

Goldoni in Scots

J. Derrick McClure

As the Scottish literary renaissance of the early twentieth century gathered momentum, the long-established national traditions of poetry and prose fiction were spectacularly enriched with a spate of new works, individually fully capable of being measured against the benchmark texts of the existing repertoire and collectively representing an exuberant expansion of its range and scope. A defect in the Scottish literary tradition, highlighted by the abundance and quality of its poetry and prose fiction, had always been the almost total failure to develop a substantial corpus of drama; and this too was addressed with vigour. What happened in this field, in fact, provides an interesting case of the planned expansion of 'culture repertoire'^[1]: one of the features of a mature literary culture in the European tradition is a corpus of drama, strongly associated with the nation and including plays with the unchallenged status of national icons; Scotland lacked this, and therefore would have to acquire it in order to claim possession of a mature literary culture. In particular, since all three of the national languages were participating in the literary renaissance, the Scots tongue was urgently in need of being developed for serious plays: nothing could diminish its claim to possess, in Sir David Lyndsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, one of the monuments of mediaeval drama, and in the anonymous *Philotus* of 1603 a comedy to rank with many better-known specimens from the era; but in later periods, even the few noteworthy attempts at drama that had been made in Scotland had been in English.^[2]

The scale and excellence of the European dramatic tradition, in its many and diverse national developments, ensured that Scottish writers had a wealth of models to emulate. General features of European drama could be, and were, naturalised in Scotland: a notable instance is the genre of the history play, iconic figures from Scotland's past becoming the subjects of drama as — the most obvious analogy, though not one to be pressed — English kings had been for Shakespeare.^[3] More specifically, individual plays from European repertoires could furnish material for translations: as poets were expanding the scope of Scots in their genre with

renderings from poetry of many languages and periods, so dramatists exercised their linguistic and literary skill in naturalising the works of their European *confrères* in the Scottish repertoire.^[4]

This source was exploited with enterprise and initiative: indeed, the importance of translations to the Scottish theatre since the Second World War would be impossible to overstate. Robert Kemp's *Let Wives Tak Tent*, a rendering of Molière's *L'École des Femmes*, first performed at the Gateway Theatre, Edinburgh, in 1948, was the curtain-raiser to a still-ongoing sequence of translations and adaptations of plays by dramatists ranging geographically and chronologically from Aeschylus to Michel Tremblay, and including some of the benchmark works of European literature: Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Racine's *Phèdre*, Ibsen's *Ghosts* and Gogol's *The Government Inspector*, to mention only a sampling.^[5] This remarkable spate of translation activity has had numerous beneficial results: it has vastly extended the scope of drama in Scotland; it has both proclaimed and enhanced the cosmopolitan outlook which has characterised Scottish literature in its greatest periods; it has provided fascinating test-cases for issues relating to the theory and practice of literary translation; and it has contributed substantially to the literary development of the Scots tongue. To the task of finding within the many available dialects, sociolects, styles and registers of Scots appropriate media for recreating the milieu of ancient Athens, seventeenth-century Paris, nineteenth-century Silesia or twentieth-century Montreal, the translators have made imaginative responses; and to the related issue of cultural relocation and naturalisation they have found a wide variety of individual answers.

A notable feature of the corpus of Scots drama translations over the last sixty years is the predominance of comedy. It is tempting to speculate that since Scotland's failure to develop a native drama tradition in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries was to a great extent, though not entirely, due to the stern opposition to stage performances of the Presbyterian Kirk, the eventual breaking of that bondage was marked by an enthusiastic embracing of the most high-spirited sections of the European dramatic tradition. A more certain reason, however, is that a vigorous, distinctive and strongly national tradition of music-hall and pantomime comedy had flourished in Scotland throughout the twentieth century, in which a number of highly skilled performers, comic actors rather than simply comedians, had attained to wide renown: a stellar example is Duncan Macrae, whom Kemp had in mind from the outset for the part of Oliphant (Arnolphe) in his *Let Wives Tak Tent*. Molière, ever since, has remained by far the most popular source for Scots dramatic translations; and among other dramatists, Aristophanes' *The Frogs* and *The Birds*, Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Beaumarchais' *Le Barbier de Seville*, von Kleist's *Der zerbrochene Krug* and Holberg's *Den Stundensløse* are a few examples of classic European comedies which have been performed in Scots versions.^[6]

In this context, the attraction of Carlo Goldoni to Scottish dramatists and audiences is readily appreciable. His smart, fast-moving plots involve universally recognisable stereotypical figures who are cleverly individualised, and humorously contrived situations that are developed against a background with elements of social realism. This combination presents enticing challenges in the domain of cultural naturalisation; and Goldoni's distinctive use of the Venetian dialect, often contrasted with standard literary Italian, gives added appeal to translators working in a medium like Scots, with its range of dialects and registers and ambivalent social and literary relationship with English. Furthermore, Goldoni was an innovator in the theatre of his time, being a landmark figure in the development of Italian comedy from the *commedia dell'arte* tradition to a more realistic and more socially observant mode. Just as in the field of poetry, mighty figures from the mediaeval and Renaissance periods like Dante, Petrarch or Villon appealed to Scots translators not only for their intrinsic merits but by virtue of recalling Scotland's great period as an independent kingdom with a splendid national literature and a part to play in the affairs of Europe, so in drama, this boldly experimental and enterprising playwright had a natural attraction for translators, over and above the quality of his work, in the burgeoning springtime of Scotland's post-war dramatic scene. (Even outwith the context of Scots translations, Goldoni has been notably popular in the Scottish theatre. The Glasgow Citizens', the Edinburgh Royal Lyceum and the Pitlochry Festival Theatre are among the venues where his plays have been produced in recent years in English versions: Robert David MacDonald, the Citizens' resident translator, rendered no fewer than seven of his plays for performance at that theatre between 1976 and 1990.)

Three Scots renderings of Goldoni plays are discussed here: *The Servant o Twa Maisters* (*Il Servitore di Due Padroni*) by Victor Carin, *Weemen Strategem* (*I Rusteghi*) by Antonia Sansica Scott and Marjorie Greig, and *The Chioggian Rammies* (*Le Baruffe Chiozzotte*) by Bill Findlay and Christopher Whyte.^[7] The methods of translation differed somewhat in the three cases. Carin, an accomplished and popular actor and director on the Scottish stage who had previously translated Molière's *Le Malade Imaginaire* into Scots as *The Hypochondriack*, was fluent in Italian (and in fact half Italian by parentage): he first translated Goldoni's original literally into English, and then worked this version into a performing text in Scots. The other two were collaborative ventures. Antonia Sansica Scott, Italian by birth and education but resident in Scotland, was experienced in translating from Italian into English and had collaborated with Robert Garioch in his remarkable Scots translations of Giuseppe Belli's sonnets in Roman dialect; her co-worker in the Goldoni translation, Marjory Greig, was by profession a teacher of English but also a dramatist and producer. Bill Findlay, an active and committed scholar of and commentator on the Scottish theatrical scene as well as a practised translator, worked from a close literal English translation, with extensive notes and annotations, supplied by Christopher Whyte, a polyglot poet,

scholar and translator of high reputation with a thorough knowledge not only of Italian but even of the Chioggian dialect of the original.

As a translation, it may be noted, Carin's is much the least faithful, in a literal sense, of the three: whereas the other translations render the original more or less line by line, Carin's includes numerous passages where Goldoni's text is elaborated, augmented or re-written in other ways; the scene-by-scene development of the plot remaining unchanged but not always the individual speeches. The Scott-Greig play remains far closer to the original; but in view of this closeness the choice of title is striking: *Weemen Stratagem* does not translate *I Rusteghi*, which refers to the four elderly men. Goldoni in his introduction explains that *rustego* in Venetian dialect carries very different overtones from *rustico* in Tuscan: it implies *un uomo aspro, zotico, nemico della civiltà, della cultura e del conversare*; and since it would certainly be possible to convey this in Scots — the title could have been rendered as *The Reebalds, The Poushons, The Lurdans, The Glumphs, The Ruddochs, The Girnygabs, The Wheebers, The Catterwurrs* or *The Cabbrachs* (the last word is used in the play), to mention only some of the possibilities — the change is clearly intentional, implying a shift in the play's main focus from the menfolk and their unattractive ways to the efforts of their ladies to overcome them. The Findlay-White translation is very close literally and, as will be discussed, differs from the other two in retaining the original setting. All the translation projects had this in common, however: it was of the essence that they were aimed at producing performable acting texts which would appeal to the Scottish playgoing public. The work of the translators was anything but an academic exercise: it was a practical means of expanding the Scottish dramatic repertoire, employed by writers with extensive theatrical experience and conducted in the context of a rapidly expanding dramatic tradition and, concomitantly, a developing sophistication among audiences. Of necessity, therefore, the issue of cultural naturalisation presented itself forcefully from the outset. When adapting a comedy set in eighteenth-century Italy to the taste of audiences in twentieth-century Scotland, the most obvious choice would be to aim for a complete translocation: to avoid any suggestion of the original setting and transplant the plays culturally to a Scotland, or at least a conventional dramatic representation of Scotland, recognisable to their new audiences. A comparable setting could be found in the Edinburgh of the Enlightenment period, where counterparts could be readily imagined and convincingly presented for Goldoni's socially-pretentious patriarchs, obedient young ladies with ardent suitors, manipulative women and smart though downtrodden servants: indeed, the social world of Goldoni's theatre is not hopelessly remote from that portrayed in the novels of Susan Ferrier or Sir Walter Scott. On the other hand, this was by no means the only possible procedure: a translator could equally well retain the original setting and the cultural references which made it recognisable, thus presenting on the Scottish stage a story of Italian characters in their own community, only the language in which they now spoke serving to relate them to their new audience. From one point of view this would be the more straightforward

procedure, as it would restrict the translator's task to the purely linguistic level; however, it would run a greater risk, as the cultural foreignness might have an alienating effect on audiences.

The Carin and Scott-Greig translations take the former approach; the Findlay-Whyte, the latter. The difference is visible from the outset in the *dramatis personae*: in *The Servant o Twa Maisters* and *Weemen Stratagem*, the characters are given Scottish names. Pantalone becomes Mr Pittendree (an authentic name, but the last syllable is homophonous with a Scots word meaning 'suffer' or 'endure': not inappropriate for the stock put-upon old man of comedy!). The Doctor's new name of Alec MacKenzie has no such significance, but is unmistakably Scottish at least. Pittendree's daughter and her maid, Clarice and Smeraldina in the original, are Mary and Susie, names which might be said to suggest the class distinction (the latter part was created by Una McLean, an actress with an outstanding talent for comedy). MacKenzie's son is naturalised from Silvio to the archetypically Scottish Sandy: a tiny detail here, with no equivalent in the original but adding a touch of artistic verisimilitude, is that father and son evidently have the same Christian name, Alec and Sandy both being nicknames for Alexander. Sarah Burnett and David Kennedy as names for the other young romantic characters are merely serviceable and Scottish; Archie for the servant, the comic central figure in the play, seems at first to be a lost opportunity to the extent that it has nothing of the overtones of the original Truffaldino (*truffare*, to cheat or swindle); but a suggestion of 'he thinks he's Archie', an expression meaning 'he has an inappropriately high opinion of himself', is probably intended. A character who is altered in more than name is the innkeeper Brighella, a male character who in the Scots version becomes Jemima Gow! (This is not the only instance of a change of sex in Carin's translations: in *The Hypochondriack*, his version of *Le Malade Imaginaire*, Argan's brother becomes his sister.) Similarly in *Weemen Stratagem*, Lunardo, Canciano, Maurizio and Felipetto become Lennox Cruikshanks, Duncan Telfer, Mungo Scroggie and his son Finlay; Margarita, Marina, Felice and Lucietta become Mairget, Mairhi, Flora and Lizy; Simon's name is orthographically unaltered though he acquires the surname Mackerlie; and Il Conte Riccardo, interestingly, remains unchanged as an Italian aristocrat. One of the surnames is an in-joke: inspiration came to Charles Dickens when, on a dark evening in Edinburgh, he mis-read an inscription on a gravestone 'Ebenezer Scroggie, meal man' as 'Ebenezer Scrooge, mean man'!

By contrast, Padron Toni, Madonna Pasqua, Lucietta, Titta Nane and the other members of the cast of *Le Baruffe Chiozzotte* remain as they were in *The Chioggian Rammies*: the only naturalisation is that padron is rendered as 'skipper'. The nicknames which feature prominently in the play, however, are decidedly Scottish; most appropriately as *tee-names* (nicknames) are an integral feature of life in Scottish fishing communities to this day. Checca's nickname *Puinetta* (buttermilk curd) becomes 'Cheesie-chowks', Toffolo *Marmottina* (little marmot) is 'Titmoose', Lucietta *Panchiana* (fib, silly story) is 'Blethermooth', Orsetta *Meggiotto* (millet bread) is 'Dough-

heid', Pasqua *Fersora* (frying-pan) is 'Plooky-neb', Libera *Gallozzo* (cockerel) is 'Hairy-Ligs', Toni *Canestro* (fish-creel) is 'Mauck'rel', Fortunato *Baicolo* (a brand of Venetian biscuit) is 'Haddick', and Vincenzo *Lasagna* (no translation needed) is 'Wan-Airm'. The naturalisations have been assigned apparently on a nonce basis: Cheesie-Chowks, Blethermooth and Dough-heid have elements of meaning in common with the originals, though the common Scots insult 'Dough-heid' has a virulence which the Chioggian lacks; in 'Titmouse' a small bird has replaced the small animal but conveys at least equally well the overtone of contempt, and has the added virtue of alliteration (elsewhere Toffolo is addressed as 'Mister Toffee-nose' — i.e. snob: the original here is *Sior mamara*, 'idiot, simpleton' — the sound of his name again giving the translators a well-taken opportunity); 'Mauck'rel' and 'Haddick' have an obvious appropriateness for fishermen but bear no relation to the originals (though the change of *Baicolo* to 'Haddick' might have been influenced by the Spanish or Portuguese term *bacalao/bacalhau*, 'salted cod'); the others are randomly-chosen insults.

Besides the names of the characters, the setting is overtly naturalised in the first two plays. Carin invents a fictitious place-name Annamuck (with an unsubtly significant final syllable) for the family seat of the Burnetts (Turin in the original), states the conjectural place of Andra's death as Dumfries or 'doon about the Borders' (the original has no corresponding references), makes the former *Truffaldino Batocchio dalle vallade di Bergamo* present himself as 'Archie Broon frae Dundee' — is the choice of town conceivably because of Dundee's association with another famous set of Broons? — and comment disrespectfully on 'ye Embro fowk' where again the original has no specific reference. Scott and Greig are even more precise in their geographical translocation: Lennox Cruikshanks' house is placed by a stage direction in 'Brodie's Close, Lawnmarket, Edinburgh' and Simon Mackerlie's likewise in 'Chessel's Court, Canongate'; *gnanca una strazza de comedia no avemo visto* (13) is rendered as 'We hae been naewhere; no e'en doun the Canongate tae the Playhouse'; *quela petazza de la lasagnera* not only deals in a new foodstuff but does so in a precise location, being now 'that capernoitie besom at sells wilks at the heid o Wardrop's Court'; two actual Edinburgh taverns are cited in the change from *Dove voressi che andessimo? a l'osteria?* to 'An whare wad ye hae us gang? Lucky Middlemass's maybes, or the Cross Keys?' A reference to 'Allan Ramsay's playhous' (simply *teatro* in the original) locates the play historically as well as geographically: the theatre which Allan Ramsay founded in 1736 was forced to close only three years later.

Other details besides place names are employed to establish the cultural naturalisation. *Weemen Stratagem* abounds in references to calendrical landmarks such as Hogmanay (the specified time of the play's action, where the original refers only to *carneval*), Michaelmas, the Daft Days and Hallow Fair: though observance of these festive occasions was by no means restricted to Edinburgh, the fact that the last two are titles of poems by Robert Fergusson, the archetypal poet

of that city, serves to underwrite the setting of the play by association. References to food figure prominently in both plays: in *Weemen Stratagem* the verb *disnar* is rendered as ‘sup broth’ or ‘brak brose’, *dei boni caponi, de le bone polastre e dei boni straculi de vedèlo* is not only Scotticised but elaborated to ‘some skate an ingans, reistit tae perfection, a tasty mutton ham an a fine howtowdie, their gowden skins crackling in the fire, an the flesh white an sappy’ and shortly afterwards Lunardo’s invitation to his friend to partake of *latesini* (sweetbreads) is expanded to nothing less than ‘I hae some unco guid sheepheid broth on the bile, a reemin pot o stovies an a creamy Scots flummery for pudden’: no wonder Mungo’s response is not merely *I magneremo* but ‘I am droolan at the mou alreadyes!’ In *The Servant o Twa Maisters*, the list of appetising dishes offered by Brighella — *la zuppa, la frittura, el lessò e un fracando*, and so on for another couple of speeches — becomes ‘a green curly kale an’ barley broth, saut cod an’ butter-milk, a jeelied chucken-bree wi’ leeks, herrin’ soused wi’ ingans; or scrambled eggs wi’ chives’. A feature lost from the translation is Truffaldino’s incomprehension of the French- and English-derived names for some of the dishes; though in the play’s new Scottish context such a theme *could* have been introduced: some Scottish writers of the eighteenth century, including Robert Fergusson and (less seriously) Robert Burns, satirised the fashionable introduction of fancy exotic dishes and their preferred status in elegant society over traditional Scottish fare.^[8]

By contrast, the Findlay-Whyte rendering of *Le Baruffe Chiozzotte* leaves the Italian scene unaltered. This play is markedly different in tone as well as in setting from the other two: whereas they are urban comedies, extravagant and often farcical in their action, this is a gentler and much more naturalistic play with a village setting, in which the humorous misunderstandings and conflicts among the characters are realistically and sympathetically portrayed. This realism is reflected in the language of the translation: a register in which the more colourful words from the Scots vocabulary (which the Scott-Greig translation uses in abundance: *clashmaclavers, houghmagandie, curfuffle, contermacious, collieshangie, whigmaleeries*) are deliberately scarce. Since the fishing communities which Goldoni here depicts have obvious counterparts in Scottish life, the need for a deliberate cultural re-location may have seemed less pressing: Findlay’s intention, however, is more positive and specific than this. In the thesis of which the play text is a part, he argues that the frequent practice among Scots translators of re-locating the plays in a Scottish setting represents ‘a kind of defeatism’. In view of the energy, imagination and linguistic skill in which such translations have abounded this is at first sight a surprising judgement; but the case he makes is entirely clear: this practice implies an assumption that the Scots language cannot sustain an association with a non-Scottish subject; whereas a fully mature literary language can be used for writing on any subject whatever: in the specific case of drama, for plays set anywhere in space or time.^[9] Scottish audiences, Findlay argues, should be able to hear a play in Scots without automatically assuming that it must be set in Scotland — any more, he might have added, than a play in English, native or translated, must be set in England — and the

practice of altering not only the language but the setting of foreign plays in Scots versions is a hindrance to the development of this ability. Accordingly, the characters in *The Chioggian Rammies* are still Italian fisherfolk and their social superiors, engaging in the activities characteristic of the community (the opening stage direction has the ladies 'sitting on straw chairs, working lace on their cushions, which are placed on stools'). *Polenta* is still polenta and *barucche* are still 'roastit yellie pumpkin', the local currency is still *soldi* and ducats, town and village names either remain unchanged or are given in standard Italian instead of the local dialect (*Sinigaglia* for *Senegaggia*), more local place-names are given literal translations (*cale de la Corona* is 'Crown Vennel', *rio de Palazzo* 'Palace Key'). A specific set of words, names of garments, are left untranslated: it is interesting to note that the dialogue –

Lucietta: Awa?! Ye're gettin a 'donzelon'?

Checca: Ah dinna ken whit a 'donzelon' is.

Orsetta: Whut a haddie! Div ye no ken 'at when a young lassie comes tae a certain age she's gien a silk skirt, a 'donzelon'? When she gets a 'donzelon', it's a sign her family waants tae mairry her aff, 'at she's in the marriage mercat. Ye no ken that?

– is not an interpolation but is in the original, a *donzelon* and its significance being evidently as unfamiliar in eighteenth-century Venice as in contemporary Edinburgh. A reference to a *ninzoletto* is explained in a parenthesis, seemingly for the benefit of readers, but not in the dialogue (it is a 'sort of white cloth headscarf covering head and shoulders which women of Chioggia carry'); and the line 'Ah've brung ye the claith fur tae mak a "giubbonchino"', defined again in a parenthesis as 'sort of waistcoat but for a woman', corresponds to one in which the local name is in fact not used. Clearly this play, when it eventually receives its first public performance, has the potential to serve as a breakthrough in the developing status of Scots as a literary language, in countering the still-prevalent association that anything described or discussed in Scots must be Scottish.

Part of Goldoni's stock-in-trade is the use of the Venetian dialect (in *Le Baruffe Chiozzotte*, the local speech of Chioggia, which could be seen as a sub-dialect of this) and the contrasting implications of it and standard literary Italian: regularly, he makes dialect-speaking and standard-speaking characters interact in a manner which instantly recalls the interplay between Scots- and English-speaking characters in Scottish fiction and drama from Sir Walter Scott onwards. It goes without saying that the sociolinguistic histories of Scotland and Italy, and the attitudes to standard and dialectal speech forms that prevail in the two countries to this day, are very different; and that there is no simple correspondence between the social or literary relationship of Scots to standard

literary English and that of Venetian dialect to standard literary Italian: nonetheless, an obvious procedure in translating Goldoni might be to render the dialect passages into Scots and the Italian into English. One of the most interesting features of the three translations is that in no case has this course been followed exactly.

In *Il Servitore di Due Padroni*, the speeches of Pantalone, Truffaldino and Brighella are written in Venetian; those of the two romantic couples, the Doctor and Smeraldina in Italian (the Doctor also has a habit of quoting Latin aphorisms, a feature which is dropped entirely in the translation). Carin, however, chooses to write the entire play in Scots: the characters are distinguished in some cases by idiosyncrasies of speech (e.g. Jemima Gow's habit, not found in Goldoni's Brighella, of repeating phrases: 'A verra sad tale, A said, a sad, sad tale' — 'Waitye, waitye, A said waitye!'), but not by difference in language. Since he would certainly have been fully capable of incorporating, even elaborating upon, this device if he had wished — one could easily imagine a Scottish version of the play in which the old merchant spoke traditional Scots, his learned friend a pedantic Latinate English, the younger generation Scottish-accented English, the maidservant an exaggerated 'Kelvinsaide' English with hypercorrections, and the comedy actor a broad couthy Scots — his decision not to do so must have been for a reason: the most probable is that in a fast-paced comedy of action and situation it would simply have added nothing to the humorous effect and might even have proved a distraction by raising irrelevant issues. A marked speech difference of Scots as contrasted with English between the old and the young characters is a notable feature of Robert MacLellan's *The Flouers o' Edinburgh* and *Young Auchinleck*; but in those plays the focus is specifically on the social changes, reflected in speech as in other aspects of life, which affected Edinburgh and (to some extent) other parts of Scotland in the eighteenth century, and the adoption of an Anglicised language by the young is a source of conflict, or lack of sympathy at least, between them and their parents: this particular theme is not conspicuous in the Goldoni play, and might have been inappropriately suggested by a translator who tried conscientiously to find counterparts for his linguistic variations.

In *I Rusteghi*, the only character who speaks standard Italian is Conte Riccardo; and his lines are, predictably, translated into English, contrasting with the Scots of the other characters. An ingenious and very effective decision of the translators, however, has been to retain his original nationality (perfectly possible, of course, in the play's new context): in production, he would speak English with an Italian accent. Small though the part is, this device cleverly enhances the comedy of his scenes. In the original he is the stereotypically elegant, foppish, unscrupulous and to ladies dangerously attractive aristocrat, but though introduced as *un cavalier forestier* he is clearly an Italian: in the translation these qualities are intensified by his exotic foreignness. This is deliberately emphasised by interpolating into his dialogue, in English, some Italian phrases which are not in the original: 'Deliziosa signora!' — 'I have fallen in love with your beautiful city. (*Aside*,

with a sigh) Non solo della città, mi sono innamorato!'. A stage direction specifies 'when the ladies talk to Riccardo they make an attempt to speak English, but retain their broad Scots accents': this is not suggested in the original either by a stage direction or in the writing of the dialogue; and Duncan's overt attempt to make a language switch 'Dinna fash yoursel ... Don't — trouble — yoursel ... it — does — not — matter' has no equivalent in Canciano's *Eh, nol s'incomoda, che no me n'importa*. Riccardo's comment *È un bel satiro costui* becomes 'Che rustico! (*Fishes out his pocket dictionary, searches for the right word, then*) Bumpkin!'

Finally, in *Le Baruffe Chiozzotte* the speeches of most of the characters are in the local dialect throughout, but Isidoro, *Coadiutore del Cancelliere Criminale* in the original and 'Depute Magistrate of the criminal Chancellery' in the translation, speaks in Venetian with some Tuscan influence.^[10] At least in print, the differences are not obvious^[11]; but the translators emphasise Isidoro's official standing by making him speak English, with an occasional Scotticism ('Leave by ...'. 'I'll skelp your ear') or switch into full Scots ('Bide a wee...'). Inconsistencies are even more noticeable in the dialogue of the Clerk: this character's lines give the impression of a dialect speaker making a determined but not wholly successful effort to emphasise the dignity of his position by speaking 'proper': 'I summon you by order of the Depute-Magistrate to proceed forthwith to the Magistrate's office *for* to be examined' — 'Is that Skipper Fortunato's residence [simply *casa* in the original]? [...] Then that's the wan Ah seek. The door's lyin open, Ah'll away in.' These highly realistic touches illustrate Findlay's mastery of the subtleties of Scottish register-shifting, and his ability to exploit this in presenting his characters.

Cultural transfer must of necessity be accomplished by means of naturalisation, i.e. making the foreign cultural feature 'at home' in its new setting. In the case of literary translation, the language shift is a part of this process, to the extent that the literary artefact is now embodied in a familiar language instead of an unfamiliar one; but translation may not be sufficient for full naturalisation if elements of the foreign culture remain. In the specific context of Scotland's progress towards developing a native dramatic repertoire comparable to those of other countries, this factor is by the nature of the case already accommodated to a large extent: since the Renaissance, plays in contemporary vernacular languages but with settings remote in space and/or time have been so familiar that the spectacle of people feigning to be, say, Antony and Cleopatra yet conversing in English is taken as absolutely normal.^[12] The naturalisations of the Goldoni plays here examined are more comprehensive than a simple language shift, however: *The Servant o Twa Maisters*, *Weemen Stratagem* and *The Chioggian Rammies* are Scottish plays, and the means by which the translators have effected their Scotticisation have been examined. A final observation, however, is that the one of the three which at first sight appears the least naturalised is from another point of view the *most* so; in that whereas the 'Scotland' of the Carin and Sansica-Scott translations is rather a comical parody than a realistic socio-historical reconstruction, that of the

Findlay-Whyte is a not inaccurate representation of a social setting closely comparable to one which formerly existed in parts of the real Scotland and of which remnants can still be seen. If *The Servant o Twa Maisters* and *Weemen Stratagem* belong to the same company as, say, Robert McLellan's *The Flooers o Edinburgh*, *Torwatletie* and *The Hypocrite*, plays in which authentic and pointed social observations are presented within the recognised conventions of comedy, *The Chioggian Rammies* belongs to that of Donald Campbell's *The Widows of Clyth* and Gráinne Smith's *Chanceshot*, plays of much greater verisimilitude, set in fishing communities as they actually were (much more recently in the second case than the first): neither of those is a comedy as the Findlay-Whyte play is, but in all three cases the dramatists have chosen to depict humanly credible situations and characters rather than ones whose 'credibility' is in terms of dramatic conventions with a much greater degree of stylisation. To state the difference in an exaggeratedly simplistic and polarised form, the naturalisation of the plays is accomplished by making them conform, in the case of the first two, to existing Scottish dramatic conventions; in that of the third, to existing Scottish social history. Goldoni's stimulus to the Scottish dramatic scene has been, and will no doubt continue to be, both productive and interestingly diverse in its effects.

NOTES

[1] On this see Itamar Even-Zohar, 'The Making of Culture Repertoire and the Role of Transfer', in *Target*, 9:2 (1997), 355-363.

[2] For example, John Hume's *Douglas*, which at its first performance (in 1755) reputedly drew from an enthusiastic audience member the much-quoted comment 'Whaur's your Wullie Shakespeare nou?'

[3] Examples include *The Wallace* by Sydney Goodsir Smith, *The Bruce* by J.R. Silver, *John Knox* by James Bridie and *Jamie the Saxt* by Robert McLellan.

[4] For a ground-breaking account and evaluation of the development of drama in recent Scottish literature see John T. Low, 'Mid Twentieth Century Drama in Lowland Scots', in *Scotland and the Lowland Tongue*, ed. J. D. McClure (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1983), pp. 170-194.

[5] Translated by, respectively, Robin Lorimer and (less satisfactorily) David Purves, Edwin Morgan, Donald Campbell and John Byrne. See the list in *Serving Twa Maisters: Five Classic Plays in Scots Translation*, ed. John Corbett and Bill Findlay (Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2005), pp. 331-8. This book, with its excellent critical apparatus and extensive bibliography, is the natural starting-point for any study of Scots drama translation.

[6] By, respectively, Douglas Young, Edwin Morgan, Hector MacMillan, Victor Carin and again Victor Carin: see Corbett and Findlay, *ibid.*

[7] The first of these received its première at the Royal Lyceum in 1965, the second at Perth Theatre in 1987; the third has not yet been staged. Only the first has been published, in Corbett and Findlay (eds), *Serving Twa Maisters*, pp. 143-215. I am grateful to Perth Theatre for allowing me to use their archive copy of *Weemen Stratagem*; the text of *The Chioggian Rammies* forms part of Findlay's unpublished Ph.D. thesis *Motivation and Method in Scots Translations: Versions and Adaptations of Plays from the Historic Repertoire of Continental European Drama*, Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh, 2000.

[8] In, respectively, *To the Principal and Professors of the University of St Andrews, on their Superb Treat to Dr Samuel Johnson* and *Address to a Haggis*.

[9] In fact the present writer argued on similar lines years ago: see 'Scots: its range of uses,' in A.J. Aitken and T. McArthur (eds.), *Languages of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Chambers, 1979), pp. 26-48; reprinted as 'Scots and its Use in Recent Poetry' in *Scots and its Literature: Varieties of English Around the World*, General Series 14, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995), pp. 171-189.

[10] This information is in Findlay's thesis. For my part, I am sufficiently familiar with standard Italian to have little difficulty in reading the dialect, but the differences between Isidoro's idiolect and those of the others elude me: even in the long conversation between him and Toffolo in Act 2 scene 1 I cannot detect any consistent differences in their speech. I take it on trust that they would be visible to native speakers or practised scholars; and no doubt in performance the play would be cast with actors who had, or could assume, clearly differentiated Chioggian and Venetian accents.

[11] In Act 2 scene 15, where Isidoro is puzzled and irritated by Fortunato's defective speech, the following exchange occurs:

Fortunato: Ah shpeaks Chioggian, ya hona'. Whit toon you frae, hona'?

Isidoro: I'm from Venice, but I can't understand a single word you say.

The *but* surely implies that a man from Venice would not expect the Chioggian dialect to present him with any difficulties of comprehension.

[12] Whereas experiments like Mel Gibson's films *The Passion of the Christ* and *Apocalypto*, with dialogue in, in the first case, Aramaic and Latin and, in the second, native Mexican languages and Spanish, seem audacious if not preposterous.