SCOTLAND, BRITAIN, EMPIRE
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Writing the Highlands, 1760–1860

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Columbus
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has had a long gestation, and I have incurred many debts along the way. I am indebted to Clare Simmons and Marlene Longenecker who co-directed the dissertation from which this book sprang and who have continued to offer advice. I am grateful to Ian Duncan and Leith Davis and to the anonymous first reader for The Ohio State University Press, who read sections of the manuscript and offered invaluable advice. I am particularly grateful to Caroline McCracken-Flesher, who also read part of the manuscript and has given her helpful suggestions on all aspects of the book. I wish to thank Ina Ferris who provided early encouragement, and to my colleagues at Eastern Connecticut State University who read parts of the manuscript and provided helpful and informed input. I also wish to thank Sandy Crooms at The Ohio State University Press for her ideas and promotion of the book, and Amy Ingalls for her indexing skills.

I am grateful to library staff who helped me in researching the book, notably Iain G. Brown at the National Library of Scotland; Jane Anderson, Archivist at Blair Castle; Tricia Boyd in Special Collections at the University of Edinburgh Library; and, especially, the Inter-Library Loan staff at the University of Connecticut. Without their ceaseless efforts this book would not have been possible. Lastly I wish to thank my family for their continued encouragement, particularly my brother, Michael McNeil, for his bottomless reservoir of enthusiasm. And most of all I thank my wife, Erika McNeil, who, from the book’s inception, offered invaluable advice, encouragement, and research materials. I am indebted to her for more than she knows, and so this book is for her.

My research was aided by two CSU/AAUP Research Grants. I also thank Eastern for a Reassigned Time for Research award, which gave me the time
to work out some key ideas. An earlier version of parts of chapter 5 appeared as “Petticoated Devils’: Scottish Highland Soldiers in British Accounts of the Indian Rebellion,” Prose Studies 23.3 (December 2000): 77–94.
INTRODUCTION

In May of 1778, a group of twenty-five expatriate Scots met at the Spring-Garden Coffee-House where they agreed to form the Highland Society of London. Their principal aims were the restoration of the Highland dress; the preservation and cultivation of Highland music, literature, and language; the establishment of institutions devoted to aid Highlanders such as Gaelic schools, churches, and asylums for Highland children orphaned upon the death of their soldier fathers; honoring the achievements of Highland regiments; and, lastly, the promotion of agricultural improvement in the Highlands. The society, which inspired imitators in Scotland—an Edinburgh society, modeled after the London one, was formed in 1784—and continued to thrive well into the nineteenth century, both reflected and helped foster the public interest in the Highlands and the belief that the Gaelic culture of the Highlands held a distinct place in the life of the nation. The society encouraged the collection and preservation of Gaelic manuscripts, gave out prizes in Gaelic poetry, and organized the first-ever piping competition, which was held in Falkirk in 1781 and which continued annually afterward. In addition, the society advocated for a chair in Gaelic literature at the University of Edinburgh, worked to produce a Gaelic dictionary, and was a keen promoter of James Macpherson’s translations of Ossianic poetry. The society’s influence is demonstrated by its successful efforts to introduce a 1782 bill to repeal the law proscribing Highland dress, as the bill’s sponsor—the Marquis of Graham—was first approached by a society committee composed of members influential in parliamentary circles. In all its endeavors, the society sought to bring Highland culture to the forefront of Scottish national culture. In doing so, the society provided a focal point for what had been a keen but diffuse interest in Highland culture among antiquarians.
and historians since publication of the first fragments of Ossianic poetry in 1760. The Highland Society was a key force in disseminating, institutionalizing, and popularizing ideas about the Highlands in the Romantic era, but its efforts also were bound up wholly with the ways in which its members struggled to come to terms with the increasing complexity of national identity in the time period. Through their enquiry on the Highlands, members of the Highland Society sought to define themselves as Scots and as Britons in an age of empire. Writing on the Highlands, of which the output of the Highland Society was an early and influential contributor, is a key Scottish component of the consolidation of nation and empire in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The nationalist impetus behind the Highland Society and the critical link its members made between the preservation of Highland culture and the continued viability of Scottish national identity are made clear in Sir John Sinclair’s address in June 1804 to a joint meeting of the Highland Societies of London and Edinburgh: “Observations on the Propriety of Preserving the Dress, the Language, the Poetry, the Music, and the Customs of the Ancient Inhabitants of Scotland.” In his opening remarks, Sinclair, influential MP from Ulbster and compiler of the exhaustive Statistical Account of Scotland (Walter Scott’s characterization of him as “the Great Caledonian Bore” notwithstanding), laid out the motives for preserving the culture of the Highlands, pointedly linking this aim with the continued viability of a Scottish identity:

Scotland, considering its population and extent, has made a distinguished figure in history. No country in modern times, has produced characters more remarkable for genius, valour, or ability, or for knowledge in the most important arts of both peace and of war; and though the natives of that formerly independent, and hitherto unconquered kingdom, have reason to be proud of the name of Britons, which they have acquired since the Union in 1707, yet surely, they ought not to relinquish on that account, all remembrance of characteristic dress, language, music, or customs of their ancestors. If in these respects they become totally assimilated to the English, Scotland becomes completely confounded in England, whilst its inhabitants at the same time can claim no peculiar merit from old English valour, virtue, literature, or fame; whereas if they consider themselves not only as Britons, but as Scotchmen, there are many circumstances, connected with more the more remote, and even modern periods of their history, which they can recollect with enthusiasm. (3–4; emphasis in original)
Sinclair’s opening address is worth quoting at some length because it encapsulates, both in substance and syntax, the shifting, even contradictory uses of Highlandness through which urban, educated Scots, in a variety of texts and contexts, negotiated the new imperatives of cultural difference in an age of national consolidation within Great Britain but also of imperial expansion beyond.

This book is an attempt to examine more deeply the complexities of identity and difference that are visible in Scottish writing on the Highlands. This writing comes out of the context of the anxieties of a Scottish elite negotiating the tensions of nation and empire in a time when British imperial expansion abroad—and consolidation at home—called for a new understanding of the relation between Scottishness and Englishness, between Scottishness and Britishness, and between Britishness and an imperial Otherness. The expression of identification with the Highlands demonstrates a nationalist desire to elide Highland/Lowland difference in order to assert a distinctive Scottish identity within a “multinational” (but also outwardly imperial) Great Britain in which Scots and English nevertheless find common ground. At the same time, this identification, particularly as it works to valorize Highland traditions as uniquely Scottish, stands alongside imperialist constructions of the Highlands as “Other” than, and distinct from, the realm of the modern, civil nation. Indeed, as much previous critical study of the image of the Highlands during the Romantic era has made clear, it is the very fact of the primitiveness of the Highlands that underpins its use as exemplar of Scottish difference par excellence. Situated at the very nexus of nation and empire then, representation of the Highlands shifts constantly between Self and Other, making visible the ambiguities, tensions, and ruptures in the formation of national and imperial subjectivities.

The conflicted position of the Highlands within the discourse of nation and empire is revealed in the contradictory aims of the Highland Society. On the one hand, the preservation of Highland traditions, language, and literature serves a two-pronged cultural nationalist agenda that works against Scotland’s absorption into an Anglo-dominated Great Britain, within the context of acquiescence to the political status quo of British union. As Sinclair’s address makes clear, continued Scottish difference—and the synecdochial identification between Scottish and Highland traditions that grounds this assertion—sits within a framework of “Britishness” that enunciates the common allegiance of Scots and English. In this respect, Sinclair’s remarks echo the aims of other antiquarian/historical societies in Ireland and Wales, which, independent of any political aims, sought to preserve the
distinctiveness of national culture by preserving its material artifacts. The institutionalization of preserving societies, John Hutchinson writes, signals the crystallization of cultural nationalist efforts to identify and valorize the authentic wisdom encoded in the distinctive linguistic, literary, religious, and political culture of their ancestors while “pleading for a rejection of the destructive English images of the . . . past” (48). The work of the Highland Society therefore parallels its counterpart in Dublin, the Royal Irish Academy, which, Hutchinson writes, in addition to becoming an important focal point for legitimizing Gaelic scholarship, branched out far beyond academic circles as many of its members were involved in political debates concerning the welfare of Gaelic-speaking peoples of the time. Rather than calling for a change in Scotland’s political status, cultural nationalists like Sinclair struggled to articulate an idea of Britishness that neither subsumed nor displaced Scottishness but instead was a composite of several constituent national identities. Later critics, pathologizing the shifting doubling allegiance this stance requires, have seen in it the symptoms of the general malady of post-union Scotland, a “cultural schizophrenia,” marked by tensions of internal linguistic divisiveness between a native organic language of the hearth and synthetic cosmopolitan one of polite society.

On the other hand, the promotion of agricultural improvement in the Highlands, an aim of the Highland Society that is not explicitly addressed in Sinclair’s opening remarks, seems to contradict the preservation aims of the society. Informed by Scottish Enlightenment theories of natural history and political economy, which would diverge in the nineteenth century into the separate field of historiography and the emergent fields of sociology and anthropology, writing on the Highlands reiterated a set of assumptions. Highlanders dwelled within only recently accessible mountain strongholds far from towns and cities, spoke a peculiar affective language, adhered to tribal allegiances based on kinship, adopted the warlike habits of a patriarchal society, and lived a life largely unchanged since the days when the Romans failed to conquer them. In the Scottish Enlightenment stadial theory of human development, Highlanders were an anachronism, a people on the first rung of the ladder of social progress, sharing affinity with other contemporaneous “primitives” around the globe while living adjacent to, and sometimes venturing into, the civil space of the modern nation.

Traditional Highland agricultural practices—and the social relations that were supported by them—therefore were deemed both archaic and inefficient and in desperate need of reform. “Improvement” meant championing the benefits of draining boglands and the proper uses of manures on soils and of certain forages for livestock, but it also meant new systems of land tenure, rents, and distribution to maximize production and profitability. Sin-
clair, founder of the British Wool Society and the Board of Agriculture, was a leader in advocating and implementing improvement in the Highlands and was credited with introducing the Cheviot sheep breed, which he developed on his own estate in northeast Scotland in the late 1780s, into the Highlands. The foundation of semipublic, government-sponsored institutions such as the Wool Society and the Board of Agriculture, which attempted to shape agricultural practice by providing financial incentives and disincentives to landowners, amounted to an unprecedented consolidation of state control of land management and is indicative of the improvers’ disregard for preexisting land-use practices in the Highlands. The transformation of both the landscape and the social fabric of the Highlands was, of course, profoundly dislocating and felt most strongly among small property owners and tenants. These people were least able to adapt to the new demands of agrarian capitalism, which tied the Highlands to market forces far from the region. As the Highland economy became integrated into the increasingly globalized British imperial economy, it became sensitive to shifts in markets, not just in Scotland or England, but in North America and Asia as well.

Improvement entailed not the preservation of traditional Highland ways, but their total negation. Further, the discourse of improvement was part of an imperial epistemology that reordered the landscape figuratively and literally, absorbing and erasing indigenous land and cultural practices around the globe. Indeed, as Highland integration into imperial economy parallels those of other colonial spaces coming under British control, so too do the efforts of the Highland Society to bring improvement to the Highlands parallel the work of other institutions serving British imperial aims, such the Asiatic Society of Bengal, founded in 1784 (the same year as the Highland Society of Edinburgh), whose work Edward Said has argued made it a founding institution of Orientalism (78).

The Highland Society’s desire to reshape the Highlands, to erase its difference in the name of a universalized set of assumptions as to what constitutes national “progress,” seems to fly in the face of the identification with the Highlands that underpins the society’s nationalist aims to preserve Highland traditions as Scotland’s own. Yet the society’s desire to improve the Highlands must also be seen in the context of eighteenth-century pro-union Scottish writing as to the necessity and benefits of self-improvement to effect more fully the equal partnership between Scotland and England within Great Britain. The call for Highland improvement betrays peculiarly Scottish anxieties as to the nation’s own relative “primitiveness” in relation to their more “advanced” southern neighbor. Thus the aims of the Highland Society to improve the Highlands was a natural outgrowth of the work of previous Scottish “gentlemen’s ‘improving’ clubs” that sought to modernize not only
Scottish agricultural practice but the Scottish character as well. Scots of a generation before had sought to purge their own language of “impurities” and Scotticisms, to forge a new kind of “metropolitan identity” in order to take better advantage of the new economic possibilities of union. Early in his career, Sinclair had made his own contribution to this project, penning *Observations on the Scottish Dialect*, published in London in 1784, in which he argued that “new manners must be assumed, and a new language adopted” before Scots achieved full access to new opportunities of union in the metropolis (quoted in Crawford 24). Scots like Sinclair saw Highland improvement as integral to the project of achieving a unified Great Britain in which all of Scotland would be able to contribute fully in its success. Indeed, Sinclair always linked improvement with the general increase of prosperity throughout the Highlands, and, as his son records in the father’s memoirs, Sinclair’s dying words expressed his “warm attachment” to the people of the Highlands, whose well-being, he regretted, was “so imperfectly provided for” (2:389). More than simply an instrument of Anglo-directed colonialism, the ideology of improvement reflects the vexed attitude of urban English-speaking Scots like Sinclair, who internalized and identified with the “primitiveness” the Highlands exemplified: On the one hand, they zealously seek to preserve or to recover that part of themselves they feel is becoming lost forever, and on the other hand, they obsessively seek to reform that same part, which represents for them the vestige of a Scottish savagery.

The Highlander thus became the most oft-cited example of the primitive in Scottish writing, a subject both familiar and relatively accessible. Malcolm Chapman writes that it must be regarded as “fortuitous that the intellectual world of the larger society became interested in the primitive at a time when the Highlander was peculiarly suited for the role, in a way that neither, say, the Lothian peasantry, who were too close, nor the South Sea Islander, who was too far away, could approach” (*The Celts* 20). Proximity underlies the ambivalence of Scottish attitudes toward the Highlands, as the Highlander is the primitive who occupies a spatial and cultural position that is far yet not too far. The space between Self and Other is inscribed onto the very geography of the nation, on the Highland/Lowland border, which is the site of repeated “border” crossings. The Lowlander goes up to the Highlands to pacify and to improve the natives but also to travel, trade, and intermarry. In turn, the Highlander comes down from mountain strongholds to do the same in the civil space of the south. That the Highland and Lowland worlds occupy different stages of development but overlapping spaces within the nation complicates Benedict Anderson’s theory of a national community that moves “calendrically through homogeneous, empty time” (26). Instead the nation is staged as a series of cul-
tural encounters that are analogous, but not reducible, to simultaneous encounters in imperial spaces elsewhere.

The complex negotiation of identity and difference in writings on the Highlands constitutes a form of colonial ambivalence akin to, but of a different order than, the ambivalence that postcolonial critics such as Homi K. Bhabha have identified in colonial discourse. Bhabha has argued that as colonial discourse poses a colonial subject that is “at once an ‘other’ and yet entirely knowable and visible,” it reveals its desire for a “reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is the same but not quite” (235). Bhabha sees in the “ironic compromise” of colonial mimicry an ambivalence that threatens to undermine the certainty of colonial discourse. In Scottish writings on the Highlands, the primitive becomes constitutive of the nation, both as its Other but also as its Self, and the shifting stance between the two terms at work in Highland representation parallels the dynamic of ambivalence of colonial discourse that Bhabha describes. The doubling of the Highland subject, however, works to much different effects, as writing on the Highlands could be said to be as much “nationalist” as it is “imperial.” Applying Bhabha’s terms to the cultural contingencies of the Highlands, one could say that Highland discourse reflects the desire to constitute a recognizable Self as a subject of sameness that is different, but not quite.

NATIONALISM AND COLONIALISMS (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

The significance of writing on the Highlands as a site for the Scottish negotiation of national identity in an age of empire, particularly in the context of Scottish reaction to the post-1707 consolidation of British union, has been the subject of much recent criticism. For example, Murray G. H. Pittock traces the use of Highland imagery and tradition in Scottish Jacobite resistance to the union. Such elements, he argues, are later appropriated and reformulated by Walter Scott, who effectively emptied Jacobite ideology of its political force, rendering it, and the Highland culture with which it was inextricably linked, a harmless sentimental remembrance of times long past (Invention 82–90). Colin Kidd acknowledges Scott’s persuasive association between the Highland way of life and a Scottish nostalgia in the context of the work of the Scottish literati “subverting Scotland’s past” and adapting an English Whig historiography (247–68). Kidd suggests that although Scott was sometimes enamored of the “romance” of the Jacobite Highlands, the ideological impetus behind all his writing was whiggish rejection of the past and acceptance of progressive possibilities of Anglo-Scottish union.
Both these studies are invaluable in tracing the role of the Highlands within the rise of narratives of the nation and the consolidation of the European nation-state, which Benedict Anderson has charted. For Anderson, the nation is an “imagined political community,” a community whose members “felt a deep horizontal comradeship” with others whom they might never know or meet. The cultural work of the Highland Society and the novels of Walter Scott give shape to the idea of the nation by infusing its presence with a sense of shared traditions and history, a shared past. In addition to the analyses of Pittock and Kidd, which focus on the role of the Highlands in the formation of Scottish national history, a large alternative body of analysis situates the Highlands within the process of the “internal colonialism” of Britain’s “Celtic fringe”—Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. As the varied regions of the world came under the hegemonic sway of global capitalism in a “world system,” they become integrated in a hierarchical relationship in which the metropolitan “core” transforms the “periphery” into the site of raw materials for its production and consumption. As Michael Hechter writes, the core overwhelmingly dominates on both an economic and cultural front; the periphery has no power to resist or even defer the core’s relentless onslaught. The Highlands are therefore doubly peripheral, as the region early on becomes subjugated to Anglicizing forces first emanating from Lowland Scotland and then, more completely, from an imperial London. Peter Womack neatly sums up the hegemonic effect of internal colonialism on the Highlands: “The Highlands are subordinated to the sign-system of the metropolis not on the basis that the latter is superior, but on the basis that it is inescapable. You don’t have to prefer it, because it is in any case coercive” (167).

Yet the Celtic-fringe model of British imperialism has come under recent fire from critics such as Linda Colley and Robert Crawford, who argue that British culture was not simply imposed on Celtic peripheries by an English core. Colley, in her analysis of British identity formation within the context of the prolonged war efforts against France, suggests a more dynamic interplay between disparate cultures within Britain. She argues that sense of common British identity came into being “above all in response to conflict with the other” and although it was superimposed on an array of preexisting identities, such as Scottish, Welsh, and Irish, it did not supplant or obliterate them (6). Crawford has criticized the Celtic-fringe model more insistently, pointing out the ways in which the Scottish “periphery” took an active role in the construction of “British” literature and culture. In a work that both describes and advocates a “devolved” rather than a “centralist or totalitarian” Anglocentric approach to the subject of English literature, Crawford suggests that “for centuries the margins have been challenging, interrogating, and
even structuring the supposed ‘centre’” (7). Crawford, like Colley, posits a dynamic, multicultural model of Britain that emphasizes the two-way influences between core and peripheral cultures that allow internal minorities both to effectively resist and help shape national culture. Yet if, both works allow for a useful rethinking of the Celtic fringe, neither work fully accounts for the uneven power relations between cultures within Great Britain. If it is possible to argue that British culture did not simply emanate from the core, it also must be said that not all members of the varied population groups of Britain had equal voice in the production of British culture.

Postcolonial studies such as those by Ian Baucom, Simon Gikandi, and Nigel Leask bring to light the role that external colonialism and the colonial text have in shaping notions of Britain and Britishness. For example, in his analysis of the imperial “anxieties” that informed constructions of the East in the Romantic era, Leask summarizes the crucial role of expansion beyond Britain’s shores in determining ideas of Britishness:

[O]ne cannot simply speak of imperialism in this period as a moment of historical crisis for the civic ideology of a preconstituted nation state. It is not as if an “originary” civil discourse, developed within a cohesive metropolitan community, was subsequently brought into crisis by its misprision within a colonial or imperial context. Rather . . . national culture was much a product of imperial expansion, as imperialism was the “expression” or exportation of that culture. (86)

Leask’s argument is suggestive in describing the ways in which the formation of ideas of nation and empire are mutually constitutive. Moreover, his synchronic reading of cultural dominance within and outside of Britain allows for a rethinking of a binary model of colonial discourse. Leask writes that British imperialism produces a triadic structure of “this,” “that,” and “the other” in which the Celtic periphery “that” is co-opted by the imperial center and so occupies a middle ground between “this” and “the Other.” This triadic structure allowed Scots, anxious about their own cultural marginalization, to displace their sense of inferiority onto, for example, an East or West Indian Other.

Leask’s displacement theory is suggestive in its accounting for the complexity of the relation between internal and external marginalized cultures. Leask’s account, however, like those of other postcolonial critics, tends to elide the cultural divisions within Scotland itself and risks oversimplifying the relation between internal and external colonialism, reducing it to one of a simple chronology in which the former precedes the latter and serves as a kind of imperial “warm-up”: Peripheralization establishes colonial institu-
tions and frameworks that would be writ large on a global canvas. Instead, the economic transformations taking place in Britain’s “peripheries” reflect the anomalous condition of cultures subject to the dynamics of both external and internal colonialism. The ambivalence at work in writings on the Highlands reflects the overlapping chronologies of British imperialism in the Romantic era, which takes place on multiple fronts and in multiple locations both inside and outside the space of the nation. More than an expression of displacement, Scottish attitudes to these processes were much more conflicted and ambiguous, a product of the conflicted nature of Scottish participation in the imperial project.

SCOTTISH EMPIRE

Colley neatly sums the importance of empire in defining Britishness by pointing out that “though the English and the foreign are still all too inclined today to refer to the island of Great Britain as ‘England’ . . . at no time have they ever customarily referred to an English empire.” If the idea of empire is central to the formation of British national feeling it is also the case that empire shaped distinctive national identities within Great Britain. For literate urban Scots, imperialism was a prominent element in the acceptance of the British union from its inception upon passage of the Act of Union in 1707. With the failed 1690s Darien expedition still part of the Scottish collective memory, collaboration, not competition, with England seemed to provide the only path toward imperial success. Even before the actual achievement of union, the idea of empire set the terms of Scottish participation in the consolidation of the British statehood, as many Scots accepted the loss of political autonomy in return for something that would prove more beneficial to the nation in the long run: access to new overseas markets and the wealth of empire. Moreover, as empire seemed a field of play upon which Scots and English were equally skilled, cultivating this field would therefore ensure Scottish-English parity within Great Britain. Far from a fortuitous by-product of Scottish acquiescence to an Anglo-dominated Great Britain, empire and “empire building” instead became a way to reassert Scotland’s greatness. As T. M. Devine writes, by the nineteenth century,

Empire-building was depicted as something peculiarly Scottish and as the fulfillment of a national destiny. Scottish talents had been displayed on the global stage through the contribution of the nation to the development of the greatest territorial empire on earth. The British empire did not dilute the
sense of Scottish identity but strengthened it by powerfully reinforcing the
sense of national esteem and demonstrating that the Scots were equal part-
ners with the English in the great imperial mission. (Scottish Nation 289–90)

Further, though it is true that Scots served in the British military in dis-
proportionate numbers, it cannot be said that Scotland simply provided
the military muscle for an English imperial brain. By the mid-eighteenth
century, Scots themselves had established trading posts throughout the
colonial world, in Asia, the West Indies, and North America. Also, by
midcentury, Scots gained greater access to the empire through ministerial
appointments and the patronage system, both of which opened the door to
imperial administrative posts in which they could play a more active part in
developing and implementing imperial policy.

Perhaps the greatest of late-eighteenth-century Scottish imperial figures,
Henry Dundas—president of the Board of Control of the East India Com-
pany (EIC) from 1793 to 1801 (and member of the Highland Society of
London)—increased the Scottish presence within the EIC’s administration.
So great was Dundas’s success in securing positions for Scots that his efforts
prompted much derision. Dundas not only secured the livelihoods of
Scots in India, he was also a strong general advocate of imperial expansion,
and his biographer Michael Fry suggests that Dundas’s attitudes in shap-
ing Britain’s imperial policy were peculiarly “Scottish,” as his methods were
informed by the Scottish Enlightenment historiographical, anthropological,
and sociological theories of his Scottish education. Thus, as an enlightened
Scot, Fry writes, Dundas “could both universalise his own conceptions and
apply them sympathetically to . . . alien conditions” (115).

A government minister whose prestige and success were premised on
acceptance of union, Dundas saw his work not as capitulation to English
interests but as a way “to complete the Union” on Scottish terms (Fry 128).
If Scotland therefore could be said to have played a central role in shaping
the transformation of places and cultures that came under British control,
the riches of empire had a profound effect on Scottish life: from the opulent
houses that ringed Glasgow, financed by the immense profits of the tobacco
trade, to the house and lands design schemes of the Scottish Nabobs, whose
newfound Indian wealth assisted in transforming the Scottish landscape. As
Devine points out, much of the funds devoted to improvement, both in the
Highlands and Lowlands, derived from this new imperial source of wealth.
Acknowledging Dundas’s influence in transforming both Indian and Scot-
tish culture, the Earl of Rosebery wrote, “He Scotticised India and Oriental-
ised Scotland” (quoted in Fry 111).
The formative role of Scotland in shaping the British Empire has become increasingly the subject of scholarly interest, but any analysis of Scottish society during the rise of empire must also recognize the anomalous position of Scotland, which was the only European nation that—despite its unprecedented industrial and imperial expansion—continued to bleed the population at consistently high levels. Between the 1820s and World War I, some 2 million Scots emigrated, putting Scotland in the same league as Ireland in terms of emigration rates per capita (Devine, *Scottish Nation* 468). Throughout Britain’s imperial age, Scottish society was marked by a profound and constant dynamism, as dislocation and migration, both external and internal, conditioned the lives of many Scots. While acknowledging his success, Walter Scott lamented that Dundas had made the EIC’s Board of Control “the corn chest of Scotland where we poor gentry must send our younger sons as we send out black cattle to the South.”

What David Lloyd says of colonized Ireland’s culture might equally be said of Scotland’s as it “plays out the anomalous states of a population whose most typical experience may be that of occupying multiple locations, literally and figuratively” (3).

That much of this immigration originated in the Highlands reflects the social and economic disruptions that continued to plague the region and which seems driven by the dynamics of internal colonization. Yet again the chronology of Highland emigration complicates the idea that colonization proceeded apace first in the Celtic fringe and only afterward expanded outward. For example, though historians identify the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as a time when Highland emigration intensified (Eric Richards reports that between 1770 and 1815, more than ten thousand Highlanders left for North America alone), this exodus marks only the first phases of the Highland Clearances (*Highland Clearances* 64). Even more dramatic rates of migration took place throughout the nineteenth century—in the 1820s, 1840s, and 1850s—only to subside in the late 1880s after passage of the Crofters’ Act, which secured land tenure for many rural Highlanders. The fact of continuous emigration and clearances throughout the era of “external colonialism” points to the simultaneous processes of empire at work both inside and outside the nation. Indeed, at the same time that Dundas, as director of the EIC, was looking ever outward to consolidate British imperial interests, he made sure also to cast his attention inwards, to the Highlands. Concerned with increasing rates of Highland emigration, for example, Dundas, as director of the British Fisheries Society, promoted the development of a fishing industry in the Highlands.

The overlapping chronologies of Scottish development schemes in India and the Highlands exemplifies the complicated dynamics of imperialism in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and suggests that a simple
opposition between internal and external colonialism cannot account for the imbrications of British imperial culture. Instead, the synchronicity of imperial expansion in its early phases, taking place inside and outside the nation, produced multiple “flows” of an imperial culture moving from one locale to another, which makes for some surprising cross-pollinations as imperial culture moves back and forth between nation and colony. For example, the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) was founded in 1709 with the aim of “propagating Christian Knowledge especially in the Highlands and Islands where Error, Idolatry, Superstition and Ignorance do most abound” (quoted in Withers 120). Yet as early as the 1730s the SSPCK had expanded its mission field, becoming active in North America and working to convert Native Americans. Missionary work in the Highlands did not simply precede such work in the British colonies proper but instead paralleled it. The SSPCK’s experiences on both sides of the Atlantic often overlapped and influenced each other. Experience in administering among “natives” in the Highlands and North America helped shape the SSPCK’s overall attitudes toward the indigenous cultures with which it worked. Over time, Donald Meek observes, the SSPCK grew increasingly tolerant of certain aspects of native culture, particularly native language, in the effort to achieve its aims.19 At the same time, close contact and interaction between Native Americans and newly arriving Highland settlers allowed missionaries to observe them together and to draw parallels between the two “primitive” cultures in their reports back to Scotland. A “North Atlantic circuit,” Meek writes, “drew Highlanders and Indians together in the thinking of the SSPCK” (“Scottish Highlanders” 387).

The transperipheral flow of imperialism brought Scots (both Lowland missionaries and dispossessed Highland immigrants) and Native Americans into new proximity, prompting observations of supposed affinity between Gaels and North American natives that would later reach their formal apogee in the comparativist writings of Scottish Enlightenment theorists. Highlighting such moments of transnational or transperipheral exchange in the work of the SSPCK is not to suggest that imperial attitudes toward Highlanders and Native Americans are roughly equivalent. Rather, such moments of exchange suggest that if a key feature of imperial culture is its ability to reproduce itself when transported from the metropolis, it is also the case that the local context in which imperial culture establishes itself transforms it, making it similar to but never exactly the same as imperial culture “back home.”

Critics such as Katie Trumpener and Janet Sorensen emphasize the synchronicity of internal and external colonialism and the importance of transperipheral and transnational conduits of cultural exchange. Trumpener, in
her masterful account, describes the rise in the Romantic era of a “bardic nationalism” on the peripheries, which reconceives “national history and literary history under the sign of the bard” in response to increasing English political and cultural dominance. This anti-imperialist bardic nationalism, Trumpener argues, was later appropriated and reformulated, particularly by Walter Scott, to consolidate an imperial British identity that was again reconstituted, and once again capable of articulating resistance to imperialism, when transported to the colonial site. Sorensen’s concern is with imperial theories of language and grammar, and her work provides a useful reanalysis of the internal colonialism model, which she suggests is insufficient to chart the transnational character of British linguistic culture in the eighteenth century. She reveals how imperialism does not simply establish a core/periphery relation between regions but also within regions established along class and gender divides. Although both Trumpener and Sorensen devote much of their analysis to the Scottish example, they also draw on a wide canvas that covers the interactions between peripheral cultures and the dominant English culture.

This study follows the lead of Trumpener and Sorensen, and I take up their suggestion that it is impossible to read formation of national and imperial consciousness in Britain as an isolated phenomenon. I, however, focus my analysis on Scottish writing in the Highlands because the colonial ambivalence that these writings make most clearly visible derives from the unique historical conditions in Scotland that produced a professional elite, which assumed a central role in shaping British imperial attitudes while simultaneously feeling the increasing dominance of English political and cultural influence. The ambivalence of the Scottish negotiation of difference reflects the anomalous condition of a minority culture seeking to transform itself into an imperial one.

HIGHLAND HISTORY: SEARCHING FOR THE REAL

The tensions and contradictions inherent in the Romantic vogue for all things Highland have not gone unnoticed by historians of the subject. Indeed, contradiction and paradox are insistent themes of some of the most influential recent histories. John Prebble, in several notable works, traces what he characterizes as the paradox of Highland history in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: While so-called Highland traditions, history, and poetry were feted in polite societies from Edinburgh to Moscow, the rural Gaelic-speaking people of the Highlands systematically were evicted from their lands and homes—forced to choose between star-
vation or relocation to the coasts, service as cannon fodder in the army, or emigration to the colonies. Prebble’s work consistently emphasizes the gap between Highland myth and Highland reality, employing ironic juxtaposition to highlight the disparity. Thus, the paradox of Highland history is brought dramatically into high relief through the employment of a satisfying, if unsettling, use of tragic irony, a mode of narrative that has structured many other Highland histories and that informs the popular understanding of that history today. Hugh Trevor-Roper’s deployment of irony in his landmark study on the invention of the “Highland Tradition of Scotland” is more sardonic than tragic, as he proceeds to demolish the idea that ancient Highlanders wore differentiated tartans affiliated with their respective clans. Thus, far from adopting the garb of the ancient Gael, contemporary kilt-wearing “Scots and supposed Scots from Texas to Tokyo” are merely the victims of skillful marketing by nineteenth-century Scottish textile firms (“Invention of Tradition” 41). For both of these very influential historians of the Highlands, irony operates to help make sense of the contradictions embedded in Highland history—to resolve these contradictions by exposing the underlying reality behind the tartan facade. In doing so, these accounts posit a self-contained “organic” cultural formation, an ideology, in which all aspects of the Highlands are integrated. Through the use of irony, historians of the Highlands establish an oppositional relation between a coherent romantic myth that they seek to dismantle and a similarly coherent truth that they will thereby uncover.

Such an oppositional framework structures one of the most detailed recent analyses of representations of the Highlands, Peter Womack’s *Improvement and Romance*. In his work, Womack begins by pointing out the seeming tension between a body of writing that on the one hand seeks to effect a transformation of Highland land use and on the other seeks to celebrate the Highlands as a special preserve of ancient values and traditions unmarred by the modern world. Highland “Romance” thus seems to appear as a counter-ideological formation to “Improvement,” but Womack discounts this possibility. Instead, “as their symmetry suggests,” he writes:

> the conflict [between these oppositions] is illusionary. Rather, it is the ideological function of the romance that it removes the contradictory elements from the scope of material life altogether; that it marks out a kind of reservation in which the values which Improvement provokes and suppresses can be contained—that is, preserved but also imprisoned. (3; emphasis in original)

Thus the contradictions of Highland representation are not contradictions
at all but aspects of a dialectic, dominant Highland myth that, once it is born in the mid-eighteenth century, operates to overwhelm and subsume any resistance to its assumptions.

While my own discussion of ambivalence is indebted to accounts of Highland myth such as Womack’s, I have also tried, for several reasons, not to resolve too easily the contradictions, disjunctures, and ambiguities of Highland representation by reading them in a totalizing framework or to reduce them to the elements of tragedy. For one, myth analyses reduce the role of Highlanders to that of passive victims in their own history, who offer only futile resistance to the juggernaut of Highland myth. More crucially, these analyses not only risk oversimplifying the complex dynamics of difference at play in writing on the Highlands, they also, by establishing a dualistic opposition between “truth” and “myth,” tend to replicate the binarism of the dominant discourse they are seeking to challenge. For example, Womack downplays the question of truth in his analysis, instead emphasizing the material effects of Highland myth. Nevertheless, in his concluding remarks Womack suggests that “as we reach reflexively for the hatchet of the demystifier,” we “pause on reflecting that the possibility which the myth cherishes and deforms—that beyond the complementary abstractions of Improvement and Romance we could discover an authentic way of living together—is not yet conclusively either discredited or achieved” (180). In his evocation of an “authentic” way of life obscured by the desires and demands of dominant culture, however, Womack, like many contemporary Highland historians, places the Highlands outside the realm of modern culture altogether—“out there,” shrouded in a mist of our own making.

My aim, however, is neither to expose myth nor to pose an alternative authentic history of the Highlands. In the first place, the dynamics of identification and difference at work in writings on the Highlands problematizes the very notion of a fixed, stable Highland culture, distorted or not. It cannot be said that the Highlander straightforwardly occupies the position of colonial victim, given that many Highlanders themselves were active agents in the colonial project, not only in the roles of settler and soldier, but in those of administrator, business agent, and investor. Perhaps even more so than other Scottish elites, the Highland gentry saw in imperialism access to increased wealth and status not available to them at home. Highland myth analyses fail to account for their participation in the imperial project.

For another, these analyses also fail to account for the internal contestations that mark Highland self-representations. In contrast, Sorensen has provided a glimpse into the internal division within Highland culture in her reading of ambivalence in the work of Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair.
She notes that Mac Mhaighstir contributed to the SSPCK’s English literacy efforts in the Highlands, yet his experience and work teaching English literacy paradoxically provided the theoretical and practical underpinnings for his creation of a new “Gaelic national linguistic identity” in later writing in Gaelic (50). The complexities surrounding imperial linguistic and literacy theory as put to use in the Highlands, Sorensen argues, reveals the transnational dynamics of Highland culture in the eighteenth century.

I want to take up Sorensen’s suggestive analysis of Highland culture but, shifting the focus away from issues of literacy and grammar, add another dimension to the examination of divisions in Highland culture by looking at ways in which transnational dynamics played out in the work of Highlanders writing in English. For example James Macpherson, the “translator” of Ossianic poetry and historiographer of the ancient Scots, whom I discuss in chapter 1, was pivotal in popularizing Highland literary traditions, which were then brought into the service of Scottish cultural nationalists. Born and raised in the Highlands, Macpherson was old enough to witness firsthand the violence of British soldiers during the military crackdown after Culloden and was keenly aware of the systematic assault on Highland culture. Yet, as Fiona Stafford has brought to light, Macpherson’s writing was also influenced by his education at the University of Aberdeen, where he was a member of the second generation of students to come under the influence of the theories of Thomas Blackwell—Greek scholar and early appraiser of “primitive” cultures—who argued that Homer’s poetic genius was precisely a function of the rudeness of his society. In later life, Macpherson settled down in London, working as a hack writer for the North government and constantly seeking patronage and influence in the EIC. He finally landed “a lucrative position as the London agent of the Nabob of Arcot.”

Tracing the trajectory of the career of Highlanders like James Macpherson, moving “inward” into the realm of Highland literary tradition and “outward” to London in the service of the British Empire, reveals an ambiguous relation to imperialism. Perhaps the most illustrative example of the contradictory energies of “imperial” Highlanders is the career of Sir John Macgregor Murray of Lanrick. Macgregor Murray, who eventually became chief of the Clan Gregor, spent most of his life as an army officer in the service of the EIC and as auditor-general in Bengal. Nevertheless, Macgregor Murray was an active member and contributor to the cultural work of the Highland Society. For example, he was instrumental in saving what proved to be the earliest extant treatise on piping. After the author died of fever in Bengal after the voyage out, Macgregor Murray brought the work back on his return to Scotland (Black, “Gaelic Academy” 6). Macgregor Murray
also provided most of the funds to pay for a sumptuous edition of Ossian’s poems in Gaelic. In short, wealth derived from imperial conquest was put into the service of zealously preserving traditions of Highland culture perceived to be under threat back home. As Ronald I. Black sums Macgregor Murray’s achievement, “[H]e put the riches of India into Gaelic scholarship”; or, as a contemporary said of him, “[H]e was a Highland chieftain elevated by Oriental ideas” (7).

The efforts of Macpherson and Macgregor Murray implicate Highlanders in the Scottish negotiation of nation and empire, as these men exemplify a Highland elite that was actively engaged not only in the imperial project but in shaping the image of the Highlands. To highlight the Highland backgrounds of these writers, therefore, is not to suggest that their assumptions are more truthful or more authentic than non-Highlanders (such as Walter Scott, for example) and therefore to privilege them. Nor is it to deny the traumatic dislocation and cultural dispossession suffered by the rural Highland populace, which has inspired a large body of cultural expression. It is, rather, to suggest that the divisions of British imperial society cut across cultures and are often a function of class and gender, as the question of who “speaks” for the Highlands is often one of access to sites of production.28 The shifting and uneven relations of power in an imperial age require that we pay attention to the multiple locations in which Highland writings are produced, from within the Highlands themselves, the expatriate communities in London (and in Glasgow), and even military and administrative outposts in the colonies.29

Like the writings of non-Highlanders, writings of Highlanders do not paint a uniform picture of the Highlands but instead produce a shifting and sometimes contradictory impression. However, at the same time, these works often pose alternative emphases and conclusions, or serve alternative political purposes. In the works of writers from the Highlands, such as Macpherson, David Stewart, and Anne Grant (who was born in Glasgow but lived in the Highlands for thirty years), one can trace a more insistent awareness and articulation of cultural loss, and with this, a clearer statement of resistance to changes in Highland society and culture. Recent critics have identified the liminal role taken up by Lowland writers like James Boswell and Walter Scott, who mediate or translate Highland culture for their English-speaking readers.30 But it is important to recognize that this mediating role is often taken up by Highlanders themselves. The predicament of bilingual Highland writers writing in English to a largely English-speaking audience, as they try to negotiate between and across the cultural divide, makes for a unique body of writing that bears closer scrutiny.
Lastly, I do not wish to overlook the contested ground on which Scots struggled in the first place to delineate the boundaries of “Highlandness.” Indeed, the ambiguity surrounding the very definition of who is a Highlander is illuminated in the efforts of the founders of the Highland Society of London to set the terms of membership eligibility. Originally, as Sinclair writes in his *Account* of the society, membership was limited to “[n]atives of the Highlands resident in the metropolis,” but as the club increased in popularity and scope—and as the year-to-year lists of members reveal—“not only Natives of the Highlands, but . . . several respectable characters from other parts of Scotland, from England, and even foreign countries, took a pride, a pleasure, in belonging to the Society.” Sinclair describes this transformation not as a corruption of the society’s original criteria but as an inevitable evolution, given the society’s awareness of the difficulties in delimiting the “Highlands.” As Sinclair writes, “[i]t is attended with considerable difficulty, to define, with any degree of accuracy, the boundaries of what is, strictly speaking, to be called ‘The Highlands of Scotland’” (5). The difficulty that attended geographical delineations only paralleled delineations based on lineage: “The principal Families in the northern parts of the kingdom, are now so intermingled together, that under the general term of ‘Descendants of Highlanders,’ there are few Natives of Scotland who are not eligible to become Members of the Society” (5–6). Sinclair and the Highland Society would have it both ways: celebrating a distinct set of traditions, whose preservation is linked with the continuation of Scottish identity, while admitting no certain demarcation of the “Highlands” or even of “Highland” lineage which might exclude one from proclaiming himself or herself a “Highlander.” What is left then is a Highland identity emptied of any material substance and instead marked by a particular attitude: “The true qualification [of membership] is . . . not so much the distinction of ‘Highland Birth’ (though that is certainly desirable, and must always give a preference to the Candidate who enjoys that advantage), but the possession of a ‘Highland Spirit’” (6).

On the one hand, the society’s changing membership criteria reflect the increasing difficulty in finding anyone left from the Highlands to wear the tartan in the ceremonies and revelries of the society. On the other hand, this shift to ownership of “Highland Spirit” as final determiner of membership is not only indicative of the fluidity by which “Highlandness” already signified as “Scottishness” in the early nineteenth century, but also suggests that lettered Scots like Sinclair and the members of the society were aware of, and accepted, the contingent, shifting complexity of their own identity.
In what follows I do not attempt an exhaustive history of writing on the Highlands, which would require much more space than I have devoted here. Yet if I do not attempt a history, I have attempted a historicist reading of my subject, framing it within the development of British national and imperial consciousness in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as this development conditioned the form of my subject and its rise to popularity. In this I depart from previous accounts which have traced a smooth evolutionary trajectory of a romanticized Highlands, which, once it is launched, remains stable and unchanging, orbiting implacably over the Highlands to the present day. Instead, I wish to situate the negotiation of identity and difference in Highland writing in the context of what Leith Davis, Ian Duncan, and Janet Sorensen have described as the unique “rhythms of continuity, change and disjuncture” in the literary history of Scottish Romanticism. As these critics recently have described, Scotland is a critical site for the invention or production of “‘Romanticism’: not in itself but always as part of a larger political, economic, and cultural geography, encompassing not only ‘Britain’—London, Northern England, Ireland—but Europe, North America and an expanding world—horizon of colonized and dominated territories” (10). I also follow in the footsteps of Davis’s work on British national identity formation in which she describes the formation of Britishness as a dialogic process: Ideas of nation/empire are articulated through competing and often fractious cultural contestations and negotiation. In situating my work in the context of these critics, I hope to emphasize the imperial dimension of Scottish literary culture and the ways in which the cultural formation of “Romanticism” is allied with the formation of national and imperial cultures.

Chapters 1 and 2 focus on two moments of cultural debate within Scotland as to the role of Highlands in the nation’s post-union identity: that which surrounded the reception of James Macpherson’s translation of the poetry of Ossian in the latter half of the eighteenth century and that which attended Walter Scott’s overreliance on “Highland” pageantry during George IV’s visit to Edinburgh in 1822. Both historical moments brought the question of cultural difference and national identity to the forefront, as the “primitive” became integrated into the national symbolic. In chapter 1, I focus on the reception of Ossian. Scots debated whether the poetry of Ossian and the Gaelic-speaking people that produced it could lay claim to being the literary and racial wellspring of the nation, yet the work’s status as a “double translation” disrupted the historiographical inquiry into the nation’s racial and linguistic origins, introducing an unreadable gap in the narrative of the nation. The persistence of this gap is evidenced by the work of the
Highland Society of Edinburgh, which sought in 1805 to “fix” once and for all the authority and meaning of Ossian. The society did so by subjecting Macpherson’s work to native Gaelic speakers in the Highlands who could speak to the question of its authenticity. Yet by relying on English translations of the testimony of these native speakers, the society only highlighted the recalcitrant ambiguity of the work.

Chapter 2 introduces the pervasive influence of the work of Walter Scott in popularizing the Highlands. Scott has long been criticized for popularizing an anachronistic, politically inert Highland version of Scottish national identity that signifies only in terms of the past. A case in point in this criticism is the heavy dependence on archaic Highland traditions and trappings during the Scott-orchestrated state visit of George IV to Scotland’s capital city. Scott’s pageantry was loudly condemned for its inappropriate “Celtification” of Scotland, which was seen to champion an outmoded Highland past while it ignored the role of progressive English-speaking, urban Lowland culture in the nation’s present. Examining Scott’s pageantry in tandem with Rob Roy (1817), his second novel of the Highlands, however, I argue in chapter 2 that both “works” reveal a complex and recognizably modern vision of national identity in an increasingly globalized economy. Rather than posing a nostalgic backward-looking vision of national identity, Scott in Rob Roy explores the ways in which the dynamic of economic and cultural exchange between individuals and across national and regional borders ultimately makes for more fluid notions of national and regional identities. Neither simply Highland nor Lowland, Scotland instead is revealed to be a space of circulation and exchange—of money, people, and blood. Scott seizes on the dynamic of blood circulating across the Highland line to envision a particularly Highland notion of collective solidarity, the tribal blood bonds of clanship. It is this notion of solidarity that Scott “enacts” in the ceremonies of the king’s visit, as Scots, Lowlanders and Highlanders alike, don the tartan and warm to the sound of the pipes. Chapters 1 and 2 both highlight the ways in which emergent ideas of race and cultural difference underpin national identity. Yet the work of both Macpherson and Scott reveal the instabilities of national identity, as the primitive comes to represent the nation.

Chapter 3 continues the analysis of Scott’s writing but shifts the focus to his interest in soldiering and the military. Specifically, I focus on Scott’s first novel, Waverley (1814), to examine the ways in which the image of the Highland warrior ties together notions of race and gender in the context of the nation’s military struggles against its Others, particularly Napoleonic France. I argue that the figure of the Highland warrior allows for a new imperial understanding of British military masculinities. This new under-
standing envisions not only a Highland man who is deemed naturally suited to a life of soldiering, but also a special breed of non-Highland commanding officers who, in order to bring forth the innate martial qualities of the Highland soldier, must assume the ethnographer’s stance of acculturation, sympathy, and tolerance. My analysis of *Waverley* is paired with an analysis of David Stewart of Garth’s influential, but relatively unexamined, *Sketches of the Highlanders* (1822). Stewart’s *Sketches* continues the cultural work of *Waverley* of militarizing the Highlands, yet the work also offers a pointed critique of the disruptive reordering of land relations in the Highlands even as it trumpets the exploits of Highland soldiers in the service of Britain’s empire. In this way, Stewart’s work does not simply replicate the ethnographic stance of *Waverley*. Rather, in its insistent positioning of its author as a native of the Highlands he seeks to represent, Stewart’s work exemplifies a kind of “autoethnography,” in the sense that Mary Louise Pratt uses to describe indigenous self-representation that engages with the terms of the colonizing culture. Yet Stewart’s position as a wounded veteran of Britain’s imperial struggles around the world complicates his status as colonized subject, as his portrayal of the Highlands and the Highland soldier both underpins and resists Britain’s imperial project.

Chapter 4 continues the examination of the Highland military man, but traces his entry into a new arena of British historiographical writings on colonial warfare and the 1857 Indian Mutiny. The chapter focuses on the writing of former British military officers and the crucial role of the Highland “soldier-hero” in shoring up British resolve in the face of the profound challenge to colonial order during the mutiny. In mutiny historiography, the idealization of the Highland soldier is part of a racial script in which the figure is set in opposition to the fanatic native mutineer. At the same time, however, theories of Highland proclivities toward warfare, once these theories are transported to the colonial site, provide the foundations of martial race theory, which assumes that certain races of the subcontinent were better suited to the military than others. Martial race theory marks a return of the racial theories that underpinned the popularity of the figure of the Highland warrior in the first place. Yet the post-mutiny development of martial race theory illustrates the varied contexts and locations in which ideas about the Highlands serve varied national and imperial aims in a variety of cultural contexts. Assumptions about the Highlands therefore do not simply ossify after the Romantic era but continue to change in response to changing cultural circumstances, serving British strategies of cultural difference well into the Victorian age.

Chapter 5 highlights this adaptation in an analysis of the Highland writings of Anne Grant and Queen Victoria. The increasing accessibility of the
Highlands in the late eighteenth century allowed for a new genre of writing on the Highlands: women’s travelogues. While adopting the historiographical assumptions of the Scottish Enlightenment, Grant’s diaristic account *Letters from the Mountains* (1806) also provides an alternative vision of the Highlands than those of previous writers in this study: Grant’s Highlands are the space of both the exotic primitive and an idealized, domestic “home.” By anchoring her own identity within this space while reserving for herself the distanced authority to record it for an outside audience, Grant creates a new kind of imperial subjectivity: of one “not absolutely a native nor entirely a stranger.” It is this liminal subjectivity that Victoria also fashions for herself in the published “leaves” of her Highland diaries. By imagining herself as a “Highland widow,” however, Victoria also creates an image of the British monarch that emphasizes the interconnection between periphery and empire, as the Highlands become the “heart” of her vision of imperial rule.

What I hope becomes clear throughout this examination is the role of the prodigious and varied body of work on the Highlands in shaping the Scottish contribution to notions of difference and identity in the Romantic era. Scots brought their own understanding of the dynamics of Self and Other to their writing, conditioned by the peculiar tensions and demands of a rapidly transforming national culture. The picture of the Highlands that comes into focus is not one of static isolation and backwardness but instead of inexorable dynamism, as Highlanders establish themselves in locations around the world, both as victims and agents of “Anglobalization.” The Highlands were brought into English-speaking consciousness under complex conditions of an imperial expansion traversing cultures, temporalities, and spaces. Therefore, as we struggle to come to grips with the complexities of the contemporary global order—which, Arjun Appadurai writes, “cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models”—and as we are faced with a burgeoning array of terms to account for the postcolonial condition, it is vital that we examine the ways in which these complexities play out, not only in the aftermath of the British Empire, but at its beginning.
NOTES

INTRODUCTION


3. David Daiches describes this as a “disassociation of sensibility” manifested in Scottish literature and the product of long habits of “thinking in one language” (Scots) and “writing in another” (English) (*The Paradox of Scottish Culture: the Eighteenth-Century Experience* [London: Oxford University Press, 1964], 21). Hugh MacDiarmid writes that a dictionary of Scottish biography would reveal “extraordinary contradictions of character, most dangerous antimonies and antithetical impulses, in the make-up of almost every distinguished Scot” (*Scottish Eccentrics*, 1936 [New York: Johnson Reprint, 1972], 284). MacDiarmid terms this condition the “Caledonian Antisyzygy,” adopting a phrase from Gregory Smith’s work *Scottish Literature and Influence*. (Smith borrowed the phrase from Sir Thomas Urquhart.) Tom Nairn warns of the dangers in the land of the Caledonian Antisyzygy: “[T]hat is the realm of an anguished examination of conscience and consciousness, a troubled subjective posturing, to which . . . Scots intellectuals have been prone” (*The Break-up of Britain* [London: NLB, 1977], 150). Kenneth Simpson has described the “split voice” of eighteenth-century Scottish literature as indicative of a pervasive identity crisis. The conflicting imperatives of the literary marketplace and national allegiance gave rise to “Protean Scots,” who were forced to adopt a multiplicity of voices (*The Protean Scot, the Crisis of Identity in Eighteenth Century Scottish Literature* [Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988]).

5. Improvement became the central focus of the Highland Society of Edinburgh, which early on became more interested in farm management than in poetry.


8. For Bhabha, the ambivalence at the heart of colonial discourse threatens its stability. “The authority of colonial discourse that I have called mimicry,” he writes, “is therefore stricken by an indeterminacy: mimicry emerges as the difference that is itself the process of disavowal.” Given the anomalous condition of Scotland in relation to British imperialism, it is perhaps not coincidental that the colonial texts that Bhabha cites as examples (Charles Grant’s “Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain”; Mill’s History of India; and Macaulay’s “Minute on Indian Education”) were written by Scots (“Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” October 28 [1984]: 235).


13. Baucom, for example, in Out of Place traces the subtle shifts in the idea of Britishness through a reading of changing parliamentary definitions of “British” subjectivity. Yet he makes little mention of nationalist pressures in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales that might have contributed to these shifts and continue to play role in legalistic definitions of Britishness.


16. Devine notes that Scots had a dominant interest in the West Indies sugar trade, and by the 1790s, “the dozen or so most powerful houses in Bengal and Bombay were dominated by Scots merchants. In America, the Scottish tobacco importers ruled the trade; by 1765 Glasgow ‘Tobacco Lords’ alone accounted for 40% of the British imports total” (*The Scottish Nation, 1700–2000* [New York: Penguin, 1999], 121).

17. The Reverend Sydney Smith, for example, wrote that “as long as [Dundas] is in office the Scotch may beget younger sons with impunity. He sends them by the loads to the East Indies and all over the world” (quoted in Michael Fry, *The Dundas Despotism* [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992], 111).

18. *Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. H. J. C. Grierson (London: Constable, 1932–37), 6:489. Scott’s phrase is often quoted in histories of Scottish contributions to empire, yet his metaphor betrays deep-seated paternal anxieties about the imperial project. When Scott learns that officer misconduct in the 18th Hussars, his son Walter’s regiment, might lead to its removal from Ireland to India, Scott writes that he would rather his son leave the service altogether than go with the regiment to India. Withholding his consent from his son’s request to be posted with his regiment, Scott wrote him in May 1821:

[You will get] neither experience in your profession, nor credit nor wealth nor anything but an obscure death in storming the hill fort of some Rajah with an unpronounceable name . . . or if you live it is but to come back 20 years hence a lieutenant or captain with a yellow face a diseased liver and not a rupee in your pocket to comfort you for broken health. (*Letters* 6:435)

For Scott, posting in India was tantamount to “banishment.”

19. In the Highlands, Meek writes, the society eventually had to resign itself to the use of Gaelic, “which gradually began to be employed in SSPCK schools. . . . [A] similar toleration of the use of Indian languages is apparent in its North American activities, especially in the third phase of its activities, after 1760” and a “learning of Indian languages was encouraged among potential missionaries.” Donald Meek, “Scottish Highlanders, North American Indians, and the SSPCK: Some Cultural Perspectives,” *Scottish Church History Society* 23 (1989): 391.

20. Trumpener situates bardic nationalism in opposition to imperialist “Enlightenment dismissals of Gaelic oral traditions.” According to theories of Scottish and Irish antiquaries:

[B]ardic performance binds the nation together across time and across social divides; it reanimates a national landscape made desolate first by conquest and
then by modernization, infusing it with historical memory. A figure both of the traditional and aristocratic culture that preceded English occupation, the bard symbolizes the central role of literature in defining national identity. (*Bardic Nationalism*, xii)


23. For example, in his detailed account of Scott’s gaudy, theatrical use of Highland costume and “traditions” during George IV’s 1822 Edinburgh visit, Prebble begins each new chapter with an epigraph taken from the testimonies of poor tenant Highlanders recalling the trauma of eviction (*The King’s Jaunt*).

24. This line of thought often produces a double irony, when it describes the victimization of colonial natives by Highland settlers. For example, Eric Richards sums the role of émigré Highlanders in North America: “The Highland Scots forced off their ancestral lands in Scotland, were now robbing the American Indians of their own ancestral lands. The ironies of the story multiplied throughout the age of clearances, which mainly began after 1780” (*Highland Clearances* 64).


26. Myth analyses also cannot account for the ways in which the discourse it identifies as “romance” can be used in resistance to the destruction of traditional social and economic practice in the Highlands. An example is David Stewart’s *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland* (which I examine more closely in chapter 3). Though Womack dismisses Stewart as a purveyor of Highland “sentimentality” in the nineteenth century, both Donald Macleod and Alexander Mackenzie cite his work as pioneering their own journalistic critiques of clearance. Calling attention to Stewart’s work in his own “Gloomy Memories of the Highlands,” Macleod writes “[Stewart] has completely vindicated the character of the Highland tenantry, and has shown the impolicy, as well as cruelty, of the means used for their ejection.” Alexander Mackenzie, *The History of the Highland Clearances, Containing a Reprint of Donald Macleod’s “Gloomy Memories of the Highlands”* (1883; Edinburgh: Meercat Press, 1991), 23.

27. Fiona J. Stafford, *The Sublime Savage: A Study of James Macpherson and the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988), 42. Faring even better within imperial circles was Sir John Macpherson, friend of James and the son of Dr. John Macpherson of Sleat, a recognized authority on Gaelic antiquity and early and ardent advocate of Ossian’s
authenticity. The son quickly rose in the Indian administration, becoming governor-general of British India in 1784, and G. J. Bryant has described him as “perhaps the most successful Scot to go to India in the eighteenth century,” whose efforts to promote the interests of other Macphersons (like James) reflected his “strong sense of clan.” Bryant also writes, “Highlanders appear to have predominated among the Scottish gentry in India.” “Scots in India in the Eighteenth Century,” Scottish Historical Review 64.1, no. 177 (April 1985): 27.

28. A particular example of a Highlander who moved equally well in English- and Gaelic-speaking cultures was John Campbell of Armaddie, who became Principal Cashier and chief executive of the Royal Bank of Scotland in 1745. Known as Caimbeul a’ Banca “Campbell of the Bank,” he was a subject of a tribute by the Gaelic poet Duncan Ban MacIntyre. (R. N. Forbes, “John Campbell of the Bank,” The Three Banks Review 99 [September 1973]: 49–57). William Mosman’s 1749 painting of Campbell shows him with the money purse and banknotes symbolic of his profession; behind the sitter, however, is a window that reveals his clan territory and the cave in which his Jacobite ancestor had hidden in 1715. Campbell also “chose to have himself painted in full Highland dress of tartan belted plaid shortly after its proscription by an act of parliament.” Hugh Cheape, Tartan: The Highland Habit (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 1991), 23.

29. The role of Highlanders in the outposts in shaping interest in the Highlands is suggested by the correspondence of the Highland Society of London, much of which is occupied with requests to establish chapters of the society overseas. These include several chapters in Canada, Cadiz, Calcutta, Bombay, and Cape Town. A lieutenant colonel writes of establishing a Highland Society of about thirty members “who, tho’ at a distance from their country, prove neither to have forgotten its language nor sentiments” (NLS Dep. 268 Box 1). The society’s list of accounts and receipts shows society funds were disbursed to indigent members of Highland regiments stationed overseas to pay for passage back to Scotland.


32. Davis, Acts of Union.

33. The term is Niall Ferguson’s (Empire).

CHAPTER ONE

1. See Colley, Britons 117–32.

2. Hugh Blair, the influential professor of rhetoric at Edinburgh University and the author of Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1784), for example, devotes a large section of his Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian, bound together with later editions of the poetry, to establishing the epic quality of Ossian. Although he argues that it is impossible to compare two epics separated by culture and a time span of a thousand years, he nevertheless points out what he considers to be the obvious similarities between the poetry of Ossian and of Homer. The Poems of Ossian and Other Works, ed. Howard Gaskill (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), 354–99.

4. Peter Womack, *Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands* (London: Macmillan, 1989), 145. Susan Manning summarizes the shift: “As the ‘assimilation-ist’ ideology of the eighteenth century gave way to the cultural nationalism of the nineteenth, Ossian achieved symbolic value as yet another index of Scottishness, a key to the country’s cultural independence and unique traditions following the loss of its political independence”; “Ossian, Scott, and Nineteenth-Century Scottish Literary Nationalism” 44–45.


6. For an overview of ideas of “race” and “culture” in European thought, see Robert J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire* (London: Routledge, 1995). Young argues that the terms are historically mutually constitutive: “Culture has always marked cultural difference by producing the other; it has always been comparative, and racism has always been an integral part of it: the two are inextricably clustered together, feeding off and generating each other” (54). For a discussion of scientific racism and its development in the nineteenth century, see Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain, 1800–1960* (London: Macmillan, 1982). Neither the racist ideas of Macpherson nor of John Pinkerton, MacPherson’s antiquarian nemesis, implied rigid biological divisions based primarily on skin color. Both Pinkerton’s and Macpherson’s theories, however, are attempts to hierarchize racial characteristics. In his *Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of the Scythians or Goths* (London: John Nicols, 1787), Pinkerton, while emphasizing that differences among humans are obvious, points to the need for a more “scientific” approach to race classification:

   It is a self-evident proposition, that the author of nature, as he formed great varieties in the same species of plants, and of animals, so he also gave various races of men as inhabitants of several countries. A Tartar, a Negro, an American, &c. &c. differ as much from a German, as a bulldog, or lapdog, or shepherd’s cur from a pointer. The differences are radical; and such as no climate or chance could produce: and it may be expected that as science advances, able writers will give us a complete system of the many different races of men.

(33–34)

For a discussion of one example of the erasure of “Celt” as a marker for “race,” as skin color became the determining criteria for racial difference in the nineteenth century, see Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).


8. As Tejaswini Niranjana emphasizes: “The idea of translation . . . is a metonymy for the desire to achieve transparent knowledge and provide for a Western audience immediacy of access to ‘primitive thought.’ The desire to translate is a desire to construct the primitive world, to represent it and to speak on its behalf.” *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press,
1992), 70; emphasis in original.

9. In her examination of U.S. representations of the Native American, Carr argues that the discourse on primitivism is itself inherently unstable and varying and occupied a multiplicity of cultural sites. The task of the critic, therefore, is to recognize this multiplicity, to “map” primitivism onto a particular place and cultural context and to chart its changing imperatives, as “colonialist images and language meet particular historical needs and change with them.” *Inventing the American Primitive: Politics, Gender, and the Representation of Native American Literary Traditions, 1789–1936* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 11.


15. The polarity of the antiquarian debate on Scotland’s ethnic origins is reflected in the personal attacks on the respective writers, a situation that is often replicated by modern-day critics. For example, Trevor-Roper, in “The Highland Tradition of Scotland,” calls Macpherson “an insolent pretender,” while commending Pinkerton for being the “implacable enemy of the historical and literary falsifications of . . . Macpherson” (27). Trevor-Roper, who reiterates much of Pinkerton’s ideas, calls him “the greatest Scottish antiquary since Thomas Innes” (27). Weinbrot is sympathetic to Pinkerton’s pro-Goth assertions in the face of what he calls the “ugliness” of James Macpherson’s work, which was “a popular but intellectually dishonest, occasionally plagiarized, and morally corrupt version of British and European history.” Howard Weinbrot, “Celts, Greeks, and Germans: Macpherson’s Ossian and the Celtic Epic,” in *1650–1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Kevin L. Cope (New York: AMS Press, 1994), 1:11. On the other hand, Colin Kidd declares an end to the “legend” that Macpherson was “a complete charlatan,” while describing Pinkerton as “more outrageous in his racial prejudices” than any other of the anti-Celt antiquarians of the time (*Subverting Scotland’s Past* 252)

16. Pittock finds the roots of Macpherson’s “sentimentalism” in the “post-Culloden experience of Jacobite culture, while his use of landscape derived from the fertility images (and their opposite) associated with the fate of the Stuart kings.” Sublime Ossianic landscape, Pittock argues, not only looked forward to an emerging Romantic aesthetic but also looked backward to the ideology of Jacobitism (*The Invention of Scotland* 78). On the other hand, Colin Kidd sees in Macpherson’s historiography a “Celtic whiggism,” “British in scope,” which emphasized the progressive development of legal and governmental institutions throughout the ancient societies of Britain (*Subverting Scotland’s Past* 224, 223).

17. Though the standard spelling of the name given to these people was in Pinkerton’s time and is in the present “Picts,” Pinkerton uses “Piks” to denote what he describes as the “indigenal” name of the people. “Piks,” he argues, is the proper Gothic term, whereas “Picts” is merely the “Latin epithet, from their painting themselves” (*Enquiry* 1:xli–xlii).
18. In his “Advertisement” to the *Enquiry*, Pinkerton even apologizes for the repetitiveness of his anti-Celticism, if not its intensity:

[M]any late authors, by applauding their [the Celts’s] savage life, and contempt of every civilized art, seemed to allow the dreams of Rousseau, which would restore mankind to a state of nature, that is, to lawless rapine and slaughter. The author regrets not that the Celtic prejudices were attacked, but that the attack was too often unnecessarily repeated; and no argument, or fact, has hitherto arisen, which in the least affects the documents, and deductions, displayed in this Enquiry, or in the dissertations annexed. (*Enquiry* 1:10)

19. *Enquiry* 1:268. In keeping with the structure of their debate, Macpherson argues exactly the opposite. The ancient Celtic people, Macpherson argues in his *Introduction*, were marked by the special political power that women had in their society:

[T]he high spirit of the Celtic women gave them more influence over our ancestors than our modern beauties derive from all their elegant timidity and delicacy of manners. The most unpolished Germans, according to Tacitus, thought that something divine dwelt in female minds: Women were admitted to their public deliberations, and they did not despise the opinions or neglect to follow their advice. To such a pitch had some branches of the Celtae carried their veneration for the fair sex, that, even in their life-time, a kind of divine honours was paid to women. The ancient Britons were particularly fond of the government of women. Succession, where it was established at all, went in the female as well as in the male line. . . . (207–208)

20. For example, Europeans embraced wholeheartedly the idea that Scotland was the land of Celtic Ossianic heroes. A Macpherson biographer describes the excitement of Herder as he anticipated a planned trip to Britain:

When I still cherished in my mind the thought of a journey to England, you little know how I counted on these Scots! One glance, I thought, at the public life, the stage, the whole lively spectacle of the English people. . . . Then the great change of scene,—to the Scots!—to Macpherson! There I would fain hear the living songs of a living nation, witness all their influence, see the places that the poems tell of, study in their customs the relics of this ancient world, become for a time an ancient Caledonian. (quoted in J. S. Smart, *James Macpherson: An Episode in Literature* [London: David Nutt, 1905], 7–8)

On the other hand, Thomas Babington Macaulay, whose father was himself born in the Highlands, as late as the 1850s provided a vision of the Gael in his *History of England* (ed. Hugh Trevor-Roper [Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968]), that seems a direct descendent of Pinkerton’s. Describing a hypothetical seventeenth-century “dinner party” in the Highlands from the perspective of a “civilized” outside observer, Macaulay writes:

At supper grain fit only for horses would have been set before him, accompanied by a cake of blood drawn from living cows. Some of the company with which he would have feasted would have been covered with cutaneous
eruptions, and others would have been smeared with tar like sheep. His couch
would have been the bare earth, dry or wet as the weather might be; and from
that couch he would have risen half poisoned with stench, half blind with the
reek of turf, and half mad with the itch. (363)

21. Hudson writes that by the late eighteenth century even Homer, whose work had
long been considered the greatest example of epic writing, had been claimed by “oralists.” In
1769 Robert Wood published An Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer, which
claimed that not only was Homer illiterate, but that he “had even derived some advantage
from being part of a pre-literate world.” “Oral Tradition: The Evolution of an Eighteenth-
Century Concept,” in Tradition in Transition: Women Writers, Marginal Texts, and the Eight-
teenth-Century Canon, ed. Alvaro Ribeiro and James G. Basker (Oxford: Clarendon Press,
1996), 174; emphasis in original.

22. Penny Fielding, Writing and Orality: Nationality, Culture, and Nineteenth-Cen-
defended oral culture in his public writings, seemed at times unsure of the reliability of his
oral sources. He is often critical of the influence of later generations of bards, because they
seemed to him to have corrupted the tales with the introduction of giants and fairies and
supernatural phenomenon, all reflecting the character of what Macpherson saw as a super-
stitious, post-Ossianic Gaelic culture. The limitations of the oral tradition, as Macpherson
describes them, determined his task as translator in his own mind. If the poetry of Ossian
had been corrupted through the ages, in both their textual and oral forms, then it was
Macpherson’s task to “purify” them by restoring the original intent of its author. Thus, what
his detractors of the time saw as outright forgery—and what modern critics may judge as
creative adaptation—Macpherson saw as simple restoration, a restoration born of his primi-
tivist ideas concerning the character of Highland society.

23. Edward Said, Orientalism (New York: Vintage, 1979), 78. See also Bernard Cohn,
“The Command of Language and the Language of Command,” Subaltern Studies: Writings
on South Asian History and Society, vol. 4 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985).

University Press, 1988). De Certeau describes the writings of a sixteenth-century missionary,
Jean De Lery, who traveled to the coast of Brazil to record the oral culture of the Tupinamb-
bous. Lery returned to France to write a narrative of his experience among the natives, to
transform their spoken words into a text in French. By converting the orality of the native
into textuality, Lery’s “ethno-graphy” transforms them: “Ecclesial election is turned into a
Western privilege; originary revelation into scientific concern for upholding the truth of
things; evangelization into an enterprise of expansion and return to one’s self” (219).

25. Quoted in Stafford, The Sublime Savage, 80. Such well-meaning efforts to preserve
indigenous oral traditions in print such as Macpherson’s often met with failure. For
example, John Reid’s Bibliotheca Scoto-Celtica (1832; Naarden: Anton W. Van Bekhoven,
1968) lists a “copy of the Gaelic contained in Sir John Sinclair’s splendid edition of Ossian”
that was printed at the expense of Sir J. Macgregor Murray and other gentlemen, for the
purpose of being distributed among the Highlanders to preserve as much as
possible their ancient chivalric spirit, by giving them an opportunity of reading
the valorous exploits of their ancestors, as the reciting of them had then nearly
ceased. Accordingly there was a copy sent for the use of every parish school in
the Highlands. These copies were addressed to the care of the parish ministers. 
. . . (99; emphasis in original)

However, local residents in the Highlands, it seemed, proved resistant to the reworking of their traditions:

[W]hether from a curiosity to have a copy of Ossian themselves in the original, or from a supposition that the book would be useless to most of the raw disciples of a rustic school, many of these copies were never given up to their destined purpose, and we yet occasionally meet with the identical copies thus meant for general use, and for promoting a laudable object, lying dormant on the dusty shelves of a manse library, with the donatory ticket still fresh upon some, and taken off others! (99)


[W]e believe no well-informed person will now pretend that Ossian is to be quoted as historical authority, or that a collection of Gaelic poems does any where exist, of which Macpherson’s version can be regarded as faithful, or even a loose translation. (429)

Kidd suggests that Scott was in large part critical of Ossian and Macpherson’s historiographical project. Scott, Kidd writes, “ridiculed those Highlanders who ‘adopted the poems of Ossian as an article of national faith.’ Old and new forms of national mythology were in varying degrees absurd and obnoxious” (Subverting Scotland’s Past 257–58). However, Kidd admits that “Scott was an admirer of Macpherson as a poet . . . and that strong Ossianic influences are apparent in Scott’s own poetry, notably The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border . . . and The Lay of the Last Minstrel ” (258 n.). Indeed, in his review of the Report, Scott seems to acknowledge the intense cultural need of many Scots to believe in the authenticity of Ossian’s poetry while at the same time knowing that the poems could not be authentic:

[W]e are compelled to renounce the pleasing idea, that Fingal lived, and that Ossian sung, [but] our nationally vanity may yet be flattered by the fact, that a remote, and almost a barbarous corner of Scotland, produced, in the 18th century, a bard capable not only of making an enthusiastic impression on every mind susceptible of poetical beauty, but of giving a new tone to poetry throughout all Europe. (462)

Scott establishes the grounds for the later critical assessments of Macpherson’s work, shifting them from questions of authenticity, and praising instead the aesthetic achievements of Macpherson.

29. Tacksmen, or *fir-tacsa*, were a class of lower gentry in traditional Highland society. In practice they acted as middlemen between tenants and landowners: They owned leases on land that they managed and supervised, collecting rents from tenants who worked for them. However, by the mid-eighteenth century the economic transformation of the Highlands was gradually eliminating this class, and, as Devine writes in *Clanship to Crofters’ War*, “the deliberate destruction of subtenure became a central theme of landlord policy from the 1770s” (34). Because of this, tacksmen and other lower gentry represented the majority of Highland emigrants to North America in the mid-1770s.


31. Stafford emphasizes the role of cross-cultural tensions in Macpherson’s work, seeing them largely in spatial terms. She writes, “Macpherson’s own life shows a constant struggle to reconcile the conflicting loyalties to North and South” (*The Sublime Savage* 7).

**CHAPTER TWO**

1. The term “Celtification” to describe Scott’s national agenda was first coined by his son-in-law, John Gibson Lockhart, in his biography of Scott (*Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.*, 7 vols. [Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 1837–38]).

2. Nairn sees in Scott’s romanticized Celtification the roots of the “Tartan Monster.” This apparition, along with “kailyardism,” is the prime bearer of Scottish “subnationalism,” which he describes in psychological terms as infantile and grotesque, composed of sentimental “kitsch images” and a “deforming nostalgia” by which Scots forever look backward to premodern Scotland, as they are incapable of looking to the future (*The Breakup of Britain* [London: NLB, 1977], 116, 114). David McCrone, in his study of the critique of “Scotch myths” of Tartanry/kailyard and the search for an “authentic” Scottish national feeling, sees in this search a dominant, but ultimately misguided, discourse in Scottish culture. This discourse premises an overly internalist account of Scotland, which ignores the inherent fragmentation of modern national culture (“Representing Scotland: Culture and Nationalism,” *The Making of Scotland: Nation, Culture, and Social Change*, ed. David McCrone, Stephen Kendrick, and Pat Straw [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989]). In a similar vein, Cairns Craig takes up Scott’s use of Highland “iconography.” Instead of the manifestation of deformed or inauthentic national culture symptomatic of shortcomings in the Scottish national psyche, Craig sees their use as the expression of the “dialectic of Scotland’s relation with England,” a manifestation of Scotland’s peripheralization in relation to an English “core.” In the weird logic of peripheralization, the most “marginal” space of Scotland became central to its identity (*Out of History* 116).

3. Some critics acutely have described the unfolding variances in Scott’s image of the Highlands, tracing a continuously evolving and shifting picture from the one that *Waverley* offered. Christopher Harvie and Caroline McCracken-Flesher, for example, cite the two
stories in volume 1 of the *Chronicles of the Canongate* as representing Scott's strongest reworking of his Highland material. Harvie sees in the pessimism of “The Two Drovers” and “The Highland Widow” a metaphor for the predicament of Scotland as a whole, as they depict “a collapsing Scottish culture . . . being replaced by an even more imperilled industrial civilization” (“Scott and the Image of Scotland,” *Sir Walter Scott: The Long Forgotten Melody*, ed. Allan Bold [London: Vision Press, 1983], 38). More recently, McCracken-Flesher sees a marked change from Scott's earlier facilitation “of his nation's economic and political advancement within union.” By the mid-1820s, after the collapse of his finances, Scott was beginning to draw “the political and the personal into a depressing picture of Scotland's socio-economic subjection” and so paints a bleak picture in “The Highland Widow” of the Scottish male who seeks advancement under the matrix of English power only to find “they stand to be permanently exiled from their Scottish identity” (“Pro Matra Mori: Gendered Nationalism and Cultural Death in Scott's ‘The Highland Widow,’” *Scottish Literary Journal* 21, no. 2 [November 1994]: 71, 76).

4. For a recent study of Scott's involvement in the theater, which, the study argues, forces us to rethink Benedict Anderson's definition of the nation as the “imagined community,” see Cairns Craig, “Scott’s Staging of the Nation,” *Studies in Romanticism* 40, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 13–28.


7. Sutherland observes “at Edinburgh University in 1789–90, Scott attended the classes held by Dugald Stewart, Professor of Moral Philosophy and Smith’s chief contemporary commentator and popularizer.” In the introductory epistle of *The Fortunes of Nigel* Scott takes issue with Smith's distinction of unproductive and productive labor. (Belles lettres falls into the latter category, as its value is fixed in no permanent commodity.) Instead, Sutherland writes, Scott imagines the writer as both an investor of capital and as a worker “whose creative effort is one stage in the book's manufacture.” “Fictional Economies: Adam Smith, Sir Walter Scott and the Nineteenth-Century Novel,” *ELH* 54, no. 1 (1987): 101.

8. Duncan, introduction to *Rob Roy* xviii. The economic mode of thought in the novel is often seen to reinforce the dialectic of Scott's thinking, as it represents the rational in opposition to the romantic. Bruce Beiderwell, for example, locates the tension between commercial values and the brutal code of Highland honor in the conflicted position of the novel's protagonist, Frank Osbaldistone, who both benefits and recoils from the horrible vengeance code of the Highlands. *Power and Punishment in Scott's Novels* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 45–61.

9. Though Lockhart would later dismiss the seriousness of Scott's national grievances, characterizing the letters as an "escape valve" for Scott to let off a little steam, McCracken-Flesher has seen in the letters Scott's attempt to speak the colonized Scottish subject, to give
voice to the nation made voiceless by English cultural and economic domination (“Speaking the Colonized Subject in Walter Scott’s Malachi Malagrowther Letters”). Acknowledging his nation’s own deformity, Scott embodies it by speaking through the grotesque form of one Malachi Malagrowther, the lineal descendent of the disfigured Sir Mungo Malagrowther, who appears as James VI’s whipping boy in The Fortunes of Nigel (1822).


11. In his study of Highland-Lowland migration, Charles W. J. Withers writes:

> temporary movement was an important means of monetary income and familiarised many with social customs beyond their native parishes. . . . The picture we must hold of rural Europe in this period is, then, one both of considerable rural movement rather than that enduring but now discredited image of a ‘static’ countryside, and of regional economies connected one to another through such population movement. (Urban Highlanders: Highland-Lowland Migration and Urban Gaelic Culture, 1700–1900 [East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998], 8)

12. Devine, Clanship to Crofters’ War, 242. Further, Devine states that “Highlanders comprised an estimated 6 percent of the population of Greenock in the early eighteenth century but around 30 percent by the 1790s, and the number of Gaelic-speakers in the town had risen from less than 500 in the middle decades of the century to over 5,000 by its end” (242).

13. Indeed, Devine reports that Highland migration patterns were regionally defined and that “it was the urban areas of the Western Lowlands which attracted most Highlanders and the Gaelic communities in Glasgow, Greenock and Paisley were much greater than those of the eastern towns.” Moreover, “the majority of migrants came from parishes and districts on the Highlands frontier and only a relatively small fraction, until the later decades of the century, from the more distant areas of the far north and west” (Clanship to Crofters’ War 242).

14. Peter D. Garside discounts Ferguson’s influence, suggesting that Scott would have found Ferguson’s work “too dry and abstract” (“Scott and the Philosophical Historians” 499). As a young man, however, Scott knew Ferguson and in later life would become close friends with Ferguson’s son, who, at Scott’s instigation, was made Keeper of the Scottish Regalia during the king’s visit.

15. For a discussion of the importance of the debate surrounding the foundation of a national militia on Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, particularly Ferguson, see Robertson, The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue, 200–209 and passim.


17. John Galt’s “The Gathering of the West” attempts to recuperate the Radical reputation of the Glasgow working class by bringing them into the fold of the loyal populace. The section titled “Paisley Bodies” depicts the deliberations of a group of weavers with radical sympathies (a group of weavers had been the main instigators of riots in the city at the height of the radical agitation) deciding whether to go to Edinburgh to see the king. One of them suggests that a “revision” of radical principles seems necessary as times have changed.
and that the way to encourage reform in parliament is to allow the king to come before the Scottish people (Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine 12 [July–December 1822]: 311).

18. The phrase is taken from a 1587 Act of Parliament, which acknowledged the ambiguity of kinship ties in relation to clan allegiances in Highland society. R. A. Dodgshon writes that the act recognized clans as integrated by “both pretense of blude” and “place of thair duelling [dwelling]” In other words, “though there is an element of ambiguity about precisely what is meant by these phrases . . . they leave no doubt over the essentially synthetic character of clans as kinship groups.” “‘Pretense of Blude’ and ‘Place of Thair Duelling’: The Nature of Highland Clans, 1500–1745,” in Scottish Society, 1500–1800, ed. R. A. Houston and I. D. Whyte (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 169.

19. The king’s London tailor provided a detailed description of his costume:

[The king wore a] fine gold chased head ornament for Bonnet, consisting of Royal Scots Crown in miniature, set with Diamonds, Pearls, and Rubies and emeralds, supported on a wreath of chased gold Thistles surrounding a sea-green emerald, large sized. His Goatskin Highland Purse had a massive gold top and nine rich gold bullion tassels, whilst his powder horn was gold-mounted and attached to a massive gold chain. His dirk was inlaid with gold and encased in a crimson velvet scabbard richly ornamented with chased gold mountings with the Royal Arms of St. Andrew, Thistle, etc. He had a fine basket-hilted sword and a pair of Highland pistols. His costume included 61 yards of Royal Sattin Plaid, 31 yards of Royal Plaid Velvet, and 17 1/2 of Royal Plaid Casemere. (quoted in John Telfer Dunbar, The Costume of Scotland [London: B. T. Batsford, 1984], 79)

20. Lockhart’s own disdain for Highland culture is reflected in his Peter’s Letters to His Kinsfolk. Full of character descriptions of Scots literati of the time (including Scott) the work makes almost no mention of Highlanders, save of Scott’s piper and of an anonymous Edinburgh caddie, one “D—d M’N—,” whose only function in the city is to “perform all little offices [a stranger] may require during the continuance of his visit.” A common figure among Edinburgh streets in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Highland caddie is an insignificant comical figure in Lockhart’s account, a lowlife immigrant who counts for nothing in the cultural doings of the nation’s capital city. Lockhart’s mocking description pokes fun at the commonhood of Highland names. The concealment of the caddie’s true name is not a concealment at all, since “Donald McDonald” was thought stereotypically to be a name so common in the Highlands that it could be used to connote all Highlanders. In Peter’s Letters to His Kinsfolk, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1819), 2:241.

21. By 1822 Wilson’s had made a considerable fortune satisfying the ever-increasing public demand for new and different tartan sets. Only around 1819, however, did the firm begin to standardize its product, though even then, tartan design still was determined largely by commercial expediency, not historical memory as demand necessitated a proliferation of differing “clan” patterns. See Cheape, Tartan.

22. Chatterjee cites a standard Bengali dictionary to list the different senses of jāṭī in India. In addition to its rough rendering into English as “caste,” the term also can be used to signify birth origin (“such as musalman by birth, Vaisnav by birth, a beggar by birth [jāṭite musalmān, jāṭībhikhāri]”), classes of living species (“such as human jāṭī, animal jāṭī, bird jāṭī, etc.”), lineage or clan (“such as Arya jāṭī, Semitic jāṭī”), or human collectivities “bound by
loyalty to a state or organized around the natural and cultural characteristics of a country or province . . . such as English, French, Bengali, Punjabi, Japanese, Gujarati, etc.” The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 221.

CHAPTER THREE


3. For a summary of the transformative effects of war with France, see Colley’s introduction in Britons.


5. Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities (London: Routledge, 1994).


7. Though the elite commanders of the Napoleonic Wars—men like the Duke of Wellington, for example—were adulated upon their return from the war, the returning common British soldier often was considered a dangerous destabilizing force let loose upon the countryside. Amid fears that soldiers used to quell unrest back home would more likely join the “radical mob” rather than defeat it, Wellington characterized the average army recruit as “‘the scum of the earth.’ . . . the ‘most drunk’ and ‘worst’ specimens of humanity.” Only during the Victorian era, Edward M. Spiers suggests, would a “transformation occu[r] in attitudes towards the army.” After the Crimean War, he writes, “[t]he valour and heroism of the troops had been widely admired. It became a commonplace to assert that the nation should, in the post-war years, recognize its responsibilities towards the rank and file” (The

8. Cynthia Enloe argues that Scottish Highland soldiers—along with Gurkha, Sikh, and Punjabi soldiers incorporated into the British Indian army after the Indian Mutiny—are an example of “ethnic soldiers.” The historical uses of such soldiers by the modern nation-state, Enloe argues, “reveal how central state regimes have used, and continue to use, ethnicity to maintain political order and their own authority through particular manpower conceptualizations and manipulations” (Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in Divided Societies [Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980], ix). Ethnic groups dependent on soldierly as a profession are thus placed firmly within the state’s sphere of control. For more discussion of representations of Highland and “native” soldiers after the Indian Mutiny, see chapter 5.

9. Diana Henderson reports that the majority of officers in Highland kilted battalions before the mid-nineteenth century were Scots. Gaelic speakers are entirely another matter. Though “it could well be the case that [officers from the Highlnds] were amongst the native speakers . . . [t]here is little evidence . . . that any officers in the Highland battalions used Gaelic in ordinary conversation or communication” (Highland Soldier, a Social Study of the Highland Regiments, 119–20). David Stewart is a notable exception.

10. Lockhart records that James Skene of Rubislaw credited the creation in 1797 of an Edinburgh force of mounted volunteers to “Scott’s ardour” (Memoirs, 1:258). Scott was not alone in his enthusiasm, as Scotland’s professional classes volunteered disproportionately to the ranks of volunteer militias. Devine reports that “by the end of 1803 more than 52,000 Scots had enrolled in 51 regiments out of the 103 established for the whole of the United Kingdom” (The Scottish Nation 215).


12. Buzard has described Waverley itself as a paradigmatic example of Scott’s enactment of a fictional “autoethnography”; “Scotland’ representing itself” to an audience of English-speaking Britons (“Translation and Tourism”). While I take Buzard’s point that Waverley is an important site of a distinct Scottish identity that signifies only in terms of an imperial “Britishness,” I take issue with labeling the work an autoethnography; at least in the sense in which Pratt coined the term and which I discuss in the context of Stewart’s work later in this chapter. As Scott himself was careful to state several times, his knowledge of Highlands was...
limited to summer visits as a boy and occasional travel. Scott's knowledge and use of Gaelic was quite limited. For a discussion of Scott's imperfect and stereotypical presentation of Gaelic, see Graham Tulloch, *The Language of Sir Walter Scott* (London: A. Deutsch, 1980).

13. Elizabeth Watterson, “Beginning a ‘Life’: Opening Movement in Scott’s *Napoleon* and Galt’s *Byron,*” *Scottish Literary Journal* 7 (May 1980): 42. In its detailed accounts of the military achievements, defeats, and strategies of France, its allies, and its enemies—from the conditions leading to the fall of the ancien régime to Napoleon's exile and death on Elba—*The Life of Napoleon* (Edinburgh: Cadell, 1827) investigates the ways in which cultural and social environments shape, and are shaped by, masculine behavior in war. For example, Scott’s discussion on the reasons the levee en masse managed to produce a large-scale but effective fighting force is prefaced with a summary of the conditions of French boyhood. The French boy, Scott writes, “adopted the habits most necessary for a soldier with singular facility and readiness” and “[military duty] is as natural to him as to his father or grandfather before him” (2:382).


15. In 1725, four independent Highland companies were established. More companies were added a few years later and were collectively known as “the Watch, the Highland Watch, or *am Freiceadan Dubh* [the Black Watch].” The Black Watch would be incorporated into the British army in 1739 as the 43rd (Highland) Regiment of Foot. In 1739, the regiment became the 42nd, with which Stewart marched in Edinburgh after Waterloo in 1816. The Black Watch survives today as the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) and presided over the handover ceremonies in Hong Kong in 1997.


17. For a discussion of the idea of *duthchas* in traditional Scottish Gaelic society, see Dodgson, “‘Pretense of Blude,’” and Macinnes, “Scottish Gaeldom: The First Phase of Clearance.”

18. The sympathetic cultural relativism of the judges’ pronouncement is echoed in Scott’s writing elsewhere. The judge who condemns the Highlander Oig MacCombich to the gallows makes much the same pronouncement. Scott reiterates the case for Highland exculpation in his own history of the rebellion in *Tales of a Grandfather*, third series.

19. Gordon points out that Scott contrasts the character of primitive warriors with those of the middle and upper classes. Summarizing Scott’s view of the Spanish ruling class, for example, Gordon writes: “[T]he nobles are decadent because of inbreeding, the clergy is bigoted and superstitious, the middle class—especially its professionals and intellectuals—respond to clerical obscurantism by flying off into skepticism. Only the peasantry remain as possible saviours of the kingdom” (“Scott among the Partisans” 117). For Scott, it is the
peasant fighter, able to “part with the advantages of civilized society upon . . . easy terms,” who is the true embodiment of the fighting will of the nation (117).

20. Robert Clyde calls the Sketches the “first history of the Highland regiments” (From Rebel to Hero 151). Prebble writes that interest in Highland society after the king’s visit prompted several newspapers in England to publish serial accounts of The Highland Clans and Their History, much of which was lifted directly from the Sketches (The King’s Jaunt 360). Two of the most popular and influential works on the Highland clans (with extensive discussion of the Highland regiments) in the nineteenth century, James Browne’s A History of the Highlands and of the Highland Clans, 4 vols. (Glasgow: A. Fullarton, 1838), and John S. Keltie’s A History of the Scottish Highlands, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: A. Fullarton, 1875), acknowledge Stewart’s groundbreaking work and borrow from the Sketches.

21. Women make only the briefest of appearances in the Sketches. In a section on chastity, for example, one of the few where Stewart singles out Highland women, he merely reports that “if a young woman lost her virtue and character, then she was obliged to wear a cap, and never afterwards appear with her hair uncovered, in the dress of virgin innocence” (1:89).

22. All references are to the first edition, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1822) unless otherwise noted. This quotation appears in vol. 1, p. 7.


24. Mackenzie, in his 1883 History of the Highland Clearances, includes a section of the Sketches in his list of “eminent authors . . . born and bred in the country” who comment on the Highland Clearances. Macleod is heavily indebted to Stewart’s description of tenant evictions on the Sutherland estate and, in particular, the hard-heartedness of estate agents Patrick Sellar and James Loch (Sellar actually stood trial for homicide). Calling the Sketches an “excellent work I beg to call [to] the attention of every friend to truth and justice, and especially those who take an interest in the fate of expatriated tenantry,” Macleod writes “[Stewart] has completely vindicated the character of the Highland tenantry, and shown the impolicy, as well as cruelty, of the means used for their ejection” (Mackenzie, History of the Highland Clearances 23).


26. This was incorporated into narrative proper in second edition, 2:420; 2:494 in third edition.

27. This was incorporated into narrative proper in second edition as a footnote, 2:422; footnote to 2:496 in third edition.

28. The necessity of such an attitude serves to rationalize in the Sketches the seemingly unambiguous historical instances of Highland disloyalty, which Stewart details in his regimental histories. In his narration of the 1746 mutiny and desertion of several hundred Highland soldiers from his own Black Watch regiment, for example, Stewart places the blame for this widespread act of Highland disobedience squarely on the shoulders of commanding officers, who, Stewart argues, had not yet learned to control their men. As the regiment was stationed in England after Prince Charles’s defeat, Stewart recounts, the men heard rumors that—rather than going back to Scotland as they had been promised—they were bound for the American colonies, the “Botany Bay of that day.” In the absence of an appropriate bond of trust between officer and Highland rank and file, who “believ[ed] themselves deceived and betrayed,” the “unfortunate act” of Highland mutiny was “the result of their simplicity, in allowing themselves to be deceived, rather than of any want of principle, [which] was sufficiently proved by their subsequent conduct” (1:236).

29. Arjun Appadurai uses this term to describe the challenges to notions of territoriality
in a globalized world culture. Migration, Appadurai writes, has created “complex conditions for the production and reproduction of locality, in which ties of marriage, work, business, and leisure weave together various circulating populations with various kinds of ‘locals’ to create localities that belong in one sense to particular nation-states but are, from another point of view, what we might call translocalities.” “Sovereignty without Territoriality: notes for a Postnational Geography,” in *The Geography of Identity*, ed. Patricia Yaeger (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 44.

CHAPTER FOUR


2. As Bernard Cohn writes:

   To the English from 1859 to the early part of the twentieth century, the Mutiny was seen as a heroic myth embodying and expressing their central values which explained their rule in India to themselves—sacrifice, duty, fortitude; above all it symbolized the ultimate triumph over those Indians who had threatened properly constituted authority and order. (“Representing Authority in Victorian India” 179)


4. A notable exception is John William Kaye’s authoritative *A History of the Sepoy War in India*, 3 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1865), which, following its title, labels the rebellion the “Sepoy War” throughout.

6. The ratio of native troops to British troops went from its pre-rebellion figure of 8:1 in May 1857 to 2:1 in early 1860. This change in the ratio was in direct response to the rebellion and was maintained until World War I. The rebellion also produced a general increase in the number of British troops stationed in India. Before the rebellion, the Indian army was composed of 40,000 British troops and 300,000 native troops. In 1860, the number of British troops increased to 60,000. By 1908 the total number of British troops had risen to 75,702. This number represents half the total British military force of the time (Spiers, *The Army and Society* 121–38).

7. Martin Green in his study of the imperial adventure novel credits Scott as an important progenitor of the form who introduced new materials “derived from romantic history” into the adventure narrative he inherited from Defoe (*Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* [New York: Basic Books, 1979], 98). Dawson describes *Waverley* as knitting together psychic split in British masculinity between adventure and domesticity (*Soldier Heroes* 66–76).

8. Grant’s praise of the unique esprit de corps of the Highland fighting men forms the basis for his own nationalist agenda in support of land reform of the Highlands later in the century. In his introduction to *The Duke of Albany’s Own Highlanders* (London: George Routledge, 1881), written in 1880, Grant echoes David Stewart and laments the “de-Highlandization” of Highland regiments, which he links to disruption in the Highland social fabric:

> The modern mode of recruiting in the Lowlands—a necessary consequent to the depopulation of the Highlands (where now more than two millions of acres are deer forest) and the new system of linked battalions—have changed the general tone of the Highland regiments, so clanship is almost forgotten in the ranks, and Gaelic unknown, or nearly so. (n.pag.)

Grant himself became a member of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights, and his critique can be read in the context of increased agitation for tenant rights in the nineteenth century, appearing in Highland newspapers such as Alexander Mackenzie’s *Celtic Magazine*, the *Inverness Courier*, and the *Oban Times*. Devine reports that J. B. Balfour referred to “a considerable body of vague and floating sentiment in favor of ameliorating the crofters condition” which had influenced several members of the Liberal Party (*Clanship to Crofters’ War* 224). Such sentiment contributed to the passage of the Crofters’ Holdings Act of 1886, which stabilized the pattern of land relations in the Highlands.


10. Grant offers an alternative, more detailed, account of the Highland bare knee, which also provides a more conventional (and more emphatic) phallic substitution in the description of the Stuart family piper:

> The piper, though of low stature, was of powerful, athletic, and sinewy form, and although nearly sixty, was as fresh as when only sixteen . . . his knees, “which had never known covering from the day of his birth,” where exposed by the kilt were hairy and rough as the hide of the roe-buck; his plaid waved
behind, and a richly mounted dirk, eighteen inches long, hanging on his right side, completed his attire. (*The Romance of War*, 4 vols. [London: H. Colburn, 1847–48], 1:21; emphasis added)

11. During the Napoleonic Wars, the Highland uniform inspired not fear as much as fascination. Dunbar reveals that during the occupation of Paris after Waterloo, “the French were fascinated by the appearance of Highlanders strolling along the boulevards, and soon the print and caricature sellers were doing a tremendous trade in comic and serious illustrations of the kilted troops.” As a Scottish observer of the time wrote of a visit to the Opera:

In one general dance four of the performers were elegantly dressed as Highland soldiers: the latter much excited the Parisians. Their entré was loudly applauded, and the exact imitation of their dress occasioned much mirth. ‘*Vive les Écossais!*’ was the cry. It is pleasing to see how much these brave men make friends even of their enemies.

Tartan dresses and feather bonnets even became the rage of Paris fashion. (*The Costume of Scotland* 173–74)

12. The belief that the mere sight of the Highland uniform could inspire terror in the enemy formed the basis for arguments against periodic attempts by the army at abolishing the kilt in favor of a more “practical” uniform. As early as 1804, a colonel in the 79th Highlanders argued that, in addition to allowing for the free circulation of air and allowing flexibility during forced marches, the kilt “has, upon many occasions, struck the enemy with terror and confusion” (quoted in Dunbar, *History of Highland Dress* 162).


14. R. S. F. In *Notes and Queries* of May 22, 1858 quotes “The Calcutta correspondent of the *Nonconformist,*” who sums up the unlikelihood of the story this way:

We have read with some surprise and amusement that wonderful story published in the English papers about Jessie Brown and the slogan of the Highlanders, in Havelock’s relief of Lucknow. I have been assured by one of the garrison that it is pure invention. 1. No letter of the date mentioned could have reached Calcutta when the story is said to have arrived. 2. There was no Jessie Brown in Lucknow. 3. The 78th Highlanders neither played their pipes nor howled out the slogan as they came in; they had something else to do. (quoted in *Notes and Queries*, May 22, 1858, 425)

15. For evidence as to the veracity of the Jessie Brown story, provided by a sergeant who served in the 93rd Highland regiment and who was in Lucknow during the rebellion, see

16. Jenny Sharpe summarizes the crucial interplay of Victorian gender ideals in making sense of the events of the mutiny:

> The representation of the English lady as an institution that had been desecrated plays into a code of chivalry that called on Victorian men to protect the weak and defenseless. Presupposing their women to inhabit a domestic space that was safe from colonial conflict, these men responded as good soldiers, fathers, and husbands. They reasserted claim over what was rightfully theirs by protecting the victims and punishing the offenders. In this manner, the knightly virtues of honor, a veneration of women, and protection of the weak were invoked so that the army *as an institution* could act as a punishing avenger. (Allegories of Empire 76; emphasis in original)

17. The well at Cawnpore would later become the site of an elaborate memorial to the British men, women, and children who lost their lives in the rebellion. The memorial was just one of many that the British would erect in the wake of the rebellion.

18. ni Fhlathúin writes, “[T]he Anglo-Indian[s] realized that their actions in controlling Indian insurrection were sometimes such that the critical distance between native barbarity and colonizing civilization became unobtainable” (“Anglo-India after the Mutiny” 67).

19. The Scottish artist Sir Joseph Noel Paton’s narrative painting *In Memoriam*, and the controversy that surrounded its first appearance, neatly demonstrates both the special symbolic force and the ambiguity that the figure of the Highland soldier brought to British representations of the rebellion. Paton’s narrative painting, first presented to the Royal Academy in late May 1858, is a triptych of three British women in a cantonment amid the chaotic clutter of strewn gloves, hats and other items of European clothing. Just visible in the upper-left-hand corner of the painting stands the unmistakable figure of the Highland soldier, stepping across the threshold of the open doorway. Even though the Highlander is (fittingly) on the margin of Paton’s work, the figure dramatically sums up the iconography of the Highland soldier: the rough red beard, exposed knee below the belted tartan kilt, the sporran, dirk, and the Glengarry bonnet. Yet it is important to note that Paton’s heroic Highlander did not appear in the version of *In Memoriam* that he had originally submitted, as the original version had sparked such severe controversy that the artist had been forced to withdraw it. At the upper left of the original version of the painting, an open door reveals, in the words of the *Illustrated Times*, the “advancing Sepoy” with his “blood-spotted legs, and his clenched musket . . . ferocity glaring in the eye, and bristling in the beard bursting into the residency compound” (quoted in Hichberger, *Images of the Army* 174). Paton’s solution to the controversy was to revise the work by replacing the image of rapacious natives with the image of Highland regimental soldiers, thereby transforming the painting’s narrative: the moment of British female dishonor and failure becomes instead the moment of victory and deliverance. The painting no longer suggests Cawnpore, but Lucknow, where British military force relieved the beleaguered civilian population and began the long campaign to

20. “Miss Wheeler” was the daughter of the British commander at Cawnpore. After Nana Sahib took the city, Miss Wheeler was said to have been determined to die rather than face sexual dishonor at the hands of Nana Sahib’s forces. In one version of her story, after first shooting down five of her captors with a revolver, she threw herself into the well. Seven years after the rebellion it was proved that Miss Wheeler had not died but, after having married a sowar and converted to Islam, she was still in India living with her husband’s family. For a discussion of the story of Miss Wheeler, see Sharpe, *Allegories* 70–73.

21. Only a little more than one hundred years before the Indian Mutiny the male Highlander was considered a rapacious, though sometimes incompetent, sexual predator. A satirical poem of the early eighteenth century recounts the misdeeds of a Highland host “who came down to destroy the Western Shires in 1678”:

This red-shank [Highlander] from no good pretence,
Pursued the Lass ben to the spence
And aiming at some naughtie deed,
Pull’d up his plaid and ran with speed,
She with a fleshcruik in her hand,
Advised him a back to stand,
But he presuming for to strugle
Occasioned a huble buble
The story is something od
She with the Flesh-cruik gript his cod,
So held and rag’ed and made him squil
And ay cry out the Deu’ 1 the Deu’1,
But getting of away he flees,
While blood was spreading down his Thighs
For several dayes he keept to his Bed
And when he got up he strid led
From either hands they get small thanks
Who are the authors of such pranks. (quoted in William Donaldson, *The Jacobite Song* [Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988], 51)

22. One notable example of a personal account of the common Highland soldier’s experience in the Indian Rebellion is Forbes-Mitchell’s *Reminiscences of the Great Mutiny*. Forbes-Mitchell provides a straightforward account of both the brutality of the war and the less-than-heroic actions of Highland soldiers, who, while on a drunken rampage, looted the town after they captured it. Neither does Forbes-Mitchell claim any special intrepidity on the part of Highland soldiers. His is an unromantic account of the daily marching, fighting, and burying of the dead.

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24. Streets emphasizes the direct influence of prominent military writers in popularizing martial race theory back home. “Late-century popular militarism,” she writes, “reflected the role that self-interested and media-savvy military figures [particularly Lord Roberts] played in helping to shape the values and ideologies of a more aggressively imperial state” (Martial Races 117).

25. Given assumptions as to the special prowess of highland regiments, it is especially ironic that, as the century progressed, fewer and fewer of their new recruits were actually from the Highlands. Clearance, emigration, and the increasing urbanization of British society all took their toll on recruiting in the rural Highlands. For example, as Spiers reports:

Whereas the 42nd Foot (the Black Watch) had found 51 per cent of its recruits in the Highlands in 1798, it secured only 9 per cent from that region in 1830–34, and a bare 5 per cent in 1854. Like other Highland regiments, it had to seek an increasing proportion of its men from the Lothians and Glasgow. (The Army and Society 48)

Yet with few exceptions, the fact that in Highland regiments one was more likely to hear working-class Glasgow slang than Gaelic was generally overlooked in the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER FIVE


2. The former printed for the author by J. Moir, Edinburgh. The work appeared, with some revision, omission, and reordering, in 1808 as The Highlanders and Other Poems (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme). A third edition was published by the same in 1810. Grant in her Memoir would later claim a subscription list of 3,000, but as Pam Perkins reports, the actual number was (a still respectable) 2,251 (“Critical essay on Ann Grant,” Scottish Women Poets of the Romantic Period, November 7 2003, http://www.alexander-street2.com/SWRPLive/bios/S7024-D001.html). Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland was published in London by Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown.

3. The sixth and last edition of the work appeared after her death and was edited by the only one of her children to outlive her, her son, J. P. (John Peter) Grant. He reordered the letters chronologically and added letters previously appended to the Essays and his own notes (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longman, 1845).


6. Ghose, Women Travellers in India, 15. Ghose gives the example of the mid-century Indian travelogue of Emily Eden, whose “ironic gaze debunks colonial myths (such as the civilizing mission) and operates as a distancing strategy toward the ideological norms of her own society.” Nevertheless, Ghose adds, the “silence on colonial reality in [Eden’s] text works to contain its subversive implications” (Women Travellers in Colonial India 12).


9. For recent discussions on the Picturesque which emphasize the extreme range of definitions associated with the term beginning in the late eighteenth century, see the collection of essays in Stephen Copley and Peter Garside, eds., The Politics of the Picturesque (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

10. Though their role in the British West Indies was at first less important than that of the Irish, Devine writes, the Scots soon caught up “and surpassed them in numbers, especially in commercial and plantation ownership.” Scots became particularly influential in Jamaica, “which produced more sugar than all the other British islands combined by the 1770s and where in 1771–5 Scots accounted for 40 per cent of the inventories after death above £1,000” (The Scottish Nation 120).

11. Christian Isobel Johnstone’s mixture of sentimental narrative and running commentary on Highland folkways in Clan-Albin, for example, shows the influence of Grant’s domestic ethnography. Andrew Monnickendam notes that Johnstone “intersperses her fiction with ethnography along the lines of her contemporary Ann [sic] Grant’s Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland,” the publisher of which also brought out Clan Albin. Introduction to Christian Isobel Johnstone, Clan-Albin: A National Tale, ed. Andrew Monnickendam (Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2003), vii.

12. In a note to her poem “The Highlanders, or Sketches of Highland Scenery and Manners with Some Reflection on Emigration,” Grant provides a footnote on the particular lament of Highland emigrants, which seems to echo in the Highlands long after they are gone: “The words ‘Ha pill, ha pill, ha pill, mi tuillardh,’ signify, ‘We return, return, return, no more.’ The Author has heard it played to two parties of emigrants marching towards the sea” (The Highlanders and Other Poems 20). Scott adopts the lament (in English and Gaelic) to end his essay on the state of the Highlands in his review of The Culloden Papers (Quarterly Review 14 [January 1816]: 283–333). In Clan-Albin, Johnstone describes the former home of Highlanders forced to emigrate: “this is the glen whose every echo was ringing—’We return, we return, we return no more!’” (adding a footnote providing much the same particulars as does Grant’s).

13. The ambivalence of Grant’s work as a travelogue is layered onto the generic tensions of the work, which presents itself as an unmediated day-to-day account of Grant’s life. On the one hand, as Pam Perkins has described, informality is demanded of a readership whose interest in the work is, in part, a voyeuristic desire to glimpse the private world of a woman. On the other hand, the text also reveals the desire of an author to establish her authority and to consciously craft her narrative (“Anne Grant and the Professionalization of Privacy,” Authorship, Commerce, and the Public: Scenes of Writing, 1750–1850, ed. Caroline Franklin, E. J. Clery, and Peter Garside [New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002]). The constraints of literary production perhaps were felt more acutely by Scottish women in the small but heated culture of letters in Scotland in the Romantic period, and the obstacles met by women...
writers in Edinburgh literary culture remarked on by Grant. She ascribes the silence of the *Edinburgh Review* with regard to the *Letters* to the chauvinism of its head, Francis Jeffrey. While praising his “structure of mind and marked acuity as reviewer” and having dined often in his company, she laments that Jeffrey “treats female genius and female productions with unqualified scorn, never mentioning anything of the kind but with a sneer” (*Memoir* 1:81).

14. In a letter to a Glasgow friend, Grant compares her own cultural tolerance with that of “Misses” who express “disgust and wonder” at any “custom or dress they are not used to.” Grant writes smugly “I now think plaids and faltans just as becoming as I once did the furs and wampum of the Mohawks, which I always remember with kindness” (*Letters* 1:73). For Grant, acculturation is a simple act of cultural code switching.


17. In the sixth edition, 2:207. See n.16.

18. In the sixth edition, 2:208. See n.16.

19. The frequent practice of war among primitive societies, Ferguson writes in the *Essay on the History of Civil Society*,

tends to strengthen the bands of society, and the practice of depredation itself engages men in trials of mutual attachment and courage. What threatened to ruin and overset every good disposition in the human breast . . . tends to unite the species in clans and fraternities; formidable indeed, and hostile to one another, but in the domestic society of each, faithful, disinterested, and generous. (101)

20. Fosterage as an example of the strength of community bonds in the Highlands is adopted by later writers such as Johnstone: Her Moome plays a key role in ensuring the continuance of the clan in *Clan-Albin*, by raising the orphan Norman Mac-Albin and (along with other female characters) aids in restoring his birthright as heir of the clan. For a recent analysis of the importance of the fosterage in creating a sense of community, in both a nationalist and imperialist register, see Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism*, 217–218. Grant also remarks in the *Essays* on the importance of *male* fosterage in the Highlands, in the form of *tuit-fhears* or “guardian uncles” (2:110).


22. In an entry toward the end of her narrative dated April 1803, however, Grant disappointingly reports that her efforts to educate her children in Gaelic have not been completely successful. After an illness in the family required a long stay in Bath away from her youngest children, Grant writes, “One misfortune I have to lament; my little boy speaks nothing but English. I am so provoked at his losing the native tongue, though it appears to be the only loss which my family sustained in my absence” (3:177–78).

23. Grant’s *Memoir* reveals an indirect connection between her and Victoria: Grant writes of meeting Victoria’s cousin, Augustus Frederick, the son of the Duke of Sussex, in 1816. After discovering that she is the celebrated Mrs. Grant of Laggan, Augustus “flew across the room,—said I was one of the persons in Scotland he most wished to see, and kissed my hand rapturously—yes, rapturously.” The poetry of *The Highlanders*, he said, had awakened “his feelings and enthusiasm for Scotland at a very early age” (*Memoir* 2:162).

25. The peculiarities of Scottish national costume is the focus of a satirical tract published in New York under the pseudonym Kenward Philip entitled *John Brown’s Legs or Leaves from a Journal in the Lowlands* (New York: Norman L. Munro, 1884). The work mocks Victoria’s journal style and unwavering concern for Brown’s health: “A dreadful calamity has happened to disturb the serenity of our Life in the Highlands. My servant John Brown, while attending me yesterday in a walk to Kschruballantachtwister, stubbed his toe. Poor dear Brown! How he suffered no pen can describe!” (2). A pamphlet appearing in 1867 entitled *John Brown, or the Fortunes of a Gillie* shows a confident Brown leaning on the British crown in an imitation of the Tomahawk cartoon, but in the pamphlet, Brown is surrounded by “admiring ladies dressed in rich national costumes” (quoted in Dorothy Thompson, *Queen Victoria: Gender and Power* [London: Virago, 1990], 82–83). Beneath the illustration is Johnson’s famous quote on expatriate Scots, “The noblest prospect which a Scotsman ever sees is the high road that leads him to England,” suggesting that the residue of eighteenth-century English Scotophobia persisted well into the nineteenth.

26. Margaret Homans writes, “The death of Albert occasioned not only the abrupt end of Victoria’s self-representations in public spaces but also her adoption of various substitute forms of royal representation, notably the publication of books originally produced for private circulation” (*Royal Representations* 115).

27. By the mid-nineteenth century, ease of transportation and the packaging of mass holiday excursions, particularly those arranged by Thomas Cook, had transformed Highland travel. As Gold and Gold report, Cook’s first Scottish tours commenced in 1846, four years after Victoria’s first trip to the Highlands. During the first twenty years of Cook’s special excursions, begun in 1866, forty thousand people visited Scotland on Cook’s trains, which by the 1850s provided a stop at Balmoral (*Imagining Scotland* 101–104).

28. Queen Victoria, *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands: From 1848–1861*, ed. Arthur Helps (London: Smith, Elder, 1868), 50–51. The *Leaves* had been in private circulation for three years. When the first edition was published, a member of her circle, Sir John
Elphinstone (a Scottish lord-in-waiting) was one of the first to see its potential in remolding the queen’s image among the public and encouraged a cheap edition, the “sooner the better” (quoted in Tom Cullen, *The Empress Brown* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969], 118). A less expensive second edition came out soon after the first. For consistency’s sake, I cite the fancier edition for both works. Unless otherwise noted, all italics are in the original. (Victoria’s style is to italicize all place names.) *More Leaves* was translated into Gaelic: *Tuilleadh Dhuilleag Bho M’ Leabhar-Latha*, trans. Mairi Nic Ealair (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1886).

29. The utter dependence on Scott for Victoria’s understanding of the Highlands is reflected in the library catalogue at Balmoral. At one point, Elizabeth Longford reports, the library held “32 *Ladies of the Lake*, 12 *Rob Roys*, and 26 guidebooks” (and little of anything else) (*Queen Victoria: Born to Succeed* [London: Harper & Row, 1964], 372). In addition, Highland guidebooks of the period often provided their readers with descriptions of sites they were most interested in visiting, many of which could of course be found in Scott’s novels. As Gold and Gold describe, sales of Highland guidebooks and Scott novels fed on one another in the Victorian era (*Imagining Scotland*).

30. Adrienne Munich summarizes the cultural paradox of Victoria’s reign as “the apparent contradiction of a devoted wife, prolific mother, and extravagant widow who is also Queen of an Empire upon which the sun never sets” (“Queen Victoria, Empire, and Excess,” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* 6, no. 2 [Fall 1987]: 265). For a study that examines the way Victoria’s journal in particular worked to ‘bolster the monarchy by displaying the intimate circle of the Queen, her husband, her children at ‘home,’ and thus inspiring gratitude and loyal affection,” see Rebecca Steinitz, “Travel, Domesticity and Genre in Victoria’s *Journal of Our Life in the Highlands*,” *Victorians Institute Journal* 29 (2001): 149–68. See also Margaret Homans, “‘To the Queen’s Private Apartments’: Royal Family Portraiture and the Construction of Victoria’s Sovereign Obedience,” *Victorian Studies* 37, no. 1 (1993): 1–41.

31. Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 23. Visuality is the critical component that allows a monarchical pageantry to function in Fujitani’s analysis. “Imperial pageantry,” he writes, “was part of a cultural apparatus that helped fashion Japan’s modern emperor into a transcendental subject, one who could be imagined as casting a single and centralizing gaze across all the nation and into the soul of the people” (24). In addition to describing the “inverted ocular relationship,” Fujitani argues for the historicization of ritual, in contrast to anthropologists like Clifford Geertz, whose work on the subject suggests that rulers use ritual because it places them in a cultural framework that is always extant, already accepted by all the people. Instead Fujitani calls for an understanding of ritual which emphasizes that “elements in the symbolic dimension of politics can be as much invented as inherited” (23).

32. While Balmoral was being renovated, Albert ordered that a prefabricated shed, of a type he had seen at the Great Exhibition, be installed as a temporary ballroom. Manufactured in various styles by Edward T Bellhouse and Company of the Eagle Foundry in Manchester, the shed had been designed to temporarily “house emigrants who were leaving Scotland for Canada or Australia as a result of the Highland clearances” (Delia Millar, *Queen Victoria’s Life in the Scottish Highlands* [London: Philip Wilson, 1985], 59). Homelessness for one group of people in the Highlands thus provides the circumstances for home improvement for another.

33. As Homans points out, this is a misappropriation of the tradition, as cairns are usually associated with death in the Highlands (*Royal Representations* 140). Victoria, however,
suggests a more generalized act of remembering, of memorialization, which is therefore not entirely inappropriate.

34. Arthur Helps, Victoria’s editor, suggests the queen’s relation with her subjects is a maternal one. Describing Victoria’s tendency to avoid digression in her conversations with the public, he writes, “[W]henever there is an exception to this rule, it arises from her majesty’s anxious desire to make some inquiry about the welfare of her subjects . . . thus showing . . . that she is, indeed, the Mother of her People . . .” (Leaves xiii). Cynthia Huff argues that the Leaves scripts a Victorian imperial “imagined community” by reinforcing the maternal relation between the Queen and her “family.” Huff, however, does not address the ways in which Victoria situates this “motherhood” within pre-existing Highland clan relations (“Scripting the Materimperium: The Queen’s Highland Journals, Colonial Women’s Diaries, and the Victorian Imagined Community,” Prose Studies 24, 1 [April 2001]: 41–62). From an alternative perspective, Adrienne Munich, in her discussion on Victoria’s increasingly “capacious body,” writes, “Nineteenth-century romantic habits of figuring nature as a nurturing mother . . . prepare for Victoria’s apotheosis as the very image of British global dominance and the figure of good and plenty—also a symbolic representation of plenty of goods” (“Good and Plenty” 17).

35. Donald Macleod, for example, though he doesn’t accuse Victoria of willful ignorance, makes a special plea to the queen to “preserve that noble [Celtic] race from extirpation, and becoming extinct, and to protect them from violence, oppression, and spoliation to which they have been subjected for many years” (Gloomy Memories of the Highlands, in Alexander Mackenzie, The History of the Highland Clearances [1883; Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1991], 135). Ironically, Macleod’s particular target is the estate of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, which saw a great number of evictions in the early nineteenth century and which Victoria recounts in her journals visiting several times, making no mention of its troubled history. In More Leaves, Victoria does include an account given by the Duke of Argyle on the “semi-barbarous” system of runrig in which plots of arable land were assigned to tenants by lot each year. Victoria remarks that “only two villages of the kind are in existence in the Highlands,” but makes no commentary on the fate of the older system, except to say that the “inhabitants are very exclusive, and hardly ever marry out of their own villages” (303). A reporter for the Northern Ensign, who witnessed forced eviction in Strath Carron in 1854, wrote that the royal cipher “VR” burned into the wood of the police truncheons caused the people to believe “that Her Majesty sanctions, nay, encourages and authorizes these evictions” (quoted in Cullen, The Empress Brown 53). For an overview of social protest in the Highlands in the nineteenth century, see Devine, Clanship to Crofters’ War and The Scottish Nation 413–417; and Richards, The Highland Clearances.

36. Victoria contrasted the favorable racial traits of the Highlander with those of the unruly Irish. In her mind the essential “disloyalty” of the Irish was the chief characteristic that set them apart from their fellow “Celts” across the Irish Sea. Constantly fearful of Fenian assassination plots in the 1860s, Victoria exasperatingly remarked that the Irish lower orders “had never become reconciled to English rule, which they hate! So different from the Scotch who are so loyal” (quoted in Longford 360). Victoria’s answer to this challenge to racial logic was to listen to Albert, who vaguely attributed Scottish superiority to an admixture of Scandinavian blood. The only solution to the Irish problem, Victoria wrote in a letter to her daughter, was a “new infusion of race” (quoted in Longford 366).

37. Elizabeth Langland, for example, in her otherwise fascinating account of the use of Victoria’s image in the “developing narrative of Englishness,” poses the question whether a female monarch “can be made to embody an Englishness that is articulated through the
public school ethos.” Langland’s study emphasizes the multiple meanings of Englishness in the Victorian age, but does not account for the ways in which Englishness defined itself in opposition to alternative national identities within Britain (“Nation and Nationality: Queen Victoria in the Developing Narrative of Englishness,” in Remaking Queen Victoria 17).
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