

## *Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh* le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk) \**

Aig an àm seo an-uiridh, bha na litrichean agam mu dheidhinn mìosan na bliadhna, agus chleachd mi am facal Gàidhlig as aithne dhomh airson *calendar* – “mìosachan”. Tha e stèidhichte air a’ Ghàidhlig airson *month* – mìos. Ach tha dà fhacal eile ann a chluinneas tu cuideachd airson *calendar* – caladair agus, seadh, “calendar”, dìreach mar a tha e ann am Beurla.

Tha sin nam inntinn an t-seachdain sa, oir bha mi a’ leughadh leabhar air a bheil “Òrain Dhòmhnall Ailein Dhòmhnall na Bainich”, a chaidh a dheasachadh leis an Athair Urramach Iain Aonghas Dòmhnallach, a tha na shagart anns a’ Ghearastan. Buinidh Mgr Iain Aonghas do dh’Uibhist a Deas, an dearbh eilean dhan do bhuin am bàrd mun do sgrìobh e. Mholainn an leabhar dhuibh, oir tha eadar-theangachadh ann do na h-òrain air fad.

Bha Dòmhnall Ailean Dhòmhnall na Bainich beò eadar na bliadhnaichean naoi deug ’s a sia agus naoi deug, naochad ’s a dhà, agus sgrìobh e na h-uibhir de dh’òrain mhatha, nam measg “Gruagach Òg an Fhuil Bhàin” agus “Moladh Uibhist”. Is tha òran snog spòrsail san leabhar air a bheil “Òran a’ Chalendar” – fear a tha furasta gu leòr do luchd-ionnsachaidh. Seo mar a tha e a’ tòiseachadh:

*Hù ga rì; hù ga rìreadh;  
B’ fheàrr gun d’ chum mi dhachaigh dìreach,  
'S cha leiginn a leas bhith 'g innse  
Do mhuinntir na tìr' mar dh'èirich;  
'S hù ga rì; hù ga rìreadh.*

*'S fhuair mi calendar bho Dhòmhnall  
A chumadh fad na bliadhn' air dòigh mi:  
A h-uile mìos air sgrìobhte còmhla  
'S pòcaid air bhiodh dhomhsa feumail;  
'S hù ga rì; hù ga rìreadh.*

Bha an t-ùghdar, Dòmhnall Ailean, air an rathad dhachaigh le calendar a fhuair e mar phreusant bho fhear air an robh Dòmhnall. Bha còir aige dhol dìreach dhachaigh leis, ach cha deach, oir thachair e ri fear a’ phuist, Nillidh Eairdsidh, taobh a-muigh Oifis a’ Phuist. Thuirt Nillidh ris, “nach tiugainn thu tacan suas air chèilidh?” Cha b’ urrainn do Dhòmhnall Ailean dhol seachad agus chaidh e a-steach airson cupa tì.

Ach fhad ’s a bha e shuas an staidhre, bha na boireannaich ri dibhearsan shìos, far an do dh’fhàg Dòmhnall Ailean a chalendar. Co-dhiù, nuair a chaidh e sìos an staidhre as dèidh

dha cupa tì a ghabhail, bha an calendar dìreach far an do dh'fhàg e e, agus cha robh coltas ann gu robh e eadar-dhealaichte ann an dòigh sam bith. Ach bha. Seo na rannan mu dheireadh san òran, agus an t-ùghdar a' toirt a' chalendar gu bhean:

*Ràinig mis' an taigh gu druaipleach  
Is shìn mi Cheit e airson fhuasgladh,  
'S b' fheàrr leam fhìn gu robh mi 'n uair sin  
Nam cheò uain' air feadh nan speuran;  
'S hù ga rì; hù ga rìreadh.*

*Dhragh i pìos de phàipear cruaidh às,  
Dh'fhaighneachd i dhomh, "An croch mi suas e?"  
'S tha is' a' fanaid orm bhon uair sin  
'S bu mhis' a' chulaidh-thruais ga h-èisteachd!"  
'S hù ga rì; hù ga rìreadh.*

Tuigidh sibh gun deach car a thoirt às leis na boireannaich ann an taigh Nillidh Eairdsidh – gun tug iad an calendar a-mach às a' chèis is gun do chuir iad pìos pàipeir cruaidh innte na àite.

Bha comas aig Dòmhnall Ailean gàire a dhèanamh air fhèin – rud a tha math ann am bàrd sam bith. Agus bha e na bhàrd air leth. Bha e dhen bheachd nach robh “de dh'fhoghlam air an t-saoghal a dhèanadh duine na bhàrd” agus gur e comas a bh' ann a bhuineadh do nàdar an duine fhèin. Bha an comas sin aigesan ann am pailteas.

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**Faclan na seachdainne:** ùghdar: *author*; preusant: *present*; thachair e ri: *he met (with)*; Nillidh Eairdsidh: *Neil, son of Archie*; druaipleach: *dozy*; pàipear cruaidh: *stiff paper*.

**Abairtean na seachdainne:** a chaidh a dheasachadh leis an Athair Urramach Iain Aonghas Dòmhnallach: *which was edited by Father John Angus MacDonald*; buinidh X do dh'Uibhist a Deas: *X belongs to South Uist*; sgrìobh e na h-uibhir de dh'òrain mhatha: *he wrote a lot of good songs*; cha leiginn a leas a bhith ag innse: *I needn't be telling*; do mhuinntir na tìre mar dh'èirich: *(to) the people of the district what happened*; 's pòcaid air (a) bhiodh dhomhsa feumail: *and a pocket on it which would be useful to me (the bard has changed the word order from the usual a bhiodh feumail dhomhsa)*; bha còir aige dhol dìreach dhachaigh: *he should have gone straight home*; nach tiugainn thu tacan suas air chèilidh?: *won't you come up for a while to visit?*; bha na boireannaich ri dibhearsan shìos: *the women were having a bit of fun downstairs*; shìn mi (a) Cheit e airson fhuasgladh: *I handed it over to Kate to unwrap it*; b' fheàrr leam fhìn gu robh mi 'n uair sin nam cheò uain' air feadh nan speuran: *I would then have preferred to be a pale mist all over the heavens*; an croch mi suas e?: *will I hang it up?*; gun deach car a thoirt às: *that he was tricked*; nach robh “de dh'fhoghlam air an t-saoghal a dhèanadh duine na bhàrd”: *that there was no education in the world that could make a man a bard*.

**Puing-ghràmar na seachdainne:** 'S bu mhis' a' chulaidh-thruais ga h-èisteachd: *and I have been an object of pity having to listen to her*. Bu mhise is the past tense equivalent to is mise and it is ga h-èisteachd, rather than ga èisteachd, because he is listening to a feminine object ie his wife who is mocking him about bringing home a piece of card, rather than the calendar he promised. But I would particularly like to point out the word culaidh, a feminine noun which here means an object and which forms a compound noun with other nouns.

Truas means “pity” so *culaidh-thruais* (employing the genitive of *truas*) means “an object of pity”. Similarly, *fanaid* means *mockery or ridicule*, so *culaidh-fhanaid* means *an object of ridicule*. Note that because it is treated as a compound noun, the second element is lenited just an adjective would be when qualifying a feminine noun. Another common example is *culaidh-mhagaidh* (from *magadh*) which has much the same meaning as *culaidh-fhanaid*.

**Gnàths-cainnt na seachdainne:** Bha an comas sin aigesan ann am pailteas: *he had that capability in abundance*. *Pailteas* means “*plenty, abundance, sufficiency*”. Tha pailteas Gàidhlig aige: *he has plenty of Gaelic (ie he speaks it well)*.

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