

Ùr-Sgeul: ceistean agus cothrom
Challenge and opportunity for Gaelic prose in the twenty-first century

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Note: A Gaelic version of this paper is available.

Introduction

This paper aims to provide an update on development and publication of Scottish Gaelic prose over the period 2007–2009, with particular regard to fiction and the Ùr-Sgeul project. It also aims to identify opportunities and challenges for development.

Publications and authors

Since 2007 there have been thirteen new books published under the Ùr-Sgeul imprint (listed in Appendix 1). Twenty-four books have been published by Ùr-Sgeul since the project began in 2003 (Appendix 2). Other publications include a CD marrying spoken-word fiction and rock music *Ruigidh Sinn Mars* (2008) and a similar format CD *Claigeann Damien Hirst* (2009), reflecting our commitment to different formats (Appendix 3). Thirty writers have had fiction published by Ùr-Sgeul, with eighteen writers included in the collection *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* (paperback, 2008; hardback limited edition, 2009). These writers are listed in Appendix 4.

Pursuit of diversity

The long-term aim of Ùr-Sgeul is to help create and publish a diverse, plentiful range of Gaelic prose from a variety of writers: a body of work with an array of literary styles and subject matter. Ùr-Sgeul aims to publish writing which reflects the full range of human experience and circumstance, writing that is not afraid to experiment or to challenge. The pursuit of diversity and the continued expansion of Gaelic prose is no easy task, since the question is not only about availability of writers and their willingness to put new ideas on paper, but about availability of funding for effective publication.

Diversity in 2009

There are signs of increased diversity and new trends within Gaelic fiction, in terms of literary style, subject matter, experimentation, innovation and form, as well as author background. This paper does not offer a detailed description of this diversity, but offers a general overview from my perspective as publisher and developer, with some insights and suggestions. An opportunity exists for scholars to examine the development of the genre, including trends and titles, in more detail.

Brief history of discourse

Before we look at the current situation, we can briefly refresh our memories about particular themes in the development of Gaelic fiction, highlighted by critics and reviewers since the Ùr-Sgeul imprint began in 2003. In November that year, *The Herald* newspaper proclaimed:

“Catholic Culture adds magic realism to Gaelic canon”

It is worth revisiting the article, written by Aonghas MacNeacail:

In 1943, a book appeared that transformed the face and nature of Scottish Gaelic literature. Sorley MacLean's *Dàin do Eimhir* established Gaelic as a medium for poetry that, without compromising full engagement with its own tradition, resonated with the literatures of the world.

Those following MacLean, prose writers or poets, who contributed to the development of a modernist Gaelic canon, shared one characteristic: from Derick Thomson and Iain Crichton Smith through successive waves, mainly of poets, but including remarkable prose writers like John Murray and Norman Campbell, they were all of Protestant origins. They were also, with very few exceptions, dissenters from those origins. It became the accepted view that while this literary 'Protestant ascendancy' came equipped to deal with the modern world, the Catholic islands were where one went to experience the pure tradition in its full, unstinted vigour.

Six decades later, under the auspices of a funding project administered by the Gaelic Books Council, the first two volumes in a new fiction strand have appeared. Martin MacIntyre's kaleidoscopic collection of short stories, *Ath-Aithne*, was launched during the Edinburgh International Book Festival (Clàr, £8.99). Now, after an interval of two months, *An Oidhche Mus Do Sheòl Sinn* (The Night Before We Sailed) (Clàr, £8.99), a novel by Angus Peter Campbell, is available. Both writers, who have effectively laid down templates for Gaelic fiction in the 21st century, were raised as Catholics.

To some extent, they fit the stereotypical perception, in that both demonstrate a natural and profound sense of the Gaelic tradition. But then, so did Sorley MacLean. What they do seem to have gained from their background, as have writers from other Catholic cultures, such as Latin America, is an ability to introduce elements of magic realism in ways that seem integral, even matter-of-fact. Things that were driven underground by a more austere theology, being accommodated by Catholicism, have retained an energy such writers can access. Significantly, Angus Peter Campbell counts Gabriel Garcia Marquez among his favourite writers (MacNeacail, 2003).

It is not for this paper to agree or disagree with the eloquent analysis of MacNeacail. Religion and belief – the influence or otherwise – with regard to twentieth and twenty-first century Gaelic fiction is a topic worthy of further debate. I have no doubt that the debate would be varied, perhaps heated.

Since MacNeacail's 2003 analysis, there have been a small number of other published articles and chapters discussing particular aspects of Gaelic novels and short stories published by Ùr-Sgeul. Máire Ní Annracháin (2007), in a wide ranging review, identified the prevalence of Russian culture 'which features disproportionately within the Ùr-Sgeul texts', chiefly within *Na Klondykers* (Iain F. MacLeòid, 2005) and *Dacha Mo Ghaoil* (Tormod MacGill-Eain, 2005). In 2009, Meg Bateman brought to our attention 'the image of water in the novels of Angus Peter Campbell', with a particular focus on *An Oidhche Mus do Sheòl Sinn* (2003), *Là a' Dèanamh Sgèil Do Là* (2005) and his English (non Ùr-Sgeul) work *Invisible Islands* (2006).

I am sure there are other themes that can be identified within early Ùr-Sgeul publications. The three examples above provide useful, informed starting points. What I do feel however, and I will return to this issue later, is that opportunities to compare a significant number of different, authoritative views on new Gaelic fiction – and to do this regularly as new titles emerge – are lacking, particularly within the national press, published journals and within the Gaelic community in general. Perhaps opportunities will increase: after all, the genre of Gaelic fiction, in its twenty-first century guise, is still in its infancy.

The development of Gaelic prose within the twenty-first century exhibits a range of trends and influences. Some of the more recent trends and influences are outlined below. As I mentioned, this report is not comprehensive. It is a snapshot of a situation: an outline of a genre which has the potential to evolve rapidly.

Emergence of female writers

The emergence of female, progressive writers (or progressive writers who happen to be female – I feel a heated debate coming on) can be identified as a recent trend. At the end of 2009, Màiri Anna NicDhòmhnaill, Norma NicLeòid, Catriona Lexy Campbell and Alison Lang will have each published novels or short story collections – two novels in Norma NicLeòid's case: *Dileas Donn* (2006) and *Taingeil Toilichte* (2008), with a third in the pipeline – under the Ùr-Sgeul imprint, with an agreement in most cases to publish a further novel or short story collection. The authors' work features a variety of issues and subject matter, with a range of styles and approaches. Catriona Lexy Campbell's 2009 novel, *Samhraidhean Diomhair*, according to a pre-publication review from John Ailig MacPherson:

is told elegantly and imaginatively. Although it is immersed in Gaeldom it also covers an international spectrum and a turbulent world. It glides gracefully through time, place and events, leaving you on tenterhooks to see the next twist in the situation (MacPherson, 2009).

In MacPherson's opinion, he has 'read few books that gave him as much pleasure and optimism as *Samhraidhean Diomhair*'. MacPherson's optimism is founded on a belief that Catriona Lexy Campbell has 'demonstrated that there is hope for prolific and powerful Gaelic literature in years to come'. Catriona Lexy Campbell, and other female writers – including emerging authors such as Màiri E. NicLeòid and Ishi Nicllleathain (to name but two) – are readdressing the gender imbalance that has existed within published Gaelic fiction.

For those interested in gender issues within Gaelic literature, a new question arises: to what extent is the dominant role of the male writer, within the sphere of Gaelic fiction, now being challenged? A detailed response to the question is outwith the scope of this paper. What is certain is that it would have been more difficult five years ago, perhaps even two years ago, to have any meaningful discussion of the topic.

Authors – the rise of the learner

Another trend within recent published Gaelic fiction is the increasing influence of the writer from a learner background. Learners have been influential in Gaelic poetry for a number of decades. This has not been the case in Gaelic fiction. Until now that is. Alison Lang is a prime example. *Cainnt na Cailleig Cailte*, her debut collection of short stories, is published by

Ùr-Sgeul in 2009. The increasing influence of learners, of course, is a reflection of linguistic and societal trends. The importance of learner-background authors within Gaelic fiction should not be underestimated. They bring a diversity of experience and perspective to the Gaelic fiction genre and, provided the quality of their writing can be ensured, this is very much to be welcomed.

International influences

Mona Claudia Striewe and Micheal Klevenhaus, both from Germany, are two other examples of learners emerging within the Gaelic fiction genre. What is also significant is that they reflect the increasing international dimension of contemporary Gaelic fiction. Who would have thought that we would have a collection of twenty-one different Gaelic stories, from twenty-one different writers, living as far as field as Japan, Alaska and Germany? This was the case with *An Claiqeann aig Damien Hirst* published in 2009 as a single volume hardback, with an introduction by Jo MacDonald providing an overview of the contemporary Gaelic short story.

An Claiqeann aig Damien Hirst

The aim of the work was to feature new Gaelic short stories, never before published, written by new and emerging authors, as well as a number of experienced writers. The approach was (deliberately) one of risk – to provide a platform for emerging, and in many cases unpublished, talent, whilst not ignoring some of the more well-established authors. The last previously published anthology of Gaelic short stories (*Cha sgeul ruin e*) was in 1995 and featured, almost exclusively, 'established names' only. For the *Claiqeann* collection, a collaboration with BBC Radio nan Gaidheal (through a short-story competition 'Sgrìobh Sgeulachd') provided a number of well-written stories, in addition to our own commissions. The resulting publication – with stories chosen for their originality, innovation, individual nature, promise or obvious quality – features a diversity of subject matter and sub-genres, including science fiction, social realism, the supernatural and the everyday. Themes explored include love, death, nature, technology, religion, culture, race, money, art, prejudice and war. Aonghas MacNeacail (2009) provides a perspective:

An Claiqeann aig Damien Hirst (Damien Hirst's Skull) is something of a curiosity. In its first manifestation, it came as a boxed set of three slim volumes, each containing seven short stories.

The twenty-one writers represent a remarkable diversity of ages and experience, but with an even more extraordinary geographic spread, from Japan to Alaska, via Germany, and more local places of origin as diverse as Lincolnshire, Dumfries, Edinburgh and Lenzie with a more predictable assortment of Hebrideans. The collection also brings together an unusual diversity of styles and genres, with suspense and science fiction rubbing shoulders with the surreal: and where romance reveals itself, it's with a distinct lack of sentimentality. A common factor is that all these stories are extremely well, occasionally brilliantly, written. And the common language is Gaelic.

At a time when media reporting on the language – audience figures for the new TV channel or the development of contemporary vocabularies, for example – present it as something essentially marginal, eccentric even, these writers, both native speakers

and those who've learned it, take Gaelic at face value, as a legitimate, and versatile medium through which to explore their world. What's both striking and immensely satisfying (to this reviewer, at least) is how uniformly successful they have been, whether moving us to tears, provoking belly-laugh or taking us on improbable, yet plausible in the telling, flights of fancy. There are imperfections, but there isn't a serious dud in the selection (MacNeacail, 2009).

He goes on to examine a selection of the short stories:

Without suggesting significant influence, Iain MacIlleathain's *An Keppler*, with its solitary survivor evokes memories of Stanislaw Lem's eerily atmospheric *Solaris*, while the Alaskan Chuck Tripp breeds his own *White Fang* in a beautifully paced account of a young wolf, estranged from his native pack, eventually establishing a new pack with the support of a small group of females. Micheal Klevenhaus' character grows up in 1970s Germany, with American pop music, and a Nazi uncle in the background. Maoilios Caimbeul's Cranleigh Croesus, who successfully pursues Hirst's diamond-studded skull, encounters a bit of traditional Highland supernatural happening, used to equally good effect by Catriona Lexy Campbell in her persuasive account of a teenager reinventing her own world. Mermaids can be real, if we need them to be.

Death among the young features in Mona Claudia Striwe's virtual world, where the kids know each other only through their digital alter egos until harsh reality intervenes, while Martainn Mac an t-Saoir experiences a grandfather's funeral through the eyes of a small child, for whom it's an extension of play. Interactions between the generations feature in several of the stories, most strikingly in Màiri Flòraidh Nic a' Phiocair's *Eilean nan Loch*. Between an opening sentence where a murderer approaches his deed and its horrific conclusion with the act (fuelled by revenge) which catches you by the throat, moments of pure farcical laugh-out-loud comedy will catch you by surprise. Tasteful? Perhaps not, but it's bloody real.

The sci-fi thread offers its own variety, from Pdraig MacAoidh's talking *GPS* to Des Scholes' robotic Hebden Bridge. And while Iain Mac Illeathain's space craft takes a conventional genre scenario, there's a case for including Iain Cuimeanach's metaphysical journey through the process of dying in this category (MacNeacail, 2009).

A short note on the average age of the *Claigeann Damien Hirst* writers: the relatively youthful profile is encouraging, given the overall ageing Gaelic population and the fact that there was no deliberate policy of including younger authors. Stories were included solely on their merits. The (closely estimated) average age is 44, with a number of younger writers featured within the collection. There is plenty of time for them to publish: Alasdair Gray, for example, published his first novel when he was 50, while Annie Proulx published her first novel in 1992, fifty-seven years after she was born.

The younger *Claigeann* generation will bring us exciting new work in years to come, I hope.

CD collaboration – Na Gathan

As well as a 'talking book' set of CDS featuring all stories in the collection, there is a single CD

collaboration, as mentioned previously, of music and spoken word, featuring the Gaelic indie rock group Na Gathan. This comprises four tracks. The first track is an original composition from Na Gathan entitled *Claigeann Damien Hirst*, followed by three tracks featuring extracts of stories by Alison Lang, Mona Claudia Striewe and Myles Campbell.

Inspired after reading the title story, the song was not a forced composition. After approaching the band with a view to collaboration, I was unsure as to whether anything would come of it. I simply said "There is an opportunity there – only do this if it feels right".

The words of the song are reproduced below with kind permission from Na Gathan. I am certainly no Simon Frith, but the social and political commentary contained concisely within the brevity and structure of a three-minute Gaelic pop song (three minutes eleven seconds to be precise) is worthy of attention. The song is sung from the perspective of a diamond miner in South Africa, and it imagines the jewel encrusted skull as a full moon drawing the life-blood out of the miners.

Claigeann Damien Hirst

written by Tim Armstrong and Greg MacThòmais

Chan eil mi ag iarraidh cus,
Chan eil mi ag iarraidh ach teachd-an-tìr,
'S bobhla bracaist dha mo mhac.
Mo chuid eòlas air ifrinn,
Shìos ann am mèinn cho dubh ri bàs,
Seudan fala, seudan bròin...
... y los ricos compran monstruos...
(agus daoine beartach a' ceannach uilebheistean)
Claigeann Damien Hirst
Claigeann Damien Hirst
Claigeann Damien Hirst
Làn fala, làn fala
Làn na fala,
'S a' ghealach slàn,
Lìon mo chuislean,
Le fuil, le fuil, le fuil

Established writers - new publications, form and content

New work since 2007 continues to emerge from the now 'established' Gaelic novelists and short story writers, including Angus Peter Campbell, Martin MacIntyre and Iain Finlay MacLeod. Norman Campbell (Tormod a' Bhocsair) is writing a third novel (his second for Ùr-Sgeul, following on from *Shrapnel* published in 2006). Finlay MacLeod's collected short stories *Dìomhanas* was published in 2008, and acclaimed by Ragnall MacilleDhuibh of *The Scotsman* as a landmark in the history of the Gaelic short story: 'Now, 35 years after the publication of *An Aghaidh Choimheach* [written by John Murray, 1973], a collection of stories that is comparable' (MacilleDhuibh, 2008). Established Gaelic fiction writers continue to write, to diversify and to explore new territory.

The scope of this report prevents me from providing comprehensive detail for each title, but I can provide background and insight into one or two of the newer publications. I'll start with Angus Peter Campbell's novel *Tilleadh Dhachaigh*.

Angus Peter Campbell – form and structure – an insight

Tilleadh Dhachaigh (2009) is Angus Peter Campbell's fourth Gaelic novel. On a very simple level, it is the story of a ghost "returning home" on the train from Aberdeen to Kyle of Lochalsh. But as with all work from Angus Peter Campbell, it exists on a number of levels. It is also his shortest work at 120 pages. The book is distinctive in its form and structure. The author describes his approach to *Tilleadh Dhachaigh* and how this compares to his other novels:

I think that form (or structure) are as important as content in a work of art. In a novel such as *An Oidhche Mus do Sheòl Sinn* (2003), which had "big" themes such as duty and betrayal and forgiveness and redemption I felt that an epic form (as in the big 19th c novels) was important. Similarly because *Là a' Dèanamh Sgèil Do Là* (2005) deals with the past and future it was obviously appropriate to place it in two different time zones.

Among other things, *Tilleadh Dhachaigh* is about the creative fragility of memory and the necessary disintegration of our hold and understanding of things. In other words, our appreciation of the world is fragmentary and partial and broken, and it seems to me that a jolting train journey, sometimes speeding and sometimes lurching from station to station across the country, is an appropriate metaphor or vehicle for that dissolution. When the main character is a "ghost" of himself that journey is even more dislocated. It is in acknowledging rather than denying that (linguistic and cultural) brokenness that movement is made. Otherwise you'd stay put, in Aberdeen, or jump off at the earliest opportunity, or at the most beautiful location (Plockton?). Fortunately – or unfortunately – things happen on the way, though.

You should never write more than you're fascinated with. As soon as you stop being fascinated by a subject, stop. That's why some chapters are short: for example, every time I think of Duncraig, I think of my dear friend Kay Matheson who once worked there as a Domestic Science Teacher in the 50s. Once I've remembered her, Duncraig is then finished. Empty, as I've put it in that particular chapter.

As with the author and reader, critics ought to recognize their own guilt and complicity in the partial, broken journey. They are on the train to defend their own class/gender position which is as fragmentary and damaged (despite apparent appearances) as anyone else's. An author should never judges his or her characters: he knows the beam in his own/her own eye too well to start taking more out of any fellow-traveller's eyes. All he does is look out the window, remember and think, and be with his fellow travellers in awe (Campbell, 2009).

Tilleadh Dhachaigh starts off with three quotes. The first is a quatrain from a song found in a footnote from Alexander Carmichael:

*Tha t'anail leams nas cùbhraidh
Na ùbhlan 's iad gam buain,
Na 'n caineal caoin ga shùghadh
A thiubhrar thar a' chuain.*

which is to say that the principal theme is love.

The second quotation comes from Louis Armstrong the trumpeter who simply declared:

You blows who you is

This is to say that the author as well as the reader (and critic) brings his or her whole personality to bear on the writing or the reading of a novel.

Finally, a quote from the Czech-French writer Milan Kundera who once stated that:

The novelist is neither historian nor prophet: he is an explorer of existence

Angus Peter agrees that this indeed is the primary function of a novelist:

to explore, through his own native language of Gaelic, what it is to exist here and now. It is an existential exploration of different possible ways of being, because I am convinced that it is only through the literary novel (and not for instance poetry) that the real/true self is exposed or revealed, unadorned by lyricism. (Campbell, 2009).

The approach and recent work of Iain Finlay MacLeod

Naturally there are different views from those of Campbell and Kundera as to the main role of the novelist. In my view, this is the beauty of Gaelic fiction in the twenty-first century – there is no right or wrong approach, simply different ones. Take for example, Iain Finlay MacLeod. *Am Bounty* is a historical adventure yarn based loosely on the story of ‘Morrison of the Bounty’, featuring Lewis and Tahiti – coconuts, caileagan and conspaid – published in 2008. As Ragnall MacilleDhuibh of *The Scotsman* outlines:

MacLeod doesn’t try to give us great literature, to write true history, to convey a social or moral message, to create vocabulary or to use long words. He entertains us. Bang. That’s all.

I think Ragnall MacilleDhuibh sums up MacLeod’s approach to *Am Bounty* very accurately. The structure and style is praised by MacilleDhuibh. He suggests that ‘we need the likes of *Am Bounty* because it is (I’m sure) the kind of thing most people want to read. That is, a good strong attractive story, concisely told, without showing off, in simple Gaelic’ (MacilleDhuibh, 2008).

Martin MacIntyre – An Latha as Fhaide

Martin MacIntyre is a name familiar to us all, and he continues to produce new, innovative work for Ùr-Sgeul. Currently working on a new novel for 2010, his second novel *An Latha as Fhaide* (The Longest Day), was published in 2008, and followed *Gymnippers Diciadain*, published in 2005. *An Latha as Fhaide* is a novel structured around a 24-hour period in the life of a Harris ex-diplomat. The story, written in the first person and present tense, contains internalisation, stream of consciousness, as well as natural dialogue and scenes of interaction with other characters. The mood is perhaps one of darkness and bleakness but there is pathos and humour too. There is a strong surprise twist in the plot.

The novel was shortlisted for the Saltire Society Main Book Award in 2008 (ahead of *Diomhanas* and *Am Bounty*, who commendably made the Long List). While many are cynical about the value of such competitions, the achievement for Gaelic fiction – three titles on the Long List and one on the Short List for one of Scotland’s most high profile national literary awards – is not insignificant, in that the success raises the profile of contemporary Gaelic literature and does so in a competition in which Gaelic books are judged by a panel of critics against books in English and Scots. The Short List for 2008 comprised: James Kelman (the eventual winner), James Meek, Meaghan Delahunt, Mick Imlah, Andrew O’ Hagan and ... Martin MacIntyre.

Diversity and progress: yes, but still some way to go

As well as titles from Angus Peter Campbell, Martin MacIntyre and Iain Finlay MacLeod, I’ve also mentioned recent work from Norma NicLeòid, Finlay Macleod and Catriona Lexy Campbell. These are just some of the writers published since 2007. Other emerging writers have already been mentioned, including some featured in the *Claigeann Damien Hirst* collection. We should also welcome the efforts of Sandstone Press, who have published fiction (with a Gaelic-English format) under the Meanmnach imprint, aimed at “advanced Gaelic learners as well as accomplished readers” (Sandstone Press website, 2009). It is encouraging to see the diversity, strength and innovation of Gaelic fiction in 2009.

Despite undoubted progress, there is still some way to go. No-one is suggesting that there is a plethora of Gaelic fiction with a huge range of styles. That simply does not exist.

I will personally only be satisfied when we have the first collection of Gaelic lesbian, *avant garde*, science-fiction short stories presented in a series of five different formats, written by a Gaelic ULPAN learner from Honolulu. Published in five years time, along with the sixth novel from Tormod a’ Bhocsair, written for twenty-something females and set in a nuclear bunker off the west coast of Scarp.

Literary criticism – perhaps further to travel

While diversity within published Gaelic prose appears to be increasing, diversity and the availability of regular published criticism appear to be in decline.

If I may employ a metaphor inspired by *Tilleadh Dhachaigh*, the train journey to literary maturity sees Gaelic fiction writers now seated comfortably in the front carriage. The authors are interpreting the view outside their window from an increasing variety of perspectives, with a growing confidence. Maybe some are not in first class yet, but they are on their way. Meanwhile, the reviewers’ train seem to be stuck at the previous station. Seats are few and far between, and getting fewer.

I’m not talking about the quality of existing reviews and criticism, which can be as good as anything you read in other languages. Ragnall MacilleDhuibh, for example, who reviews Gaelic books for *The Scotsman*, is a renowned scholar and critic, often writing on a par with anyone in English.

No, what I am talking about is the actual dearth of published, authoritative opinion – specifically in terms of quantity and variety. We should have half a dozen regular, prominent

and accessible review columns, all competing with each other, at a national level. New Gaelic fiction titles should be looked at regularly, in detail, and from a wide variety of perspectives.

Gaelic fiction appears to suffer against Gaelic poetry when it comes to grabbing the attention of reviewers (and editors), given that many of today's poetry publications feature the (almost) obligatory parallel English translation (more on that later).

We have a bleak situation. On a national level, *The Scotsman* has ploughed an admirable, but lone, furrow. *Scotsman* Gaelic book reviews are done through the medium of Gaelic, and this is also to be praised. It is hoped *The Scotsman* will continue, and also introduce reviews in English of Gaelic titles. Other 'quality' national newspapers, such as *The Sunday Herald*, *Scotland on Sunday*, and *The Herald* should all carry regular reviews, either in Gaelic or English, of Gaelic titles, but do so rarely. It is a situation that must change.

GATH, the Gaelic periodical, brought to us so expertly by Professor Donald E. Meek and the team from Martins the Printers, regularly featured book reviews, but has suffered a delay in publication. The Gaelic newspaper *An Gaidheal Ùr* disappeared in 2009. *An Gaidheal Ùr*, in terms of design, was more Communist bus shelter than Cathedral of Constantinople, but it had several commendable features and was always willing to accept well-written book reviews. The editor of *An Gaidheal Ùr*, Murray MacLeod, is quoted:

In December I got told that the Bòrd would not be providing any money for rental or administration support. In view of the whole situation over the past 12 months and no clear indication of what the future plans would be, I felt there was no other course but to stop production of the paper ... I was spending more time dealing with Bòrd na Gàidhlig in trying to access funding than producing the paper, which is an unsustainable position. I believe the Bòrd have some plans for a Gaelic publication in the future, but have no idea what it is. I couldn't go through another year with no guarantee that things were going to improve ... (*Stornoway Gazette*, 2009)

A representative of Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Hugh Dan MacIannan, is quoted as saying 'it was regrettable that *An Gaidheal Ur* had come to such an end'. (*Stornoway Gazette*, 2009)

In terms of regional newspapers, Gaelic fiction reviews are scarce, and it is hoped the *West Highland Free Press* and the *Stornoway Gazette* will improve their coverage of Gaelic fiction. One positive note is that some community newspapers situated in 'traditional' Gaelic communities carry reviews e.g. *Am Paipear* in Uist.

It may be that the importance of community newspapers such as *Am Paipear* has been underestimated. If the target audience continues to include Gaelic readers (both existing and potential), then the prominence of book articles in these publications may well be as important as (or in some cases more important than) coverage within a national newspaper. A review in a national, quality newspaper may currently have the upper hand in terms of status (within the literary world) but, in terms of potential reader impact, perhaps the community/local newspaper should be afforded increased attention. This question becomes more relevant as many of these publications now transcend geographical boundaries, with an on-line presence. It is an interesting debate and one worthy of further discussion, unfortunately outwith the confines of this paper.

And yes, there are alternatives to the review. There is that old cliché that people “can make their own minds up”. Word of mouth is important, and the internet increasingly so. We also have programmes like BBC Radio nan Gaidheal’s ‘Leugh an Leabhar’. But for the moment, the well-written review, in a national or regional newspaper, or journal, still carries kudos.

Against the above background, the role of *The Scotsman* Gaelic books column is significant. Given the lack of alternatives, submitting a title to *The Scotsman* can sometimes feel like an emergency patient putting their life in the hands of the only available surgeon on call. He is a brilliant specialist in his field, perhaps a bit of a maverick. If the operation goes well – and quite often it does – you feel fantastic. You wake up the next day (usually the operation is on a Saturday) and feel amazing. Complications at the operating table, however, and you need a second opinion. Except that there are not many available. In the world of Gaelic fiction, you don’t often get that second opinion.

That’s not the fault of *The Scotsman* who, as I say, should be praised most strongly and indeed encouraged to expand. The focus should, however, be taken off one outlet, by an increase in coverage from quality equivalents.

A dearth of regular reviews and literary criticism, within the public domain, results in stifled debate.

Debate – ‘formula’ within the Gaelic novel

Let me provide a recent example. In 2009, an article in *The Scotsman* Gaelic column praised the virtues of a ‘formula approach’ to Gaelic fiction writing. The reviewer asserted: ‘I think he [Iain F. MacLeod in *Am Bounty*] has hit upon a valuable formula that can be followed by other Gaelic writers.’

The formula for this type of novel was outlined in the same article: ‘Find a Gael who was involved in a historical event. See what happened through his eyes. Use what we know about him. Fill in the rest from other accounts, with your imagination as glue. You only have to be a good storyteller. Iain F is one’ (MacilleDhuibh, 2009).

The merits of such an approach, and how this approach would be employed if used by other writers, are potentially interesting topics for discussion. I am sure *The Scotsman* columnist was not suggesting the ‘formula approach’ as a solution for all, but one that could be very effective in certain situations. One only has to look at the popularity and commercial success of certain types of ‘formulaic’ literature in English, to see the potential. It’s interesting – but very difficult, however – to access alternative viewpoints. Consider the opinion of Angus Peter Campbell, for example, on the ‘formula’ issue:

Formulas have no place in literature. Formulas may have a place in science or mathematics, but they have no place in a creative art. They are the very antithesis of art, the death of literature. Formulas may lead to solutions, whereas literature (and story telling) has nothing to do with solutions, and everything to do with exploration. The only ‘formula’ that art intrinsically permits is the sweat of the human heart – as the great writer William Faulkner put it in his Nobel prize winning speech – ‘the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself is the only thing which makes good writing because only that is worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat.’

To even believe in formulas is to be anti-art. To argue and suggest that Gaelic (or any other) writers go along the formulaic path is to lead writers badly astray along a road that is dry, barren, derivative and withered (Campbell, 2009).

I am fortunate enough to read such an alternative viewpoint because I am in the privileged position, as someone actively involved in Gaelic publishing, of being able to correspond with Gaelic authors such as Campbell.

Whether we agree with Campbell – or MacilleDhuibh – is another matter. Perhaps neither of these views accords with our own. But the point is this: opportunities for the reading public to access a cross-section of such opinion are limited. I don't just mean the views of Angus Peter Campbell, or Ronald Black, respected though they are, but the thoughts of a variety of Gaelic authors and critics. There are opportunities on-line, but a comment tagged on to a web page hardly carries the same cachet as an original published article. Trolls have occasionally been found to speak Gaelic.

The on-line blog now exists, and there is evidence of its rising influence within other areas such as politics (Guido Fawkes anyone?). But in Gaelic literature, blogging your own opinion (rightly or wrongly) has yet to reach the status of the national newspaper or journal, and – crucially – has yet to chime fully with the Gaelic community. This may change, but until it does, we must be concerned as to the limited opportunities for serious discourse.

Currently, well-meaning assertions about Gaelic fiction are promoted with only the occasional opportunity for presentation of alternatives.

Linguistic policies

In 2009, for example, *The Scotsman* Gaelic column hinted at a possible new linguistic policy with regard to publication (and presumably commissioning), of Gaelic fiction. The columnist (in an otherwise glowing review), pointing out room for improvement with regard to a particular aspect of *Am Bounty*, suggested the author 'Iain F. would have avoided this error had he written the whole book in Gaelic. Isn't that what he was paid to do anyway?' (MacilleDhuibh, 2009)

The same column in *The Scotsman* also praised Martin MacIntyre's novel *An Latha as Fhaide* for 'not having much English' (MacilleDhuibh, 2008), and there are other examples of reference to this topic. In these instances, however, there is a lack of comprehensive detail. This may not be the fault of the reviewer, who is constrained by the limits of column inches. But the reader of these articles is left in a state of wonder: to what extent are Iain F. MacLeod and other writers writing in English? Are they doing so in a terrible and profligate fashion?

Catriona Lexy Campbell is another writer who, on occasion, takes a 'realist' approach to particular aspects of her writing – undertaking a quest for a degree of authenticity – especially with regard to dialogue. Does her novel *Samhraidhean Diomhair* contain English? It most certainly does. Like other Ùr-Sgeul writers, though, when she employs languages other than Gaelic she does so occasionally and in context (mostly within dialogue). And she does so thoughtfully. I know this, because I have discussed it with her.

As well as providing a degree of authenticity, such freedom within fiction can provide other occasional benefits. Take a pressing issue within contemporary Gaelic society which affects many of us: confidence, and how this relates to language use within certain peer groups. The issue has been the subject of much thought amongst language planners. Why is it, for example, that in a Gaelic-speaking family one sibling might choose to continue to speak Gaelic in later years, while other siblings abandon the language for English?

Samhraidhean Diomhair explores a number of areas, and touches upon this particular subject: how Gaelic is used, and viewed, by today's generation. This is done through portrayal of the lives and relationships of five friends, originally from Skye, now living in different places, including Edinburgh, York, and Los Angeles. Some of these friends and their family members are more confident and proficient in their use of Gaelic than others. Some recognise the value of Gaelic, others are not convinced. The situation is portrayed through dialogue and thought: with language, vocabulary and freedom of expression being key elements in this portrayal. Certain readers might argue the novel does not go far enough, if it wishes to take a 'realist' approach – that perhaps even more English should be included, to reflect present-day realities. Others, as we have heard, are horrified by the inclusion of any English at all. Should we respond, as publishers, and dictate or prejudge the development of characters within a work of fiction? It would be interesting to see how an author would play out such scenarios if we, as publishers, or others as language planners, imposed a new 'hard-line' linguistic policy with regard to their writing e.g. a 100% blanket ban on the use of English or other languages.

Freedom of choice

I will provide another brief example to illustrate, on a very basic level, the issue of freedom within contemporary Gaelic fiction writing. Much of the action in *Samhraidhean Diomhair* takes part in Los Angeles, and on occasion involves an element of the gangster fraternity. Not all gangsters are Gaelic speakers. Should we expect an L.A. mobster to greet their friends with a '*Cail as ur a-nochd?*' Perhaps they meet someone in a bar '*Dè mar a tha thu, a ghràidh?*' Or should we illustrate their native patois in another language or register – perhaps even their own? There are obviously different approaches to such a situation, and this is already reflected in the work of Ùr-Sgeul writers.

We can look at cinema, and in particular English language big-budget film, to see how it has evolved and adopted a more flexible approach to the portrayal of language. The industry previously suffered (and still does to an extent) from a peculiar kind of obsession for imposing English on the viewer, with absolutely no room for compromise no matter how multi-cultural the scenario or international the situation. In the past, you could be certain, with the odd exception – no matter how small and insignificant the role or scene – that the language coming from the mouths of the most 'foreign' of characters would be English.

The acclaimed spy series *The Bourne Trilogy* (*The Bourne Identity*; *The Bourne Supremacy*; *The Bourne Ultimatum*;) has shown it need not be this way. These are still very much English-language films, set against a fast-moving international background, but the key is their willingness (albeit moderately) to feature dialogue and spoken word from other languages, including Russian, Arabic and German. The use of these languages, in a small but significant way, adds to the viewer's feelings of authenticity and enjoyment. There is still some way to

go within cinema, but we should look to such examples as the above as lessons, and at times, inspiration. I'd rather have my Russian hoodlums, thank you, speaking Russian, as opposed to communicating in some ridiculous affected English – or Gaelic – brogue.

Or would I? Perhaps I'll change my mind, and want to view – or read – about them in a different way. Why have only one way of presenting a story? In English literature, and indeed other languages, debate such as this – about the possibility of a fixed linguistic policy for prose – would be dismissed as trivial, perhaps embarrassing: a topic for the classroom and not the mature literary playground. Yet within current Gaelic critical debate we are saddled with such narrow preoccupations. It is time for us to move on and mature, and to accept that fiction comes in all shapes and forms.

Contemporary Gaelic authors should continue with the freedom they have at the moment to use different approaches within writing. In doing so, they contribute to the increasing diversity of Gaelic fiction. As long as the vast majority of the story is in Gaelic – and in every Ùr-Sgeul title this is the case – it is not for us as publishers, or language planners, to start dictating. There are echoes here (albeit in a kind of inverse fashion) of the mild furore surrounding Kelman and Welsh in the 1980s and 1990s, when they started exercising their own linguistic freedoms.

Angus Peter Campbell has offered the following contribution to the linguistic debate. Again, I only have the opportunity to read this because I am in a privileged position of being in contact with the writer:

Literature is not linguistics, and that total freedom to move between all kinds of languages (as well as characters and cultures) remains at the heart of the art of the novel. Constraints – just like formulas – limit and deaden, when what appears to be required is liberty and individual freedom. It may be that it is literature itself which actually creates language, rather than the other way round.

An important consideration may be the degree to which language has been stolen or expropriated by developmental-organizations and men and women in suits: as a writer, as well as a human being, I can now hardly use words such as 'leasachadh' or 'cudromach' or 'sgrùdadh' or 'rannsachadh' because they have been impregnated with developmental and financial weight which has forcefully dislocated them. The struggle of writing may be to find a language that sings through that dislocation. Which was the same challenge facing the great Stravinsky, who also lived in exile beyond 'the clerks', to use the phrase which the great 18th century novelist Henry Fielding coined for 'critics'. You see, language resonates, and when it resonates with the sound of 'ro-innleachdan' – planning – it becomes less and less the language of art and literature and community and more and more the mere language of function, funding and formality. Literature must answer only to its own aesthetic, and I think we need to guard against 'breitheanas' – judgment – from a completely different aesthetic. A current example would be 'poileasaidh-cànain', the policy of language or language-policy beloved of language-development buffs. It seems to me that poileasaidh-cànain has as much (or maybe more precisely as little) to do with literature as Nua Labour (New Labour) has to do with socialism. (Campbell, 2009).

Gaelic fiction – contribution to Gaelic development

It is ironic how contemporary Gaelic fiction is singled out for attention regarding its relatively minor use of other languages, when other 'Gaelic' genres, arts activities and media often contain considerably higher levels of English. Contemporary published Gaelic poetry, as we have mentioned already, is often 50% English in presentation, i.e. a Gaelic text with a parallel and prominent English translation, on most pages. McLeod (2009) has explored this area in far greater detail than I have, and provides information on some encouraging exceptions. Recent innovative publications moving away from a simple Gaelic-English or English-Gaelic format include Christopher Whyte's 2009 Gaelic-Gaeilge *Dealbh Athar*. But in general, there is still a strong element of English within Gaelic poetry publications. Gaelic television, despite technological advances, is often subtitled in the first instance, in English, and I hope this will change soon with a move towards the S4C situation, where technology has been utilised to provide the viewer with that ideal scenario: greater choice. Feisean, with several Gaelic medium exceptions, are mostly held in English (although we welcome Feisean nan Gaidheal's recent reaffirmation of their Gaelic language policy).

Published Gaelic novels in the twenty-first century – without exception – have one advantage over the majority of other 'Gaelic' art forms, in that they are actually overwhelmingly Gaelic in content. If anything, critics interested in linguistics and the Gaelic arts or media, should focus public attention on other areas – poetry or television for example – to see how levels of Gaelic could be increased.

Within a wider context, Gaelic fiction writers should be praised for their commitment to Gaelic, and publishers should be praised for the extent to which Gaelic permeates the final publication. Both should be encouraged and rewarded. Perhaps funders, and particularly those involved in language planning – yes, I'm thinking of Bòrd na Gàidhlig for example – should review their strategies and give greater priority, and investment, to genres and art-forms such as Gaelic prose which demonstrate a high level of Gaelic usage or content.

Of course, the above is opinion, which really brings me back to my central point: regular outlets for opinion, discussion and review, are few and far between. As I mentioned, we should have at least half a dozen well-written columns and viewpoints, appearing on a regular basis, in respected, prominent outlets. These outlets should, wherever possible, engage with the Gaelic community. A concerted campaign needs to be undertaken to develop a major increase in such opportunities.

Other challenges

There are other challenges – more pressing than the lack of media coverage and literary criticism – challenges that could severely hamper the development of Gaelic prose within the twenty-first Century. To paraphrase one of Tormod Caimbeul's characters in his seminal urban novel *Shrapnel* (Ùr-Sgeul, 2006): *'It's make or break time, guys. On the double!'*

Operational structure

A victim of its own success, development of Ùr-Sgeul is placing severe pressure on existing staff within the Gaelic Books Council. It is likely that a new Operational Plan for the development of the Gaelic publishing industry will be implemented over the next few years, and this is very much to be welcomed. However, it is unclear as to the impact this will have

on Ùr-Sgeul and the development of Gaelic prose. The situation with regard to staffing, for example, in 2009 is as follows:

- No full-time staff for the Ùr-Sgeul project or development of Gaelic prose
- One part-time project officer who has responsibility for development of Ùr-Sgeul, juggling this with a number of other non-Ùr-Sgeul related responsibilities and projects
- One part-time editorial officer (outsourced)
- Occasional assistance from other Gaelic Books Council staff. The contribution of Ian MacDonald, the Director, should be recognised.

This structure was sufficient to maintain a very small project. The success of Ùr-Sgeul, the expansion in the level of activity within Gaelic fiction and the current situation – more titles, more authors, more collaborations, more community based literature activity, more ideas, more confidence, more possibilities, higher expectations – means that the existing operational support structure must be developed.

The most pressing areas, in terms of core activity, are:

- Sales and marketing – both at national level, and within the community
- Editorial (at two levels: structural; and orthographic)
- Practical assistance at office level

In addition to the above, increased support and investment (due to the increase in activity) is required in the following areas: typesetting, design, advertising, printing, production, web development, commissions, provision of information, marketing materials, organisation of book launches, community events and general promotion.

To summarise, it is an increasing challenge to be active in all areas. Limited financial resources mean outsourcing is difficult to achieve. The strain on staff is increasing. The sector is buzzing, but resources are scarce.

Solutions

The challenges above can be solved. I am convinced of that. If the Gaelic prose sector is put on a more long-term, secure footing with increased investment, it can flourish.

As part of the Gaelic Books Council plan for development of the sector, an application was submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig – the main funder of Ùr-Sgeul – for the year 2009/2010. This plan included the creation of a new post of full-time senior editorial officer. The new editor would be employed to assist writers with all aspects of script development, and in particular the structural aspects of their work (e.g. characterisation and plot), as well as more familiar typographical issues. This new post would also contribute to other editorial work (when appropriate) within the Gaelic Books Council.

Also included in the application to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for funding for 2009–2010 was creation of a new post of full-time sales and marketing officer. The new marketing officer would be active within Gaelic communities throughout Scotland, developing high visibility and sales of Gaelic titles.

In addition to the above, the application to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for funding in 2009–2010 included plans to publish eight new Gaelic fiction titles in the same year, along with four talking books based on these titles, and a general increase in web services and promotion.

It should also be noted that the post of full-time senior editor had been raised previously with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, in September 2008.

It is important also to remember that the Gaelic Books Council takes a strategic approach to development, and that all our plans are formulated with consideration of the wider picture. Ùr-Sgeul (and other project based initiatives) will be essential to the development of the new Operational Plan for Gaelic publishing. Without real projects – with tangible results, such as Ùr-Sgeul - the new operational structure will be ineffective.

Funding 2009–2010

Ùr-Sgeul currently receives less than 2% of the Bòrd na Gàidhlig total budget for 2009/2010. (The Bòrd budget is £5.5 million including operational costs [Napier, 2009]). We cannot facilitate real progress within Gaelic prose, and any other areas, without a substantial increase in investment. In a body-blow to our immediate plans, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, despite recognising and welcoming the success of the project, notified us in March 2009 that there would be no increase in funding for Ùr-Sgeul for 2009/2010. They offered a standstill budget for the project.

It is more than likely now that our planned publishing programme will be affected. Our plans for other genres will also be delayed.

Development of other genres

It has always been our strongly held belief that there are a number of other genres within the area of Gaelic prose, in addition to fiction, that are worthy of investment. In 2009, we applied to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for support towards development of the following genres:

- a) Biography – we proposed an initial four biography titles for 2009/2010
- b) Drama – we proposed an initial three drama titles for 2009/2010
- c) Graphic novels – we proposed an initial three graphic novels for 2009/2010

These are modest targets, and these only represent three of the many genres on our list. Such modest activity would be built upon in a strategic, planned fashion. Such funding would allow us to invest in authors, and develop their titles professionally – rather than some of the other traditional Gaelic publishing models which do not always allow for post-publication promotion.

Our 2009/2010 plan to develop ten new titles, within these three genres, as specified above, included a proposed £97k contribution from Bòrd na Gàidhlig. This was to cover most of the costs for the new titles, including commissioning. For 2009/2010, Bòrd na Gàidhlig agreed that they would contribute £5k towards the development of a series of biography, drama and graphic novels. With the greatest respect, £5k hardly gives us a blank canvas to work with. It is imperative that Bòrd na Gàidhlig increase its levels of contribution to project development within Gaelic publishing.

Other funding sources

It is clear we also have to look to other funding sources, if Gaelic prose is to be developed to its potential. Creative Scotland is an obvious potential source of investment (the Scottish Arts Council has always been supportive of Ùr-Sgeul, and indeed was instrumental in helping establish the initiative). Private investment is an even greater challenge, but should not be ruled out. As has been mentioned, we must hope that the Operational Plan for the development of the Gaelic publishing industry will assist, but it will only be truly effective if substantial project funding – for projects with tangible benefits such as Ur-Sgeul – is made available.

Financial Context

The requirements of Ùr-Sgeul, and the investment needed to develop other prose genres, are extremely modest in comparison to many other projects currently being promoted within sectors such as the arts, media or Gaelic. As has been mentioned, Bord na Gàidhlig budget in 2009/2010 is approximately £5.5 million, including operational costs. The current economic climate is tough but, where there is a political will, there is a way. The Scottish Government's budget for 2009/2010 was around the £30 billion mark (*The Herald*, 2009). These are the kind of figures we should be focusing on. There still seems to be a prevailing mentality which suggests that publishing is not worthy of substantial investment.

Compare this with attitudes to other sectors, such as television. Not many people, unless they are fully paid up members of the Taxpayers' Alliance, question that significant investment in television is necessary. As well as news of a new Gaelic TV channel, in the last few years we find

'Gaelic gets creative with new £8m centre' (*The Herald*, 2008)

This comprised the development of 'a state-of-the-art creative/ media environment, including a full broadcast-standard digital television recording studio, sound-recording studio, theatre and post- production facilities' at FAS at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. In 2009, blink and you would be forgiven for thinking you read the same headline again (with a different figure, but does anyone appear to be counting?)

'£2.5m media centre for Outer Hebrides' (*Stornoway Gazette*, 2009)

The article explained 'a former textile mill on the outskirts of Stornoway will be transformed into a new £2.5m media and creative industries centre in ambitious plans being supported by Highlands and Islands Enterprise.'

Gaelic television, in relative terms, is in the political ascendancy, and the investment is well deserved. It is interesting, however, that both these news stories mention the 'creative industries': I'm willing to bet the planners behind the new initiatives did not have literature – one of the most 'creative' industries in existence – at the top of their lists. Perhaps it is not their total responsibility, and that those active and influential in literature need to engage more with funders and politicians (who, in turn, must listen and act). Gaelic literature deserves to be brought into the ascendancy, and we all need to play our part.

Opportunity

The opportunity exists to continue the development of a vibrant, new and varied genre – that of twenty-first century Gaelic prose. My vision is that Gaelic prose writing will prosper and enjoy fortune similar to that of its equivalents in other European languages, such as Icelandic and Basque. As students of literature will know, the great prose writer Bernardo Atxaga compared the sudden flourishing of Basque literature in the twentieth century to a hedgehog that had just woken up from a very long sleep. Only 101 books were published in their native language over the four previous centuries, after the first book was published in 1545. Now, there are a multitude of exciting new books published annually in Basque, with a strong emphasis on prose. We must draw inspiration from such development.

Questions

Can we sustain the continued progress of Gaelic prose within the twenty-first century? Can we realise our aim of a plethora of published titles, free from constraint or boundary, accessible to all, created by talented new and existing authors, inspired by a range of experience and influence? A sea-change in priorities and investment is needed.

Does the political will exist to facilitate the continued development of Gaelic prose, or will our own recently awoken Gaelic hedgehog, inspired by its Basque cousin, return to its slumbers? Will the early years of the twenty-first century be regarded as an exciting, and at times inspiring, period for the development of Gaelic literature, but ultimately a short-lived one, consigned to the pages of history? Or is there more exciting development to come? We will soon find out.

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Appendix 1 – **Books published 2007–2009**

- *Tilleadh Dhachaigh* le Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul, 2009
- *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* (hardback, twenty-one short stories) 2009
- *Samhraidhean Diomhair* le Catrìona Lexy Chaimbeul, 2009
- *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* vol 3 (paper) – Stories 15–21, 2008
- *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* vol 2 (paper) – Stories 8–14, 2008
- *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* vol 1 (paper) – Stories 1–7, 2008
- *Taingeil Toilichte* le Norma NicLeòid, 2008
- *Am Bounty* le Iain F. MacLeòid, 2008
- *An Latha as Fhaide* le Màrtainn Mac an t-Saoir, 2008
- *Diomhanas* le Fionnlagh MacLeòid, 2008
- *Cleas Sgathain* le Màiri Anna NicDhòmhnaill, 2008
- *Slaightearan* le Tormod MacGill-Eain, 2008
- *An Taigh-Samhraidh* le Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul, 2007

Thirteen books in total comprising eight novels and five short story titles (short story titles include four books under the banner of ‘An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst’: three paperback volumes and one hardback). Information refers to the period August 2007 – July 2009.

Appendix 2 – Books published 2003–2009

- *Tilleadh Dhachaigh* le Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul, 2009
- *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* (hardback, twenty-one short stories) 2009
- *Samhraidhean Diomhair* le Catrìona Lexy Chaimbeul, 2009
- *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* vol 3 (paper) - Stories 15-21, 2008
- *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* vol 2 (paper) - Stories 8-14, 2008
- *An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst* vol 1 (paper) - Stories 1-7, 2008
- *Taingeil Toilichte* le Norma NicLeòid, 2008
- *Am Bounty* le Iain F. MacLeòid, 2008
- *An Latha as Fhaide* le Màrtainn Mac an t-Saoir, 2008
- *Diomhanas* le Fionnlagh MacLeòid, 2008
- *Cleas Sgathain* le Mairi Anna NicDhòmhnaill, 2008
- *Slaightearan* le Tormod MacGill-Eain, 2008
- *An Taigh-Samhraidh* le Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul, 2007
- *Shrapnel* le Tormod Caimbeul (Tormod a' Bhocsair), 2006
- *Ùpraid* le Éilís Ní Dhuibhne (eadar-theangachadh bho Ghaeilge), 2006
- *Dileas Donn* le Norma NicLeòid, 2006
- *Gymnippers Diciadain* le Màrtainn Mac an t-Saoir, 2005
- *Na Klondykers* le Iain F. MacLeòid, 2005
- *Am Miseanaraidh* le Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn, 2005
- *Dacha Mo Ghaoil* le Tormod MacGill-Eain, 2005
- *Là a' Dèanamh Sgèil Do Là* le Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul, 2004
- *Tocasaid 'Ain Tuirc* le Donnchadh MacGillÌosa, 2004
- *An Oidhche Mus Do Sheòl Sinn* le Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul, 2003
- *Ath-Aithne* le Màrtainn Mac an t-Saoir, 2003

Twenty four books in total, comprising seventeen novels and seven short story titles (the short story titles include four books under the banner of 'An Claigeann aig Damien Hirst': three paperback volumes and one hardback). Information refers to the period August 2003 – July 2009.

Appendix 3 – **Talking books and other publications, 2003–2009**

- *Claigeann Damien Hirst* – CD (Na Gathan, Alison Lang, Mona Claudia Striewe agus Maoilios Caimbeul), 2009
- *Ruigidh Sinn Màrs* – CD (Na Gathan, Iain MacIlleathain, Màiri Anna NicDhòmhnaill agus Seonaidh Adams), 2008
- *Shrapnel* le Tormod Caimbeul – 4 CD set, 2007
- *Gymnippers Diciadain* le Màrtainn Mac an t-Saoir – DVD, 2007
- *Na Klondykers* le Iain F. MacLeòid – DVD, 2007
- *Là a’ Dèanamh Sgèil Do Là* le Aonghas Pàdraig Caimbeul – DVD, 2007
- *Am Miseanaraidh* le Iain Mac a’ Ghobhainn – 2 CD set, 2005
- *Dacha Mo Ghaoil* le Tormod MacGill-Eain – 3 CD set, 2005
- *Tocasaid ‘Ain Tuirc* le Donnchadh MacGillÌosa – 3 CD set, 2005
- *Ath-Aithne* le Màrtainn Mac an t-Saoir – 6 CD set, 2004

Appendix 4 – **Published Authors 2003–2009**

Thirty writers in total: eleven female, nineteen male

(C) denotes publication in *An Claipeann aig Damien Hirst*, with no other Ùr-Sgeul publication as yet.

- Adams, Seonaidh (C)
- Caimbeul, Alasdair (C)
- Caimbeul, Aonghas Pàdraig
- Caimbeul, Maoilios (C)
- Caimbeul, Tormod
- Chaimbeul, Catriona Lexy
- Cuimeanach, Iain (C)
- Klevenhaus, Micheal (C)
- Lang, Alison (C)
- Mac a' Ghobhainn, Iain
- Mac an t-Saoir, Màrtainn
- MacAoidh, Pàdraig (C)
- MacGill-Eain, Tormod
- MacGilllosa, Donnchadh
- MacIlleathain, Iain (C)
- MacIomhair, Dòmhnall Iain (C)
- MacLeòid, Iain F.
- MacLeòid, Fionnlagh
- MacRisnidh, Steafan (C)
- NicAmhlaidh, Màiri – Dùn Èideann (C)
- Nic a' Phiocair, Màiri Flòraidh (C)
- NicDhòmhnail, Màiri Anna
- NicIlleathain, Ishi (C)
- NicLeòid, Màiri E. (C)
- NicLeòid, Norma
- Ní Dhuibhne, Éilís
- Scholes, Des (C)
- Stone, Cairistiona (C)
- Striwe, Mona Claudia (C)
- Tripp, Charles (C)

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