth A. McCoy has observed the abolitionist editors William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips exercise in their prefaces to the slave writer Frederick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845).[\[68\]](#) Or we can perceive the affinities between Burns' glossary and the similar apparatus Aimé Césaire provides to translate the Martinican colloquialisms he combines with literary French in his anti-colonial poem *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land* (1956). Identifying these connections breaks Burns out of the limitations of a Scottish or British literary canon. It also allows us to draw together the experiences of internal and external victims of European colonialism. As Césaire ruefully acknowledges, 'there is room for all at the rendezvous of conquest'.[\[69\]](#)

The reason why Burns is so important to this project is that his work embodies an inclusiveness that transgresses the limitations of nation. We have already seen how he refrains from placing himself in opposition to the English literary tradition and refashions it in his own image. Such open-handedness is also revealed in the performative nature of his poetry and its role in creating rituals that establish a sense of community. For instance, in his glossary for 'To a Haggis', McGinn underscores the participative nature of the poem by adding footnotes that give instructions on how to perform it during a Burns supper, telling us, for instance, at line fourteen to 'give the haggis a belt with the knife: a gentle stab or a backhanded blow – your choice!'.[\[70\]](#) Among other things, this ritual acts as an interactive glossary on 'To a Haggis', enabling diners to bring their own personalities and cultures to the poem and engage with it in any way they see fit. The glossary's potential for fostering transcultural dialogues is further developed in the version provided on the *Burns Country Website*, in which readers can click on Scots terms highlighted in violet and access translations in French, German and Spanish, as well as English. Such an

example demonstrates the potential hypertext offers for the creation of a new global culture of literary interaction and linguistic exchange.

Indeed, these efforts to break writing from Scotland out of the confines of a national tradition have also been taken up by some of the contemporary poets featured in Robert Crawford's recent anthology *New Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (2009). In 'Muckle Hippo', Alasdair Gray stages a hilarious confrontation between a bizarre Scots-language poem and a sanctimonious English-language gloss, which seeks to suppress the verse's scatology and cultural specificity. Moreover, in 'Ode tae a Hosefish', David Kinloch imagines the early-twentieth-century Italian poet Eugenio Montale being confronted by a Scots-speaking cuttlefish demanding an ode in Standard Habbie. The resulting poem is a conflux of different languages, mixing Heidegger and Houdini, Spanish cuisine and scientific terminology. Like Burns' collision of Scots and English, Kinloch's poem fuses disparate elements of different cultures to demonstrate the benefits of encounter and amalgamation. Crucially, many of these poets eschew a traditional Scottish literary identity. In 'English. A Scottish Essay', Douglas Dunn asks 'Who were these purer folk / Whose tongues absolved them from an "English" stain?'. For Dunn, Burns is the main symbol of Scottish literature's parochialism and hypocrisy. He scorns what he calls 'The Robert Burns syndrome – just write, like him, and you'll be true / To Scotland, when its good self returns'.

Drawing attention to Burns' cultural hybridity can act as a powerful panacea to such a syndrome. Above all it enables us to explode the nationalist myths that have confined both him and his antecedents. Doing so allows contemporary poets to escape the anxiety of Burns' influence and enables writing from Scotland to evade the shadow of English literature, locating it a transnational and translingual context quite different from a national tradition. As Dunn observes, 'we've got three sound tongues / In which to utter poetry'. Burns' work can contribute towards Dunn's attempts to 'to triplicate our nationality' by reclaiming English as '[a] site of rebel mimicry' and forging a polyglot tradition.^[71]

The glossary is crucial to Burns' poetry because it highlights his role as a cultural mediator, fusing different traditions and subversively appropriating English in the way Dunn describes. Moreover, the generosity with which Burns engages with a range of cultures is an essential aspect of that same open-handedness that Emerson identified when he described Burns' poems as 'the property and the solace of all mankind'.^[72] Such hospitality is also perhaps one of the many reasons why Burns has never found a comfortable home within the individualism and lyricism of English Romanticism – and also perhaps a reason why he does not need to do so. Instead, examining the glossary, and Burns' other paratexts, draws our attention to the fact that, far from being a fixed entity, his language is an 'echos-monde': a relation to everything else, not an essentialised whole. More generally, the complex, multi-faceted nature of Burns' paratexts

provides a compelling illustration of how the paratext's lack of fixed address enables writers to evade and challenge monolithic ideas of language, nation and poetic identity. The example of Burns therefore shows us how investigating the paratext can contribute towards the creation of a 'Poetics of relation': Glissant's label for a rejection of essentialised ideas of identity in favour of a pluralist and inclusive model in which 'each and every identity is extended through a relation with the Other'.^[73] Crucially, Burns shows us how we can forge a form of identity that is alive to the particularity of our own cultural situation, while remaining aware of its contingency and hybridity, and reaching out to others. If we wish to liberate literature from the limitations of national traditions, and understand the dialogues it can create across cultures, the margins might be a good place to start. As Genette exclaims, '[a] threshold exists to be crossed'.^[74]

NOTES

[1] Murray Pittock 'Burns, Smith, language and lice', 17 January 2009, *Robert Burns 1759 to 2009*, Centre for Robert Burns Studies, University of Glasgow.

[2] Henry Mackenzie, unsigned essay in *The Lounger*, 97 (9 December 1786) reprinted in Donald A. Low (ed.), *Robert Burns: The Critical Heritage* (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974) [henceforth 'RBCH'] pp. 67-71, p. 69.

[3] Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 407-8.

[4] Susan Manning, 'Antiquarianism and the Scottish Science of Man' in Leith Davis, Ian Duncan and Janet Sorensen (eds), *Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 57-76, p. 67.

[5] Kevin Halliwell, 'John Galt and the paratext: the discourse of authentication in North American emigration literature', *Star Project Website*, <http://www.star.ac.uk/star-publications/e-texts.aspx>, p. 4. See also Ian Duncan, 'Authenticity Effects: The Work of Fiction in Romantic Scotland', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 102, No. 1 (Winter 2003), pp. 93-116.

[6] Glyn White 'The critic in the text: footnotes and marginalia in the Epilogue to Alasdair Gray's *Lanark: A Life in Four Books*' in Joe Bray, Miriam Handley, and Anne C. Henry (eds), *Ma(r)king the Text: The presentation of meaning on the literary page* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp. 55-70, p. 55.

[7] The glossaries I have consulted are as follows: Robert Burns, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Edinburgh: William Creech, 1787); Robert Burns, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (London and Edinburgh: Adam Neill and Co. for T. Cadell jun. and W. Davies and W. Creech, 1800); Robert Burns, *The Works of Robert Burns*, James Currie (ed.) (London and Edinburgh: T. Cadell and W. Creech, 1802); Robert Burns, *The Works of Robert Burns*, ed. The Ettrick

Shepherd and William Motherwell (Glasgow: Archibald Fullarton and Co., 1835); Robert Burns, *The Work of Robert Burns, with notes and illustrations* (Glasgow and Edinburgh: Blackie and Son, 1861); John Cuthbertson, *Complete Glossary to the Poetry and Prose of Robert Burns, with upwards of three thousand illustrations from English authors* (London: Alexander Gardner, 1886); Robert Burns, *The Life and Works of Robert Burns*, ed. Robert Chambers, revised by William Wallace (Edinburgh and London: W & R Chambers, 1896); Robert Burns, *The Poetry of Robert Burns*, William Ernest Henley and Thomas F. Henderson (eds) (Edinburgh: T.C. and E. C. Jack, 1896); Robert Burns, *A Choice of Burns' Poems and Songs*, ed. Sydney Goodsir Smith (London: Faber and Faber, 1966); Robert Burns, *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns: Volume Three*, James Kinsley (ed.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968); Robert Burns, *The Canongate Burns*, Andrew Noble and Patrick Scott Hogg (eds) (Edinburgh: Canongate 2001). Robert Burns, 'Address to a Haggis', *Robert Burns Country: The Official Robert Burns Website*, <http://www.robertburns.org/works/147.shtml>; Clark McGinn, *The Ultimate Guide to Being Scottish* (Edinburgh: Luath Press 2008).

[8] Cuthbertson, *Complete Glossary*, p. 28; Burns, *The Life and Works*, Chambers and Wallace (eds) p. 27; Burns, *The Poetry*, Henley and Henderson (eds) p. 238; Burns, *A Choice of Burns' Poems and Songs*, ed. Sydney Goodsir Smith p. 110. *Robert Burns Country*, <http://www.robertburns.org/works/glossary/135.html>.

[9] Robert Burns, 'Address to a Haggis', *Robert Burns Country*.

[10] Robert Burns, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Edinburgh: W. Creech, 1787) p. 363. Unless otherwise stated, all subsequent references to this edition are given in parentheses in the text. Line numbers are provided for verse, page numbers for prose.

[11] Cuthbertson, *Complete Glossary*, p. vi.

[12] Clark McGinn Interview, 27 February 2009.

[13] Burns, *Poems*, Kinsley (ed.) vol. I, p. viii.

[14] Burns, *Poems*, Kinsley (ed.) vol. III, p. 1222.

[15] *Canongate Burns*, p. 214.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. xciv.

[17] *Ibid.*, both p. lxxxviii.

[18] See Gerard Carruthers, 'The Canongate Burns: Misreading Burns and the Periodical Press of the 1790s', *Review of Scottish Culture* 18 (2006), pp. 41-50,

[19] *Canongate Burns*, p. xcv and p. xciv.

[20] See Robert Crawford, 'Bard of Friendly Fire', *London Review of Books*, 25 July 2002, pp. 16-8, p. 17.

[21] Robert Burns, *The Works of Robert Burns*, The Ettrick Shepherd and William Motherwell (eds) (Glasgow: Archibald Fullarton and Co., 1835), both p. 2.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 51 He quotes extracts of praise for the poet made by prominent English critics,

printing, for instance, William Hazlitt's effusive description of Burns' 1786 poem Halloween as 'striking [...] picturesque [...] humorous [...] masterly [...] remarkable'. Ibid., p. 99.

[23] Ibid., p. 62.

[24] Ibid., p. 30.

[25] Ibid., pp. 36 and 35.

[26] Burns, *Burns*, Currie (ed.) vol. III p. 406.

[27] Ibid., vol. I, p. 2.

[28] Ibid., p. viii.

[29] Ibid., p. 10.

[30] Ibid., p. 25.

[31] Ibid., p. 31.

[32] The National Burns Collection of Scotland lists an astonishing eighty-six different versions published between 1800 and 1874 (see <http://www.scotlandsculture.org/nbc/index.cfm>). And this figure does not count the many additional editions that focused exclusively on Burns' prose or his poetry (see, for instance: Robert Burns, *Poetical works of Robert Burns: as collected and published by Dr. Currie* (London: Jones and Co., 1825); Robert Burns, *Prose works of Robert Burns* (Edinburgh: W & R Chambers, 1839)). In comparison, the Hogg and Motherwell was reissued by the Glasgow publisher Archibald Fullerton eight times between 1834 and 1853, the Chambers was reprinted twice in 1851-2 and 1856-7, then revised by William Wallace and reissued in 1896; and the Henley and Henderson was printed in 1896 and 1901, before being reissued in 1927.

[33] Cuthbertson, *Complete Glossary*, p. v.

[34] James Currie, 'Criticism on the Writings of Burns', *The Works of Robert Burns, with an Account of his Life* (Liverpool, 1800) I, pp. 267-336, in Low (ed.), *RBCH*, p. 151.

[35] Henley and Henderson, pp. viii, ix.

[36] Chambers and Wallace, p. 28.

[37] *Canongate Burns*, p. 213.

[38] McGinn, p. 70.

[39] Robert Burns, *The Work of Robert Burns, with notes and illustrations* (Glasgow, Edinburgh and London: Blackie and Son, 1861) p.I.

[40] Hogg and Motherwell, p. 57.

[41] Ibid., pp. 115 and 109.

[42] Robert Crawford, *The Bard: Robert Burns, A Biography* (London: Princeton University Press, 2008) p. 3.

[43] Andrew Noble, 'Introduction' in *The Canongate Burns*, pp. ix-xcii, both p. lxxxviii.

[44] The paucity of typographical errors in the first edition suggests that he prepared each element of the edition carefully. In contrast, many copies of the second edition feature numerous

discrepancies. However, these are probably not the result of Burns' negligence, but the outcome of the printer William Smellie not printing enough copies initially and having to quickly reprint them, resetting all the type and most likely bypassing Burns. See James McKay, *Burns: A Biography of Robert Burns* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1992) p. 288 and Crawford, *The Bard*, pp. 220-4.

[45] See MacKay, p. 298.

[46] MacKay, p. 25.

[47] See MacKay, p. 259.

[48] Burns, *Poems*, p. 358.

[49] Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. 9, 36.

[50] Homi K. Bhabha, 'Introduction: The Location of Culture' in *The Location of Culture* (London: New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 3.

[51] Murray Pittock, 'Robert Burns and British Poetry', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 121 (2003) pp. 191-222, p. 204.

[52] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Alastair Fowler (ed.) (University of California: Longman, 1998), Book Nine, lines 896 and 900, p. 521.

[53] Bloom defines 'daemonisation' as 'a movement towards a personalized Counter-Sublime, in reaction to the precursor's Sublime'. Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, Second Edn. (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 15.

[54] Unsigned review, *English Review* (February 1787), ix, pp. 89-93, reprinted in *RBCH*, pp. 76-7, fn p. 76-7.

[55] Ebenezer Picken, *Poems and Epistles, mostly in the Scottish dialect* (Paisley: 1788) and Robert Crawford (ed.), *New Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (London: Polygon, 2009). See also David Craford, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect, on various subjects* (Edinburgh: 1788); Robert Gray, *Poems in the Scots and English dialect* (Glasgow: 1793); John Lauderdale, *A Collection of Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Edinburgh: 1796); David Morison, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Montrose: 1790); Andrew Shirrefs, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Edinburgh: 1790).

[56] For more details see Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, Second Edn. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), pp. 111-76.

[57] Charles A. Fergusson, 'Diglossia' in *Word* 15 (1959), pp. 325-340.

[58] Crawford distinguishes four kinds of language that Burns uses: 'English English'; 'Scots English'; a 'General Scots'; and his own 'regional dialect' of Ayrshire and the south-west. And McGuirk argues that 'Burns' diction...seems 'natural' but is designed and invented: a mixture of local dialect, archaic Middle Scots, dialect words of regions other than his own, sentimental idioms, and 'high' English rhetoric'. Thomas Crawford, *Burns: A Study of Poems and Songs*

(Edinburgh: Mercat Press 1978), p. vii-x; Carol McQuirk, *Burns and the Sentimental Era* (London: Tuckwell, 1997), p. xii.

[59] Robert Burns, *Robert Burns' Commonplace Book, 1783-1785*, J.C. Ewing and Davidson Cook (eds) (Glasgow: Gowans and Gray, 1938), pp. 1070-71.

[60] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Vintage, 1996), p. 18.

[61] Crawford, *The Bard*, p. 3.

[62] Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, pp. 89, 109.

[63] J. G. Herder, *Sämliche Werke*, ed. B. Suphan, 33 vols. (Berlin, 1877-1913) vol. 17, p. 58, quoted and translated by Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (London: Viking, 1976), p. 165.

[64] Edwin Muir 'The Burns Myth' in *New Judgements: Robert Burns* (Glasgow: William Montgomerie, 1947), pp. 5-12, p. 6.

[65] Liam McIlvanney, *Burns the Radical: Poetry and Politics in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (London: Tuckwell, 2002), pp. 4, 7.

[66] Robert Burns, *Robert Burns: Poems*, Don Paterson (ed.) (London: Faber, 2001), p. vii.

[67] Beth A. McCoy, 'Race and the Paratextual Condition', *PMLA*, January 2006, Vol. 1231, No. 1, pp. 156-169, p. 160.

[68] See Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave. Written by Himself*, David W. Blight (ed.) (New York: Bedford, 1993).

[69] Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, trans. Mireille Rosello with Annie Pritchard (1956; Northumberland: Bloodaxe, 1995), p. 127.

[70] McGinn, p. 14.

[71] Douglas Dunn, 'English. A Scottish Essay', in Crawford (ed.), *New Poems*, lines 13-14, lines 38-9, lines 32-3, line 35, line 15.

[72] Ralph Waldo Emerson, extract from a speech given at a Centenary Burns dinner in Boston on January 25 1859, Low (ed.), *RBCH*, pp. 434-6, p. 436.

[73] Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. by Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997), p. 11.

[74] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 410.