<center>CASE STUDY 10</center>

CUMHA TIGHEARNA BHRAGHAID ALBAINN
(LORD BREADALBAN'S LAMENT)

SOURCES

PIPE

Campbell Canntaireachd [CC]	c1815	Vol. 1. no. 73.

Lord Breadalban's March.

Donald MacDonald [DMcD] Ms.	c1806-1826.	p. 114

'Lament for MacLean'(index: Lament for Lachlan Mor MacLean.)

Music of Clan MacLean. [McL]	1900.

'Lament for Sir Lachlan MacLean. Cumha Lachuinn Mhoir. Latha Sròn a'Chlachain.

Angus MacKay Ms. vol. 2.	c1826-1840	p. 124 no. 39

'Cumha Mhorair Bhreadalbain Lord Breadalbane's Lament.'

Pìobaireachd Society Series [PS]	1970	Bk. 12: 368

'Cumha Tighearna Bhragaid Albainn(sic)[1] Lament for Lord Breadalbane'

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[1]   This Gaelic title, (which should be Bhràghaid Albainn) would seem to be a twentieth century translation of the English title as in the Campbell Canntaireachd.   These translations are often deceptive as they suggest that the tunes were recognised by these titles in Gaelic society.   The implication might be that they have more credibility and respectability than is merited.   It was clearly a lament in the song tradition which some of the other pibroch titles bear out.   The tune is based on Angus MacKay's setting but without themal Es, which MacKay had. These Es for the most part have been replaced by cadences in the PS series.   There are notes on alternative sources but the CC version does not seem to have been one of those considered.

Song text with Music

Killin Collection [K]   1884   no. 21 p. 54

'Cumha Aonghais Mhic Raoghnuill Oig.'[2] (Keppoch's Lament)

Song text only

Orain Iain Luim [OIL]   A.MacKenzie.(ed)   1964.   p. 10.

'Cumha Aonghais Mhic Raoghnuill Oig na Ceapaich.'

Description and variant settings.

This is a tune which has a tonic on the low A and an exposition around
the notes ACE using the supertonic as a means to develop into an eight
phrase piece. In all the sources, the number of phrases identified is
dependent on regarding the *hiharin* figures at the end of the tune as a
musical phrase. Their number varies between collectors. The CC version
has two-*hiharin* figures throughout the *ùrlar* and a coda of four *hiharins*
at the end of the *ùrlar*[3] with each vocable taking a melodic stress. In

italics

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[2]   There is further information underneath the title which helps to
explain its other titles. It appears as follows:- 'Chaidh fear na Ceapach a
marbhadh(sic) Latha Blar Sron-Clachan 'n uair thog clann Iain Ghlinne-
Comhunn creach Bhraid-Albann.   Translation: (The chief of Keppoch was
killed at the Battle of Sron 'a Chlachain when the people of John of Glencoe
cattle raided Breadalbane.)   In the Killin coll. is the English title, Keppoch's
Lament, followed by a summary in English: 'Lament for Angus MacDonald
of Keppoch, who fell at the Battle of Stronclachan, in the Breadalbane
Creach by MacIain of Glencoe.' In the fairly copious notes it states: 'The
following Lament to his memory was composed by the celebrated bard,
John MacDonald, better known as Iain Lom.'

[3]   DMcD only has double *hiharins* in the first phrase and ends on a double
hiharin in the last bar.   However, they appear throughout the CC *ùrlar*
where it ends with four *hiharins*.   McL does not have the end *hiharins*   s o
that version consists of seven phrases.   The sixth and seventh phrases of
McK and PS are repeats of phrases A and B followed by the *hiharins*.   Both
DMcD and McL use the fourth phrase C rather than B to end the song
melody, which for the comparison here excludes the final *hiharins* .   T h e
suggestion from the music is that the *hiharins*   are separate motifs which
have become conventional on the pipes but which possibly have an older
provenance in Gaelic words or exclamations at the funeral ritual such as
ochone, ochone.   The majority of Laments in pibroch have this motif, most
often at the end of the tune.   The implication of this is that it might be
useful to reconsider pibroch form or metre without the hiharin endings..
The problem however lies in knowing which of them had exclamations

DMcD, however, they are edited to two *hiharins* at the end of the tune and where they appear earlier in the *ùrlar*, they have been reduced to one, apart from at the beginning, where they correspond with the song form. AMcK has retained the four *hiharins* at the end of the tune as in the CC, but has reduced all the earlier ones to one. This setting was copied by the PS series, despite AMcK being at odds with all the earlier sources. The McL setting also agrees with AMcK but in the penultimate phrase (hiodro hinodro hiodindro hiodin" - see below) departs from AMcK in line with CC and DMcD but then finishes the tune without the *hiharin* coda. This gives a version with an unusual seven-phrase *ùrlar*.

In all the pibroch settings, the first four phrases are in the ABAC form where the fourth [C] moves up a note as a 'bridge' allowing the tune to develop. In the CC this looks as follows. The numbers beside the vocables are how the CC refers to lines of music. The commas have been inserted by myself to show the phrase ends.

1.	Hindro cherede cheodro hiharin hiharin"	A
	hiodro cherede cheodro hiodin"	B
2.	Hindro cherede cheodro hiharin hiharin"	A
	hiodro hinodro hiodindro hihorodo hihorodo"	C
	hiodro cherede cheodro hiodin."	B
3	Hindro cherede cheodro hiharin hiharin"	A
	hiodro hinodro hiodindro hiodin"	B
	hiharin hiharin hiharin hiharin"	Coda.

Phrases are clearly identifiable in all the sources except for DMcD, which will shortly become clear. As pointed out above, the CC has preserved the double *hiharins* which are more easily recognisable as representing the ends of phrases in melodic rather than metric features. But these CC phrases are not being identified in the usual way from the notated score where two bars of music are in most cases equivalent to one phrase of music. The problem of phrase identification in this manner is exacerbated because DMcD retained the repetitive *hiharins* with the result that the phrase endings now appear in the middle of a succeeding bar of music. The reason he retained them at the beginning of the tune may have been

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rather than song text. For example, A Cholla mo rùn has the words 'tha mise 'n làimh, tha mise 'n làimh' and is an integral part of the song.

because the pibroch remains closer to its song form in this format. Subsequent collectors edited them out, probably because it allowed the phrases to be more identifiable in a standardised form with each phrase corresponding to two bars of music. It is necessary to look at the song vesion before one can understand why this problem of notation has arisen.

The Song version

The problem of phrase identification according to bars of music is further complicated in DMcD's notation because the song is not in the *amhran* form with its usual four stresses per phrase but is in what is sometimes identified as strophic metre. This means that the phrases proceed in the order of two, two and three stresses per phrase in a three-lined format.

The song appears in three lined stanzas in OIL with six different melodic phrases. The first two stanzas are as follows:

1.   Rìgh gur mór mo chuid mulaid,
         Ged as fheudar dhomh fhulang,
         Ge bè dh'éisdeadh ri m'uireasbhaidh àireamh.

(O Lord, heavy indeed is my sorrow/though bear it I must/who so should listen to the tale of my losses [would admit it])

2.   On a chaill mi na gadhair,
         Is an t-eug 'gan sìor thadhal,
         'S beag mo thoirt gar an tadhail mi'm Bràighe.

(Since I have lost the hounds/whom death is constantly seeking out/it matters little to me if I do not visit Brae Lochaber)
[Trans. MacKenzie OIL]

The song is performed as follows.[4] The first two three lined stanzas are sung to six different melodic phrases. The song then proceeds from the second stanza, sung from the beginning of the melody and continues throughout in the same way. This procedure can be shown by numbers where each number refers to a stanza in the order 1,2.; 2,3; 3, 4; etc. This means that after the first stanza is sung, each three-lined stanza is repeated

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4   Based on examples of similar song forms and from discussion with Rev. Wm.Matheson.

twice, each one being accommodated to the first and second half of the six-phrase melody in turn.

The pibroch in the song

The first phrase of the pibroch melody can be identified in only the first two lines of the first stanza. The pibroch setting therefore represents a reworking and repetition of these founding phrases to give the eight phrase form.

As can be seen from the following notated example, there are only three melodic phrases in the *ùrlar*, excluding the coda at the end. The bottom of this example shows phrase C* showing the position of bars as they appear in DMcD.

Ex. 1

Another hand may have been responsible for placing the bars in other places so that the tune reads in 2/4 time. The position of bar lines are very misleading as a guide to the phrasing of the tune. As in other case studies, however, the guide to melodic phrasing can be obtained from the poetic stresses which in this case are 2, 2,3 in each stanza. The subsequent phrases to the ones which match the song's can be identified by extrapolation.
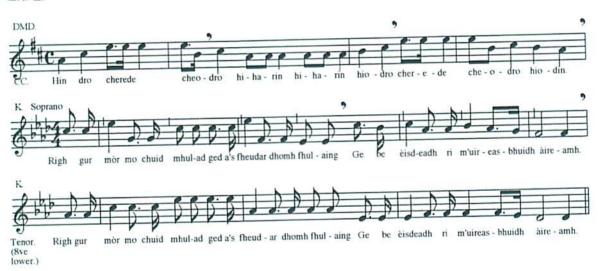
Although there are no sound recordings of this song available, it appears in K with words and music. It has been chorally arranged there with piano accompaniment. What is unusual is that the melody of the pibroch is only recognisable in the tenor score of the song which represents a harmony to the song melody found in the soprano. (See Ex. 2) It would be expected that the melody in song would be the one which the pibroch player would take on[5] rather than what appears as a harmony. Despite

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[5] With reference to the other songs in the Killin Collection, all melodies are found in soprano with the tenor as accompaniment. It may be assumed

this intriguing situation there is, nevertheless, no doubt as to the shared melodic and rhythmic features in song and pibroch, in addition to the title(s) alone.

In Ex. 2, the melodic line of DMcD's version is shown with the CC version underneath. The *hi* of the vocable *hiharin* has been inserted underneath the note rather than before it as if it were a cadence. The reason is because it is a rhythmic representation which, although possibly technically shortened into a birl in CC (see Intro) was at an earlier period was represented by three notes giving a three-pulse rhythm.[6] Below this is the melodic line of the song in soprano. The K version of the song in soprano is underneath this. The tenor part, where one can identify the melodic link with the song melody, is also shown. The key signature has been left in Ab because it represents the same scale for the pipes.

Ex. 2.

One can see where the phrases of the song end in the melodies; the position is identifiable at the end of the poetic phrase, eg. these positions

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then, that the editor did not meddle with the melodic line of the song as he saw fit. Although this still does not explain the pibroch's closer relationship with the tenor rather than the soprano, it is interesting to speculate on the manner in which variant forms of a song melody are created. In this case, the tenor starts off and finishes on the tonic doh whereas the song melody starts on the mediant mi and finishes on the submediant lah. It may be that there is a tendency or a predisposition to certain notes when a tune in the oral tradition creates another by way of variation. Could it be that the pibroch was composed from a variant of this song which happened to be harmonically related to another version?

[6] See Compleat Theory (Ed. 1994) for Joseph MacDonald's examples.

are at *mhulad, fhulang* and *àireamh.* (These are shown by commas.) As in so many Gaelic songs, the first stress does not occur on the first syllable but, as in this case, on the third syllable of the song. This means that the words *'Rìgh gur'* occur on an anacrusis. The beginning of the next phrase is at *'ged a's'* with the melodic and poetic stress occuring at *fheudar* in the next bar.

If DMcD knew the song or a variant of it, then one can understand why he would retain the second *hiharin* at *fhulang* because, without it, the phrase would seem incomplete. However, one can only speculate on this point because he left out the subsequent double *hiharins* in the *ùrlar.* The most important point of the pibroch/song identification is that which allows one to become familiar with the rhythmic scansion of the tune and in order to do this, identifying the rhythm of the first stanza alone is sufficient.

The words of the first stanza of the song have been overlaid on an amended pibroch notation, in Ex. 3 below, based on the CC and DMcD's notation. The interpretation of the notation is closer to the rhythm of the song words than to what one would expect to hear from a modern day piper interpreting a DMcD score.[7]

The stress positions in the song identify where the stresses should occur in the pibroch although one has to apply some intrferpretive freedom with the note lengths of the pibroch to do this. When this is applied the common rhythmic features becomes more obvious. The words of the song can now be sung to the pibroch melody which, as it is related harmonically, can be regarded as a melodic variant of the one which appears in K.

Ex. 3 [overleaf]

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[7]   There are now piping competitions held in Scotland (Armadale, Skye) where pipers are expected to interpret Donald MacDonald scores of pibroch. The problem with this is that the same rhythmic parameters are adopted and assumptions made on the style of playing which existed in the time of Donald MacDonald such that the performance style is very similar to what might be heard in the mainstream pibroch competitions held throughout the year.

✱ The points marked with a large asterisk, show where the post-AMcK collectors only had one of these motifs. DMcD only retains two hihorodo figures and two hiharins at the first phrase A.

The cadences have not been shown in the examples because they are not relevant to the song/pibroch relationship. For the pibroch performance to be understood in the rhythmic context of the Gaelic tradition from which it arose, these cadences would require to be played very short, in a fairly literal manner. There seems to be too many cadences if one assumes that the tune be played in a tempo which would make the song version effective. Clearly, playing the cadences, the echo beats and the *hiharins.* along modern lines of interpretation would be inappropriate.

If it is assumed that the pibroch was based on a melodic variant of the one in K, given the close coincidence of notes and syllables, there are areas which show how the conventions of pibroch were so much closer to the song rhythms than the modern style. For example, the echo beats, with their dotted first E and short gracings separating the following E/s

represent stressed words of the song. In the succession of stanzas this occurs at *mór, chaill, bochd, gèadh chraobh* . Similarly, the dotted E of the second bar represents the second stress at *mulaid, gadhair, daoine, spionadh, rùsgadh* . The two *hiharins* fall short in rhythmic value in comparison to the words at *fheudar dhomh fhulang* and *t-eug 'gan sìor thadhal* in the second line. This is because in pibroch they have become conventional in nature so that a double strike would be played only on low A at *fhulang* rather than three low As to properly represent the words. This point is verging on the pedantic, however, and ignores the fact that the pibroch merely represents an instrumental setting of a melody which has been adapted because of the existence of particular instrumental conventions.

The K song version is notated in measured time and therefore takes little account of the rhythmically variable behaviour of language in music. However, the transcription is a fairly good rhythmic representation despite the restrictions of measured time. What is important for a proper interpretation is that a Gaelic speaker can identify the rhythm of the song when the words are placed underneath the notes. Without these words, or a knowledge of the rhythms which underlie the measured time, the song might be interpreted in the same way as a person might interpret a pibroch score. In the pibroch tradition, one is often reminded by those who have had some 'traditional' oral tuition, that the notes are more useful as a melodic guide rather than as a rhythmic one. Unfortunately, in the pibroch tradition, the rhythmic guide has been transmitted with deceptive and unsatisfactory musical scores to fall back on with no words to act as a rhythmic guide.

CONCLUSION

This case study has shown that phrase identification in pibroch can best be realised when compared to its Gaelic song version. When the words of the song or variant melody on which the pibroch has been based are known, the phrase structure is easier to identify and therefore the rhythmical and melodic procedure of the tune becomes more obvious. Some editing of pibroch texts has been undertaken during the course of transmission which has been founded on fairly subjective premises.