Imagining Scotland in Music: Place, Audience, and Attraction

Paul F. Moulton
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

IMAGINING SCOTLAND IN MUSIC:
PLACE, AUDIENCE, AND ATTRACTION

By
Paul F. Moulton

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The members of the Committee approve the Dissertation of Paul F. Moulton defended on 15 September, 2008.

_____________________________
Douglass Seaton
Professor Directing Dissertation

_____________________________
Eric C. Walker
Outside Committee Member

_____________________________
Denise Von Glahn
Committee Member

_____________________________
Michael B. Bakan
Committee Member

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.
To Alison
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# Table of Contents

List of Musical Examples ................................................................. viii  
List of Figures ................................................................................. x  
Abstract ............................................................................................ xii  

1. INTRODUCTION .............................................................................. 1  
   Purpose ............................................................................................ 4  
   Survey of Literature ......................................................................... 5  
   Approach ........................................................................................... 6  

2. ORIGINS OF THE SCOTTISH IDENTITY ........................................ 9  
   Land .................................................................................................. 10  
   History .............................................................................................. 14  
   Creating Cultural Borders ................................................................. 26  
   Representing Scotland in Literature ................................................... 31  
      James Macpherson .......................................................................... 34  
      Robert Burns .................................................................................. 44  
      Walter Scott .................................................................................... 51  
   Conclusion .......................................................................................... 57  

3. SCOTLAND IN THE DRAWING ROOM ............................................ 59  
   Overview of Scottish Songbooks ....................................................... 60  
      Allan Ramsay’s *The Tea-Table Miscellany* ........................................ 60  
      William Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius* ........................................ 62  
      James Johnson’s *The Scots Musical Museum* .................................. 65  
      George Thomson’s *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* .... 69  
   Songbook Audiences .......................................................................... 73  
   Songbook Attraction .......................................................................... 86  
   History and Authenticity ..................................................................... 87  
   Primitivism ......................................................................................... 88  
   Entertainment ..................................................................................... 91  
   Social Development .......................................................................... 92
7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION ................................................................. 207

Scotland’s Images ................................................................. 208
Performance Spaces and Audiences ........................................... 209
Audience Attraction ............................................................. 210

APPENDICES

A  Chronological List of Scottish Songbooks ................................. 212
B  Known Editions of Allan Ramsay’s *Tea-Table Miscellany* .......... 221
C  Sample List of Subscribers to *Orpheus Caledonius, 2nd Edition* 223

BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................................................. 225

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ............................................................ 238
LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Example 3.1. mm. 9-12 of Johnson’s “Highland Laddie” .......................... 102
Example 4.1. Uberto’s folk-aria “Aurora! Ah sorgerai,” in La donna .................... 119
Example 4.2. Harp introduction, fountain scene, in Lucia .......................... 120
Example 4.3. Lucia’s harp accompanied aria, “Quando rapito in estasi” .......... 120
Example 4.4. Trio excerpt at beginning of Act II, in La donna ....................... 122
Example 4.5. Excerpt, Uberto’s love aria, “Oh fiamma soave” .................. 122
Example 4.6. Excerpt, Elena’s rondo in the finale of La donna ....................... 123
Example 4.7. Beginning of Lucia’s “Regnava nel silenzio” ......................... 123
Example 4.8. Excerpt, Regnava nel silenzio,” when Lucia describes the ghost .. 124
Example 4.9. Aria “Ill dolce suono” from Lucia’s mad scene ....................... 124
Example 4.10. Enrico’s vengeance aria “Cruda, funesta smania” ............... 125
Example 4.11. Edgardo’s vengeance aria “Qui del padre ancor respira” .......... 125
Example 5.1. Wave gesture, Hebrides Overture ........................................ 139
Example 5.2. Andante theme, first movement, “Scottish” Symphony ............ 147
Example 5.3. Primary Allegro theme, first movement, “Scottish” Symphony .... 148
Example 5.4. Secondary theme, first movement, “Scottish” Symphony ........... 149
Example 5.5. Second closing theme, first movement, “Scottish” Symphony .... 149
Example 5.6. Primary theme, second movement, “Scottish” Symphony ................. 151

Example 5.7. Introduction theme, third movement, “Scottish” Symphony ................. 152

Example 5.8. Primary theme, third movement, “Scottish” Symphony ................. 152

Example 5.9. Martial 1P theme, fourth movement, “Scottish” Symphony ................. 153

Example 5.10. Martial 2P theme, fourth movement, “Scottish” Symphony ................. 153

Example 5.11. Regal 2S theme, fourth movement, “Scottish” Symphony ................. 154

Example 5.12. Hushed 1S theme, fourth movement, “Scottish” Symphony ................. 154

Example 6.1. Opening verse and refrain of traditional “Bheir mi sgriob.” ................. 181
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1. Map of Scotland ................................................................. 11
Figure 2.2. Scara Brae ................................................................. 16
Figure 2.3. Complex of Identity Layers .............................................. 58
Figure 3.1. Scottish Songbook Production, 1700-1850 ..................... 63
Figure 3.2. 9th Edition of the *Tea-Table Miscellany* ..................... 76
Figure 3.3. Binding and cover page of *Orpheus Caledonius* .......... 78
Figure 3.4. Partial list of subscribers to *Orpheus Caledonius* .......... 80
Figure 3.5. Alternate Scots and English song texts in *Select Collection* ................. 83
Figure 3.6. Frontispiece engraving of Volume II of Thomson’s *Select Collection* ...... 84
Figure 3.7. End engraving of Volume II of Thomson’s *Select Collection* ........ 85
Figure 3.8. Pleyel’s introduction to “Yellow-hair’d laddie” .................. 86
Figure 3.9. Pleyel’s coda to “Yellow-hair’d laddie” ......................... 86
Figure 3.10. Frontispiece of *Fun for the Parlour* ............................. 91
Figure 3.11. James Gillray’s *Farmer Giles* ....................................... 93
Figure 3.12. Detail of image on British chimney board ..................... 96
Figure 3.13. Claude Glass ................................................................. 98
Figure 3.14. “The Highland Laddie,” in Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius* .......... 99
Figure 3.15. Johnson’s “The Highland Ladie,” arranged by Stephen Clarke ................. 101

Figure 3.16. Excerpt from Pleyel’s setting of “The Highland Laddie” in Select Collection . 103

Figure 5.1. Proscenium Arch ................................................................. 132

Figure 5.2. Outer and inner frames of Mendelssohn’s Scottish Symphony ................. 156

Figure 6.1. Album cover of Capercaillie’s Crosswinds (1987) .............................. 178

Figure 6.2. Album cover of Capercaillie’s Dusk till Dawn (1998) .......................... 180

Figure 6.3. Dougie MacLean ............................................................... 187

Figure 6.4. Dougie MacLean and performers with the tractor in Rural Image, Jan. 2006 . . . 204
ABSTRACT

Since the eighteenth century modern Scotland has attracted the attention of a large audience of foreigners, curious about this place of intriguing scenery, history, and culture. For these onlookers, music portraying Scotland has created attractive images that have fulfilled and informed their perceptions of Scotland. This work surveys several prominent compositions that have created an aural representation of the place of Scotland, and identifies the various images portrayed in these compositions. Works examined include eighteenth-century songbooks, nineteenth-century operatic and orchestral works, and modern Celtic music. The images of Scotland presented in these pieces vary, but often identify Scotland as an Other place. The study also identifies audiences, and then based on the images presented and the audiences’ reactions to the works suggests several reasons for foreigners’ attraction to the images. For some listeners, musical performances brought Scotland into their own environs and allowed for a temporary visit as virtual tourists. For others, a performance was an experience that transcended regular life. Still others used the music to link their own personal identity to a culture with historical roots.

The various musical works and their respective representations of place are examined in the context of their places of performance. This discussion illuminates the influence a performance space can have upon musical depictions of place. The settings of the drawing room, opera theater, concert hall, and modern listening media help shape the presented image of Scotland. In turn, the performance of Scottish images in foreign spaces temporarily transforms the performance space as Scotland is re-implaced. Audiences’ willingness to participate in these performances, through various levels of activity, reveals personal desires to experience the Otherness of Scotland through the emotionally laden medium of music.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the past two and a half centuries the land and people of Scotland have inspired numerous musical compositions ranging from songs to symphonies and from operas to modern Celtic songs. Musical interest in this small, European-fringe country is unusual. The English musicologist Roger Fiske has identified a peculiar lopsidedness in this interest, noting that most of the art music relating to Scotland has been written by musicians who resided outside of Scotland.¹ This country, with its relatively small population,² has produced only a few, lesser-known composers of art music, but the lack of native composers has been disproportionately compensated for by outside composers, who have written much music about this foreign land. Purcell, Haydn, Beethoven, Rossini, Schubert, Berlioz, Mendelssohn, Donizetti, Brahms, and Bruch, to mention only a few, all wrote music inspired by Scotland.

Ironically, only one of the above named composers (Mendelssohn) actually visited Scotland, and it is evident that he anticipated writing Scottish pieces, even before he traveled there. Thus it was the alluring image of Scotland, rather than personal experience there, that captivated the attention of some of the most prominent Western composers; and this image may have had a more pronounced effect on the minds of composers and audiences than the physical land itself.

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¹ Roger Fiske claims that the interest in Scotland is “un paralleled” in his book Scotland in Music: A European Enthusiasm (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), x. He notes that Spain attracted similar interest, but not until the end of the nineteenth century. In current times Ireland may have surpassed Scotland with its lead in the modern Celtic movement, but for many audiences, Irish and Scottish locales are more unified than separate within the blurred boundaries of the Celtic landscape.

² Slightly more than five million people currently inhabit Scotland; the 2001 census counted 5,062,011 people. By comparison, the 1901 census counted 4,962,152 people in Scotland, and the 1801 the census counted 1,608,420 inhabitants.
The duration of outsider interest is notable, particularly in light of the stylistic and aesthetic trends that have come and gone during the last two and a half centuries. Diversity within this large body of Scotland-inspired music is significant, but beneath its varied musical surfaces this music generally depicts a peculiar place, a distinct landscape, and an intriguing people.

Much Scottish music research has been written in the traditional historical narrative that documents the characteristics and developments of the music of Scotland rather than music about Scotland. Musicologists have exerted significant efforts describing the history of native Scottish art music and folk music. Modern Celtic music scholarship, which has been dominated by ethnomusicologists and folklorists, has similarly focused on documenting the history and roots of the popular movement within the various Celtic countries, including Scotland, during the last few decades. Only a few scholars, including Fiske, have noted the unusual interest in Scotland by the non-Scottish, but they have usually focused on quantifying and gathering evidence that demonstrates the outsiders’ fascination with Scotland. Several others, such as R. Larry Todd, have documented individual foreign musicians’ fascination with Scotland, but few have specifically addressed general reasons for this attraction.

A lacuna in these studies has been treatment of the images of Scotland portrayed in music. Studies of individual pieces have usually discussed the construction of the music, often focusing on Scottish-sounding elements in the works. Mendelssohn has been the exception, as scholars have noted the relationship of his Scotland-inspired pieces to his travels through the land. In the research, however, there has been little discussion about the imagined land of

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3 The Celtic “nations” include Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Mann, Cornwall, Brittany, and Celtic Iberia. See Kenny Mathieson, ed., *Celtic Music* (San Francisco: Backbeat, 2001), 4.


Scotland. Literary and political scholars have noted the fabrication and propagation of a Scottish identity, but few music scholars have investigated the subject, which has been so resonant with composers during the past two hundred years.

In addition to musicians, Scotland intrigued foreign audiences. Beginning with James Macpherson’s *Ossian* poems of the 1760s and continuing with the works of Robert Burns and Sir Walter Scott, Europe developed an appetite for depictions of Scotland. This northland, somewhat isolated by its island location and its rugged geography, was depicted in literature as a sublime place with capacity for both grandeur and desolation. While the inhabitants of this sensational landscape were viewed as equally rugged, their behaviors were often described as more virtuous and noble than those of the refined European aristocracy. The Scots and the Scottish landscape, as portrayed in literature and music, fascinated people across Europe and America.

This image, its construction and presentation, has not been a passive portrayal of Scotland. Its representation has actively informed, or misinformed, foreigners about the physical and cultural features of this place. Indeed the image and its attraction involves interplay between physical Scotland, the musical imagination of composers, and the imaginations of audiences. When Scotland’s portrayal through music resonates with audiences, an interaction occurs wherein imagined ideas of Scotland are communicated to individual audience members, either verifying or altering their perceptions.

The depiction of Scotland in music relates to its land and people, but ultimately it is a fabricated representation. And it is this imagined place—this imaginary landscape—that has captured the attention of audiences outside of Scotland. This study seeks to identify the images represented in music and then to understand the attraction of non-Scottish audiences to these portrayals of Scotland.

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5(...continued)

Tonality?,” *19th Century Music* 29/3 (Spring 2006): 240-60.

6 The Scottish Highlanders were viewed by many as proof of the Enlightenment views of primitive man as the noble savage. In Hugh Blair’s “A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian, the Son of Fingal,” which was printed with various editions of *Ossian* beginning in 1765, he extolls the virtues of the ancient Celts. He declares that the ancient poet Ossian was “our rude Celtic bard” who was able to penetrate “a heart . . . with noble sentiments, and with sublime and tender passions.” See James Macpherson, *The Poems of Ossian and Related works*, ed. Howard Gaskill (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), 356-58.
Purpose

This dissertation has a three-fold purpose: addressing 1) the images of Scotland in music, 2) the places and audiences for these musical performances, and 3) reasons for audience attraction to these representations. This study will look at the ways Scotland—the land and its people—are depicted in music. These images have their roots in the writings of James Macpherson, Robert Burns, and Sir Walter Scott, and these literary roots will be summarized. Whether or not composers are aware of these literary roots seems to matter little. Scotland’s literary identity has become pervasive, existing in both musical and non-musical works including art, dance, and film.

To gain an understanding of Scotland’s depiction, I survey a number of pieces from various genres and times. The point of this study is not to trace a history or to show a chronological development among pieces, which is beyond its scope. Scottish song books from the eighteenth century mark the earliest works studied, while popular Celtic albums from the turn of the twenty-first century constitute the latest works. Between these distant bookends I will survey a variety of works, by composers as diverse as Felix Mendelssohn and the contemporary Celtic composer Dougie Maclean. Admittedly, the juxtaposition of these strange bedfellows may seem problematic, but these unusual associations are fruitful in providing a more comprehensive understanding of the way Scotland has been imagined in music.

Most of the compositions studied will be by non-Scottish composers, but a few native voices will also be heard. What the pieces have in common is that all are works written for foreign audiences. For example, Mendelssohn’s *Scottish* Symphony was inspired by his visit to Scotland in 1829, but it was completed and premiered for Leipzig and London audiences much later in 1842. Many of the works have since been played in Scotland, but all of the pieces discussed have had a significant performance history outside of Scotland.

The study’s second purpose is to gain an understanding of the places in which the pieces were performed and audiences for these venues. I generally do not focus on particular members...
of the audiences, although this information is used when accessible, but rather general audiences, using newspaper reviews and an analysis of the location of the performance.

Finally, this study attempts to make sense of the interface between the image and the audience by proposing reasons for foreign audiences’ interest in the image of Scotland. In studies of place, scholars frequently link representations of place to political and nationalistic agendas, but in this case nationalistic explanations cannot be as readily used, since most of the music to be discussed has been composed by outsiders for members of other nations. Reasons vary from the aesthetic climate to personal tastes. Ultimately, Scotland in music often acts as a symbol for something more personal and abstract than the land itself.

**Survey of Literature**

The study draws from multiple disciplines, including research from the fields of musicology, ethnomusicology, and Scottish literature. Roger Fiske’s *Scotland in Music: A European Enthusiasm* (1983) is the launching point for this study. This Englishman seems to have been the first to discuss in detail the unusual attraction of Scotland to those outside of Scotland, and he has identified many of the pieces inspired by the land. Fiske’s monograph traces, with depth and insightful conclusions, the history of Scottish music abroad and the pieces inspired by the land. His list and discussion of pieces, although incomplete, provides a summary of some of the most notable musical works about Scotland, and many pieces chosen for this study have been drawn from his survey.

Much has been researched about the music of Scotland, not surprisingly by Scottish musicologists. Henry George Farmer (1947), Cedric Thorpe Davie (1980), and John Purser (1992) have written books that detail the history of art music in Scotland, beginning with medieval manuscripts and ending with twentieth-century composers. Others, such as Francis M. Collinson (1966), George S. Emmerson (1971), David Johnson (1972), and Peter Cooke (1986), have written about the traditional musics of Scotland. But these predominantly Scottish scholars have had less concern for the ways that foreign composers have depicted their homeland. Instead
they have documented the history of their native music, with the understandable agenda of magnifying the merits of their music with justifiable national pride.

As the focus of these works has been on the histories of Scottish music, studies about the depiction of Scotland as place have been lacking. But a groundwork has been laid by history and literary scholars who have explored the construction of the Scottish and the related Celtic identity. Malcolm Chapman has been foremost in claiming that the Celtic identity is a fabricated one in *The Celts: The Construction of a Myth* (1992), while Murray G. H. Pittock has advocated a similar argument in *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the Present* (1991). Studies by William Donaldson (1988) and Kenneth Michael McNeil (1998) have made similar assertions.

Although not directly related to Scotland, recent studies of place provide insight into the ways places have inspired and influenced composers and societies from a wide range of geographic locales. Ethnomusicological studies by George Lipsitz (1994), Martin Stokes (1994), Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso (1996), and Denise Von Glahn’s historical musicological study (2003) have brought attention to the importance of place as a factor in music worldwide.

Relating to studies of place but on a more abstract level, postmodern studies of constructed global communities propose theories that also have application to historical communities and audiences. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983), Benedict R. Anderson (1991), Arjun Appadurai (1990), and Mark Slobin (1993) have all completed significant works that describe the fluctuating, multilayered, and often fabricated boundaries of community and place that contribute to notions of community and identity. These notions of identity and community are usually applied to the postmodern age, but they may also inform our understanding of audience members from the nineteenth century, for example, who also participated in various subcultures and formed communities of music patrons.

**Approach**

A study of musical representations of Scotland must start with the land, its people, and its history. Whatever the abstraction or conscious fabrication of these images, they ultimately
derives from the place itself. I begin the dissertation with an overview of the physical features of
the land and a brief history of its people. Then I proceed beyond the physical land and discuss
representations of this reality in literature, with specific attention to works by James Macpherson,
Robert Burns, and Sir Walter Scott. These writers created descriptions of the land that ultimately
established widely accepted images of Scotland, which subsequently inspired numerous people
outside of Scotland.

After this groundwork is laid, I analyze a variety of music pieces to discover the ways
Scotland is portrayed in music. Attention will be given to stylistic features (such as technical
construction, instrumentation, and their aural connotations), dramatic form or effects, and issues
of language and dialect. The works come from a wide range of times and genres, with the earliest
work from 1733 and the latest from 2005. Major works will be analyzed, such as Mendelssohn’s
Scottish Symphony, as well as a few less-known works, such as William Thomson’s songbook
Orpheus Caledonius. Modern Celtic music will also be discussed; analysis of Celtic pieces will
be primarily based on albums.

The audiences at the premieres of these pieces are also investigated. This aspect of the
dissertation will take into consideration matters such as the city where a piece premiered or was
intended to be heard, the performance venue, the cost of a ticket or songbook, the possible
identification of audience members or the culture of the audience generally, and the critical
reception of the work. Composer biographies and the histories of certain theaters and concert
halls will provide some information about these performances and the audience members.
Additional information will be gleaned from published letters, memoirs, subscription lists, and
contemporary newspaper and journal reviews of concerts. Understanding the place of a
performance and the audience that received it ultimately reflects back on the place evoked, the
way it has been imagined and portrayed, and the meanings that Scotland may represent.

The analysis and discussions of these pieces will be organized according to the places in
which the pieces were performed. After a chapter providing background about Scotland, its
history, and literature, I explore the topic of Scottish songbooks and their performance in the
drawing room. This is followed by a chapter about opera in the theater, and another about orchestral music in the concert hall. The final setting discussed is not a specific location, but explores modern Celtic music experienced through portable electronic media.
CHAPTER 2

ORIGINS OF THE SCOTTISH IDENTITY

Music about Scotland derives from the physical land, people, history, and stories of Scotland. Since the land does not produce music, nor do its diverse inhabitants sing a unified chorus, the composer must interpret place, often through the lens of literature, and translate it into sound. He transmogrifies the “hard facts” of history and space into musical tones. The process of representing place becomes the musical act of composing place, as landscapes, weather, and life are created anew in a musical world.

Inspired by the land and its inhabitants, authors similarly create a verbal Scotland. The resulting creations bear the mark of the actual place and of each writer’s finite experiences and biases. Representations in turn build upon representations, until a national identity is formed. The resulting images inform the imaginations of audiences in and out of Scotland. For a foreigner or a Scottish student who reads literature that revels in its kings, knights, and heroic battles, his reality of Scotland becomes inexplicably intertwined with this view. Although the daily experiences of the Scottish reader will mediate romantic portrayals of his homeland, his sense of personal identity will form in a way that relates to these propagated visions. For the outsider who has no experiences in or directly relating to Scotland, these representations become reality. The physical becomes supplanted by the imagined, so that the imaginary produces real effect in the world.1 The present chapter journeys between the physical and the abstract, the objective and the subjective, the history and the story, and the natural and the musical.

A travel brochure published by the national tourism organization of Scotland encapsulates a stereotypical summation of Scotland’s identity. The opening page of the brochure contains

images of mountains, castles, standing stones, and a bagpipe band. Interestingly, all of the images come from the northwest area of Scotland. The more populous regions of the south and east are not represented. Running across the page in large font, with some words highlighted with an even larger font size, the text reads,

> From stunning cities to **breathtaking** scenery, **haunting history**, wonderful festivals and warm **friendly** people, Scotland is all of these and more. It’s a proud and **passionate** place with an impressive heritage, a **vibrant** culture with a distinctive identity. It’s also **easy** to get to and once you arrive here, it’s just as easy to get around. We’re **pride** of our **traditions** and our history and we look forward to sharing them with you.²

This brief introduction illuminates the fabrication of identity. A whole nation is represented by pictures from only one region, and the highlighted words in the description foreground certain ideas to create an emotionally laden national identity. The brochure also provides a convenient template for this chapter. Although I will not touch on everything mentioned in the advertisement, I begin by discussing the “breathtaking scenery,” followed by a review of the “haunting history” and a discussion of the traditions of Scotland. After a survey of geography, history, and traditions I then show ways these “realities” have been perceived and communicated as abstractions in literature.

**Land**

Scotland’s identity stems in part from its geography. Located on the northern part of Britain, its central land mass stretches nearly three-hundred miles in length and one-hundred-fifty miles at its greatest width, although the islands to the north and west substantially extend the boundaries of the country (see Figure 2.1).³ The small size of the nation facilitates the creation of an imagined homogenous national identity, but this constructed unity suppresses the geographical, cultural, and linguistic divisions that have been more pronounced in the past.

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² “Scotland: Welcome to Our Life” (Edinburgh: VisitScotland, 2006). VisitScotland is the national tourism organization of Scotland.

³ This image comes from Wikepdia Commons.
Geographical features separate the nation into three main regions: Highlands, Lowlands, and islands. These distinct physical areas maintain some linguistic and cultural autonomy and have historically had varying degrees of political separation. The Grampian Mountains divide the nation diagonally into the Highlands of the northwest and the Lowlands of the south and east. The range begins a few miles north of Glasgow in the west and runs northeast to Aberdeen on the east coast. This geographic feature has separated the people of Scotland physically and contributed to the semi-independent development of cultures, so that historically Scotland has been divided culturally.

Historically the Lowlands have been the most populous part of Scotland. Comprised of rolling hills and a few minor mountain ranges, the area is the most inhabitable part of the land, suitable for agriculture, transportation, and the building of large cities. Its firths (large ocean inlets), such as the Firth of Clyde, Firth of Tay, and Firth of Forth, provide excellent access for nautical transportation and consequently host most of the largest cities: Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dundee.

In contrast, the Highlands are a rugged, mountainous area, laced with numerous glens (narrow valleys) and lochs (deep glacial lakes). Although picturesque, the rough land is not well suited for agrarian purposes or for sustaining large populations. Highlanders have historically relied on raising sturdy herds of sheep and cattle and on fishing for their sustenance. The harsh
terrain contains the highest mountain in Britain, Ben Nevis, and a desolate landscape interspersed with numerous moors and treeless glens and mountains, inhabited by few people.

Away from the mainland, to the north and west, are nearly eight-hundred islands, with fewer than two hundred of them actually inhabited. To the west the islands are largely grouped into two formations: the Inner Hebrides and the Outer Hebrides. In the north the Orkney Islands lie close to the mainland, while the distant Shetland Islands are mid-way between Scotland and Norway. Even more rugged than the Highlands, most of these rocky island groups are nearly treeless, covered with peat bogs created by heavy rainfall and acidic soil. Although the island groups are physically separate from the mainland and thus more prone to have independent traditions, the inhabitants of the islands have maintained consistent cultural commerce with the Highlanders, sharing a common heritage, a language, and many traditions. As will be seen, the coastal nature of Scotland (including its nearly thirty-thousand lochs) in combination with its mountainous Highlands and agrarian Lowlands constitute a geography rich in imagery for writers, artists, and tourists.

The climate of Scotland also informs its identity. Rain, wind, and cool temperatures have helped contour the land and the lives of its people, often determining their occupation opportunities, their food choices, and their daily habits and activities. The native Scotsman Robert Louis Stevenson recognized the reality of climate when in 1879 he described Edinburgh:

But Edinburgh pays cruelly for her high seat in one of the vilest climates under heaven. She is liable to be beaten upon by all the winds that blow, to be drenched with rain, to be buried in cold sea fogs out of the east, and powdered with the snow as it comes flying southward from the Highland hills. The weather is raw and boisterous in winter, shifty and ungenial in summer, and downright meteorological purgatory in the spring. . . . For all who love shelter and the blessings of the sun, who hate dark weather and perpetual tilting against squalls, there could scarcely be found a more unhomely and harassing place of residence. 

Stevenson’s description seethes with discontent and counters the common romanticized images of historic Edinburgh, but his description of the weather is perhaps more accurate.

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Rain falls abundantly throughout Scotland. In the islands and the Highlands the average often exceeds 120 inches per year, while the east coast receives less, with some areas averaging around 31 inches per year. Precipitation adds to the already watery nature of Scotland with its coasts and lochs. It also brings with it abundant cloud cover and fog, so that misty depictions of Scotland reflect empirical reality. In the Highlands “measurable” rainfall occurs on over 250 days of the year, and this figure does not take into full account the “Scottish mist,” a light rainfall that seems to dampen everything but soak very little. Thus un-obscured sunlight reaches the wettest portions of Scotland only a minority of the time.\(^5\)

Wind also blows in abundance, as many of the major Atlantic depressions pass over or by Scotland, creating stronger winds in Scotland than in other parts of the United Kingdom. Winds are most acute in the Hebridian, Orkney, and Shetland Islands, where gales (sustained winds of more than 39 miles per hour) occur more than thirty days of the year.\(^6\) Such winds make human habitation difficult and inhibit the growth of all but the hardiest of plants, and they thus contribute to depictions of Scotland as an exotic, unpopulated landscape.

Rain and wind further exacerbate the generally cool temperatures of Scotland. Considering its location in the north, one would expect a very cold climate, like that of its neighbors Norway and Iceland, but the same Atlantic winds that blast its coasts also make the weather milder. Temperatures occasionally drop below freezing but seldom for a sustained period. On average the temperature during January and February is between 41 and 45 degrees Fahrenheit. During the summer temperatures hover around a tepid 66 degrees Fahrenheit.\(^7\) Society has found ways to cope with these chilly conditions in ways that influence clothing styles, food choices, occupational and entertainment activities, and mental health.

\(^5\) For a comparison of rainfall in the United States, Orlando, Florida, receives an average of about 48 inches per year, with 116 days of rain, Seattle, Washington, averages about 38 inches of rain per year, with 151 days of rain (www.climate-zone.com, accessed 26 June 2006).


Cool temperatures and the constant barrage of wind and rain influence the day-to-day activities of the Scottish people, their individual self-concepts, and outside perceptions of Scottish identity. The people are often stereotyped as being a rough and sturdy lot. I once heard a foreigner comment that the Scottish were “a prickly lot” like their national flower, the thistle (itself an interesting emblem). Perhaps the rugged geography and rough climate condition an equally rugged people, so that such generalizations about Scottish people are rooted in reality. Of course exceptions abound, but a discussion of national identity is necessarily an investigation of generalizations.

Typically a depiction of place requires selective representations of objects and characteristics, so that some elements receive much attention, while other characteristics may be completely ignored. In portrayals of Scotland much attention is given to the spectacular scenery, while the harshness of climate is often ignored. However, elements of climate are far more difficult to depict than dramatic scenery. Literature and music cannot make you cold and wet, but neither would most artists or audiences want to communicate such unpleasantries. The result is that no representation, no matter how accurate, can ever portray a complete place; all representations are inherently selective portraits.

**History**

The “hard facts” of history comprise the second foundation for any depiction of place. Like representations of climate, history is inherently selective and more interpretive. The Lowlands have for centuries been the seat of government and have housed nearly all of the ecclesiastical centers and universities of Scotland. These centers of writing and records have the largest mass of historical evidence, so the history of Scotland favors the perspective of the

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Lowlands, while the Highlands and islands, with their sparser populations, have few historical records. Scottish history is inevitably lopsided.

Lack of written historical evidence is further complicated by the historical animosity between Highlanders and Lowlanders. Historical accounts by the Lowlanders often present an uncomplimentary view of their mountain neighbors as indolent cattle thieves. European visitors shared these sentiments, considering the inhabitants of the Highlands as barbarians equal to their rugged terrain. In 1535 the traveler Peter Swave described the Highlanders in unflattering terms:

The wild Scots live in the manner of the Scythians, they are ignorant of the use of bread; when they are hungry they outstrip a stag in swiftness of foot, overtake it and kill it, and so sustain life: they eat the flesh raw, only squeezing out the blood. Views like this one lasted well into the eighteenth century. However, an unusual transformation of attitude has occurred during the last two hundred years, as Scotland has adopted the image of the Highland culture.

Like representations of place, history wears blinders; it is a selective distillation. Events that happen through time are suspended, as the active becomes inactive. What was a disjointed conglomeration of events is smoothed into a cohesive, stylized narrative, as a collage of histories becomes a singular story. Certain events, people, and images have risen to the surface in the pool of history and become national symbols of identity.

Scottish history is dominated by figures who represent independence and sovereignty—a central Scottish theme. Narratives herald William Wallace and Robert the Bruce as national heroes, while they deride English sympathists such as Edward Balliol, and neglect peaceful monarchs such as Robert II. However, this study is less concerned with historical accuracy than creative mimesis. The important figures and events in Scottish history need summarizing, since they form the mythology of the people who inhabit the land.

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10 Quoted in Rixson, 18.


12 Balliol ceded part of southern Scotland to England in exchange for its supporting his claim to the Scottish throne in the fourteenth century.
Most histories begin by describing the earliest inhabitants of Scotland, about whom very little is known. Once these vague, ancient groups have been identified, based on archaeology, as the ancestors of the modern-day Scots, many histories then center around Scotland’s resistance to various invading groups: Romans, Anglo-Saxons, English, etc. Focusing on these conflicts, the narrative of Scotland revolves around a plot of an ancient people in constant struggle for independence.

Descriptions of Scotland’s ancient inhabitants often border on the mystical and contribute to the image of Scotland. Little is known about these peoples, and the relics that remain tantalize archeologists, historians, and the public in general. These peoples left no written record—it is assumed that they were not literate—but they did leave enigmatic standing stones and other building remnants that encourage numerous, and often far-fetched, explanations. On Orkney Island exist the remnants of Skara Brae, the best-preserved prehistoric settlement in Europe (see Figure 2.2). Inhabited around 3100 BC, before the pyramids of Egypt were built, this village attests to significant ancient cultures north of the Mediterranean. During the next millennium inhabitants on the Isle of Lewis built a circle of large standing stones named Calanais. Built before Stonehenge these stones inspire more questions than they answer, with some archeologists speculating that it may have been used as a temple, a burial complex, or an astronomical observatory with ritualistic purposes. Other standing stones, in addition to burial mounds and other structures, exist throughout Scotland and incite similar curiosity. The continuous existence of ancient structures built by unknown peoples establishes an ancient and mystic lineage for the inhabitants of Scotland.

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14 Ibid., 7.
Attempts have been made to identify these ancient residents, but many proposals are flawed, and the remainder lean heavily on guesswork. One of the earliest theories was produced to support John Balliol’s claim to the Scottish crown during the 1290s. This “origin myth” claimed that the indigenous populations of Scotland came originally from Egypt, and it established a lineage of kings that linked Scottish royalty to Irish royalty and ultimately to Noah. An even earlier origin myth was formulated in the tenth century by King Constantine II. He claimed that Scotland was settled by an Egyptian princess named Scota, who brought with her the stone used by the Hebrew Jacob in his dream about the ladder. This stone became the Stone of Scone or Stone of Destiny.\textsuperscript{15}

A more modern myth was circulated in the mid-eighteenth century, when William Stukeley assumed in his \textit{History of the Ancient Celts} (two volumes 1740, 1743) that the stone circles of Britain were the temples of the ancient Celts, the sanctuary of Druid priests.\textsuperscript{16} Stukeley and others in the eighteenth century believed that the original inhabitants of Britain were descendants of the continental Celts described by Roman writers.\textsuperscript{17} Although historians and archeologists generally disagree with his claim, participants in the modern Celtic movement hold fast to the idea.

More is known about the residents of Northern Britain following the Roman invasion of Britain in AD 43 and their invasion of the area of present-day Scotland in AD 61. The Romans wrote about the inhabitants of this northern area from their biased perspective, but their reports provide the earliest written account of Scotland. When Christian missionaries arrived in the fifth and sixth centuries their accounts further described these peoples.
During the first millennium AD the area was inhabited by several distinct groups, who comprised a number of kingdoms.\textsuperscript{18} The Picts dwelled in the northern-most part of the British Isle and were given their name by the Romans because they painted themselves. Little is known about residents of Pictland, although they are famous for their stone carvings in central and northeast Scotland. The Gododdin (or Votadini) occupied the area surrounding modern Edinburgh, of which they are the earliest known settlers, but they were overrun by the powerful Angles, who had originally come from Germany to assist the Romans in the fourth century. The Angle kingdom of Northumbria stretched from the northeast of England into the southeast of Scotland as far as the Firth of Forth. In the southwest of Scotland were the Britons (Saxons), part of a larger group of people that stretched south into the present Lake District. It was from this people that the mythology of King Arthur developed, with some claims that he hailed from Scotland.\textsuperscript{19} In the area of present-day Scotland the Britons formed two rival kingdoms: Strathclyde (including the area around modern Glasgow) and Rheged (in the southwest).

The name of Scotland derives from a group originally from Ireland. Gaelic-speaking Scots, whom the Romans called Scoti, originally came from Ireland around the year AD 500 and settled the islands and mountains of west Scotland. Their kingdom of Dalriada expanded as a result of military forays into neighboring kingdoms, and in the ninth century the Scots and the Picts were united under Kenneth mac Alpin, a descendent of both a Gael and a Pict. The new kingdom established its royal seat in Scone, near Perth, and it is the first recognizable royal dynasty in Scotland.\textsuperscript{20} The kingdom eventually expanded to cover Scotland’s current territory, although its southern border with England has often been in dispute.

Conflict over the border and Scotland’s sovereignty in general has been a dominating topic for many Scottish historians, and it is in these tensions—whether violent or merely political—that Scotland’s identity has been formed. The first recorded conflict was with the Romans. In attempts to consolidate their positions in AD 121 the Romans built a wall, named

\textsuperscript{18} See Magnusson’s review of pre-historic Scotland, 24-34.


\textsuperscript{20} Magnusson, 41.
after Emperor Hadrian, that ran from west to east coast just north of the present cities of Carlisle and Newcastle. They later pushed further north and in AD 142-43 built another wall, named after Emperor Antonine, between the Forth and Clyde rivers. By the fifth century the Romans withdrew from Scotland to deal with pressures on the Continent. Although the Roman military prevailed against dissenting Scottish bands, these two walls have become symbols that perpetuate the myth of Scotland’s fierce independence. Modern residents of Scotland take pride in the fact that the Romans had to build walls to keep back the Scottish warriors.

Next in the wave of invaders were the Vikings. They harried the coast and islands for more than two hundred years (800-1000 AD), causing some residents to flee vulnerable areas. In addition to harrying the coastal areas, the northern invaders also colonized the Orkney and Shetland Islands and established settlements in the Western Isles, creating a hereditary link between Scotland (or a portion of it) and the Scandinavian raiders.

Norman occupiers were the next threat, but they never actually invaded Scotland as they had done England. However, the Scots brought trouble upon themselves when they preemptively invaded the Normans in northwest England during a series of raids between 1072 and 1093. In each attack the Scottish were repulsed and forced to sign a treaty. The situation was never as dire as it was in England, and eventually Scotland invited Norman knights into their kingdom and a melding of the two cultures occurred.²¹

During the last millennium the conflict with England dominates Scotland’s story. Although the populations of both countries share much of the same lineage (Angles and Britons), the relationship between the Scots and the English has been constantly tense, encouraging the Scottish to differentiate themselves from the neighbors by establishing their own traditions and sense of nationality.²² Through more than seven hundred years of war between the two kingdoms, Scotland made numerous incursions into England in an attempt to reclaim its historic lands and to repulse the English when they seemed weak. In response England repeatedly

²¹ Magnusson, 70.

squelched these provocations and on several occasions coerced treaties from the Scottish wherein its monarchs made promises of fealty to the English king. These treaties seldom had any actual binding effect, and they often propagated even more political and martial feuding between the two neighbors.

Against the backdrop of struggle for independence Scotland’s most renowned national hero arose: William Wallace. Wallace became a key figure in the history of Scotland because of his successful defiance of the powerful armies of England. In a stunning victory he routed Edward I’s larger and better equipped army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297, but he was defeated a year later at the Battle of Falkirk. Wallace became a fugitive, successfully hiding from Edward’s soldiers and allies for nearly eight years, until he was betrayed by a fellow Scot.23 Once captured, he was taken to London, where he was partially hung and then drawn and quartered in 1305. Wallace was a capable warrior with exceptional leadership skills, and his defiance of the English has given him a mythological status. He has been revered in oral and written legends since his martyrdom, and to this day he still inspires Scottish nationalism.24

Robert the Bruce is another hero from the same time period, but his status is complicated by his allegiance to Edward I during the same time that Wallace was defying English authority. After Wallace’s defeat, Bruce, the Scottish would say, came to his senses (although perhaps too late) and took up Wallace’s rally for independence. In 1306 Bruce was crowned King of Scots, but after his defeat to Edward I in the same year he went into hiding for a year. He later emerged and rallied support to defeat Edward II at the Battle of Bannockburn (1314). His success continued as he conducted several successful military forays into England and Ireland and eventually forced England to recognize Scotland’s independence—at least temporarily.

During Robert the Bruce’s reign, and under his direction, came the most celebrated of Scotland’s documents, the Declaration of Arbroath (1320). The document was written to Pope John XXII in an effort to persuade him to lift the excommunication of Robert the Bruce, which

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23 Sir John Menteith exposed Wallace to the English, and he has become the arch-traitor in Scottish history. Magnusson, 153.

24 The 220 foot William Wallace Monument was built near Stirling in 1869. Mel Gibson’s popular movie Braveheart (1995) is one of the most recent contributions to the lionizing of William Wallace.
he had incurred in 1306 as a result of his murdering a rival to the throne. The document is heralded for its claim that men are inherently free and that a king is ultimately answerable to his subjects:

Yet if [the king] should give up what he has begun, and agree to make us or our kingdom subject to the King of England or the English, we should exert ourselves at once to drive him out as our enemy and a subverter of his own rights and ours. . . . It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom—for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself.25

This stirring doctrine has since influenced numerous political documents, including the American Declaration of Independence, but the bulk of the Declaration of Arbroath advocates the independence of Scotland and indicts the English as deceitful adversaries. Indeed the Declaration encapsulates the mythology of Scotland.

The document begins by recounting Scotland’s origin myth, claiming that according to the “chronicles and books of the ancients” the Scots had come from “Greater Scythia by way of the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Pillars of Hercules, and dwelt for a long course of time in Spain among the most savage tribes.” Eventually the Scots came to their current land, where they drove out the Britons and Picts and resisted the Viking raiders. The document emphasizes their fierce resistance to enemies, boasting that “nowhere could they be subdued by any race, however barbarous,” and that “even though very often assailed by the Norwegians, the Danes and the English, [the Scots] took possession of that home [Scotland] with many victories and untold efforts; and they have held it free of all bondage ever since.” Having established this honorable history, the document then accuses the English of unwarranted provocation:

Thus our nation . . . did indeed live in freedom and peace up to the time when that mighty prince the King of the English, Edward, the father of the one who reigns today, when our kingdom had no head and our people harboured no malice or treachery and were then unused to wars or invasions, came in the guise of a friend and ally to harass them as an enemy. The deeds of cruelty, massacre, violence, pillage, arson, imprisoning prelates, burning down monasteries, robbing and killing monks and nuns, and yet other outrages without number which he committed against our people, sparing neither age nor sex,

25 The original was written in Latin. The translation is by Sir James Fergusson (b. 1925) and is quoted in full on the Clan Stirling website (http://www.clanstirling.org/Main/lib/research/TheDeclarationofArbroath.htm, accessed 7/18/08).
religion nor rank, no one could describe nor fully imagine unless he had seen them with his own eyes.

This diatribe against England summarizes the animosity between neighbors that dominates the narrative tone of much of Scottish history.

Once England has been criminalized, the Declaration lauds Robert the Bruce as the deliverer from English atrocities. It then proclaims their innocence and desire for freedom, and urges the Pope to intercede on their behalf:

May it please you to admonish and exhort the King of the English . . . to leave us Scots in peace, who live in this poor little Scotland, beyond which there is no dwelling-place at all, and covet nothing but our own.

The writers depict Scotland as a small, innocent nation full of peace-loving people—capable of ferocity when provoked—who are bullied by an unruly Goliath. This self-depiction establishes the Scottish identity and its placement in a history of struggle.

Over the course of the next three centuries Scotland was intermittently engaged in internal conflict and in war with England. Often Scotland’s position against the latter was strengthened by its long-standing alliance with France, which only further infuriated the English. During this period two events rise prominently to the surface of the pool of histories: one is the Scottish Reformation, led by the feisty and politically savvy John Knox during the middle part of the sixteenth century; the other is the execution of Mary Queen of Scots by her cousin Queen Elizabeth of England. The Protestant movement in Scotland drew further divisions, doctrinal and organizational, that fueled numerous internal and external conflicts for several centuries, many with lasting consequences.

Queen Mary was the first monarch in Britain to die as a result of this religious animosity. For numerous reasons Catholic Mary was derided by Scottish Protestants, and through a series of personal and political misfortunes she ended up as a fugitive in England, hoping for the mercy of her cousin Elizabeth. However, once she was in England accusations were made of her complicity in a planned coup, and she was imprisoned and eventually executed in 1587. The circumstances surrounding her demise have been the subject of much debate among historians, but perhaps most vivid in this episode of Scottish history is the regicide committed by her own English cousin. Her martyrdom, in the eyes of the Scottish, is diminished very little by the fact
that she was forced out of Scotland by her own subjects. Once again, the Scottish-English conflict is fore-grounded in this intriguing story.

Scotland entered a new phase of relations with England when Mary’s son James VI became the king of England in 1603 as James I, thus uniting the crowns of both nations. The Union of the Crowns signaled a more peaceful era between Scotland and England, although not one without conflict. From the Scottish perspective the result of this union was that they become neglected, a second-best to England. James and the Stuart dynasty reigned from England, with little attention given to Scotland, except when Charles I was trying to rally support for himself during the Civil War (1642-51).

Blood was shed at the end of the seventeenth century when the Scots became discontent over politics and religions divisions. During the Glorious Revolution of 1688 James II had been driven out of England by his daughter Mary and his nephew, Mary’s husband, William of Orange. Supporters of James (Jacobites) were to play a prominent subversive role in Great Britain politics during the course of the next century. They initiated several unsuccessful uprisings, beginning in 1689. Ultimately these provocations precipitated the massacre in Glencoe of an innocent Highland clan by English and Scottish soldiers in the winter of 1692. The tragedy has remained a blight on both the English and the Scottish clan Campbell, and the place of Glencoe has become a hollowed place where tourists flock to remember the massacre. It has become a symbol of innocent Scotland suffering at the hands of tyrannical England.

The Scottish claim to a monarch expired when the Stuart line ended with Queen Anne’s death (1714). But this fading of the Scottish royalty did not end without several violent convulsions. These were largely the result of the Act of Union in 1707, which politically unified Scotland and England as the Kingdom of Great Britain. The union was not brought about by violent coercion, although numerous political incentives and threats were pressed upon the Scottish parliament. The act was the result of a legitimate vote by an independent Scottish parliament. Although some of the Scottish citizenry were pleased with the economic promises made by England, most were incensed by this marriage to the age-old adversary. Ultimately,

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26 Magnusson, 557.
though, the Union was financially advantageous for Scotland. Tom Nairn summarizes this beneficial but awkward arrangement: “During the prolonged era of Anglo-Scots imperialist expansion, the Scottish ruling order found that it had given up statehood for a hugely profitable junior partnership in the New Rome.”

But in the short term, the Union of 1707 prompted both violent and ideological attempts to separate Scotland’s identity from that of England. In some ways the erasure of political borders fueled the erection of more distinct cultural borders, as will be discussed later.

After the Union of 1707 France sought to take advantage of Scottish grumblings by sending the exiled James Stuart, son of James II (Queen Mary and Anne’s half brother), back to Scotland with some troops, in the hope of agitating the English with threats of internal divisions. Although their first attempt in 1708 was never realized, a second attempt was made in 1715, after George, Elector of Hanover, had been made George I of England in the previous year. Hoping to take advantage of Scottish and English opposition to their new German king, James Stuart (the “Old Pretender”) hoped to lay claim to the throne as the legitimate heir to the crown. Although his supporters mustered an army of several thousand, they were defeated, and James returned again to the Continent where he would remain the rest of his life.

However, while James was exiled in France and Italy, the Jacobites in Scotland, including the famous Rob Roy MacGregor, continued to harass the English. The final attempt to reinstate a Stuart on the throne occurred when Charles Edward Stuart—also known as “Bonnie Prince Charlie” or the “Young Pretender,” son of the “Old Pretender”—crossed the channel in 1745 to gather an army in Scotland. Initially his military campaigns, called the uprising of “forty-five,” were largely successful, and by the end of the year he was within several days’ march from London. The morale of his troops and generals waned, however, and so they returned to Scotland to gather support. The strongest base of Jacobite supporters was in the Highlands, and the final Jacobite battle occurred there at the moor of Culloden. During the Battle of Culloden (1746) thousands of Highlanders were killed, and the Jacobites were resoundingly defeated. After the defeat the English and Hanoverian dragoons mercilessly slaughtered the injured and

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then for days traveled through the Highlands killing, raping, and plundering the Highlanders they encountered. After spending several months on the run, Charles eventually escaped back to France and faded into history along with the Stuart line.

The English celebrated the victory and defeat of these Highland savages, and further punished the rebels by enacting legislation that forbade weapons, bagpipes, kilts, and speaking Gaelic in Scotland. For the Scottish the defeat at Culloden and the subsequent punitive action has remained a bitter memory that has fomented animosity towards England.

No such violent uprisings have occurred since the Battle of Culloden, and the Scottish seemed to settle into an uneasy relationship with their dominant neighbor. The symbol of a more peaceful union came when George IV visited Edinburgh in 1822 and later when Queen Victoria and Prince Albert established their summer residence at Balmoral Castle in Scotland. The patronage of the royal family helped pacify the divisions of the previous century.

Qualms with the union were latent during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although several groups formed over the course of time, such as the Scottish National Party, that sought to secure more freedoms and independence for the Scottish. But these groups had little success until the final decades of the twentieth century, when many felt that the Tory government (under Margaret Thatcher) was dealing unfairly with its northern partner. In 1988 Sir Robert Grieve published *A Claim of Right for Scotland*. In it he called for a constitutional convention to meet and discuss issues of devolution. His language in some ways echoes the same issues mentioned in the Declaration of Arbroath written nearly seven-hundred-years earlier:

> Scotland faces a crisis of identity and survival. It is now being governed without consent and subject to the declared intention of having imposed upon it a radical change of outlook and behaviour patterns which it shows no sign of wanting. All questions as to whether consent should be a part of government are brushed aside.

Although the meeting of the convention in 1989 did not produce any immediate results, it seemed to initiate some momentum towards Scottish independence a decade later. In 1997 a

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28 Handel composed his famous oratorio *Judas Maccabaeus* in honor of the returning English troops.

29 Magnusson, 624.

30 Italics added. Quoted by Magnusson, 688.
A referendum was held in Scotland calling for the establishment of a parliament in Scotland, and more than seventy percent of voters supported the initiative. By 1999 a new Scottish parliament was elected that controlled many local matters but still allowed for British parliament to control larger issues such as foreign policy. The quasi-independence of Scotland has not completely resolved the division between Scotland and England. Although it has eased some of the political tensions, the political devolution highlights, and may even encourage, yearnings for distinction and separation.

Creating Cultural Borders

Following the Union of 1707 the territorial border dissolved, but it sublimated into a more ideological border: a cultural border. In his study of communities, Anthony P. Cohen has observed that as a result of undermining social changes, “people resort increasingly to symbolic behavior to reconstitute the boundary.” He notes that “history is wonderfully malleable” in the formation of these symbolic boundaries:

Symbols of the “past,” mythically infused with timelessness, have precisely this competence, and attain particular effectiveness during periods of intensive social change when communities have to drop their heaviest cultural anchors in order to resist the currents of transformation.  

Although his conclusion refers to modern sociological changes, it also applies to the social upheaval resulting from the 1707 Union. During the time after the Union the Scottish turned to “malleable” history and cultural distinctiveness to help differentiate their identity from England.

In a similar argument Murray G. H. Pittock states that “Mythology can be a kind of history favoured by the dispossessed.” He and several other scholars have successfully argued that the Scottish identity was formed largely as a result of a national identity crisis. In The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the Present, Pittock


argues that the Scottish identity was born out of the Stuart myth that linked the royal Stuart family with legends of King Arthur and the Gael Fingal (Fionn). This myth was strengthened and cemented by the timing of the Stuart demise at the same time as the Act of Union; thus a longing for independence was coupled with the disappearance of the Stuart line. Pittock then traces the development of this image, beginning with the violent Jacobite opposition to the Union, moving to more passive protestations in literature (namely Macpherson and Burns), and finally transformed into an impotent romanticized version in the nineteenth century (through the writings of Scott).  

The idea of invented culture is not new nor particular to Scotland. Eric Hobsbawm and other contributors to The Invention of Tradition have similarly noted that cultural pressures precipitate the formation of new cultural practices in the form of created traditions:

There is probably no time and place with which historians are concerned which has not seen the “invention” of tradition. . . . However, we should expect it to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which “old” traditions had been designed.

The union between Scotland and England pressured the Scots into producing new traditions that signified their cultural differences with England.

Paradoxically, the new cultural identity was taken from the “traditions” of the Highlands. As mentioned earlier, the Highlands were historically the cultural and economic backwaters of Scotland. Indeed, much of the internal history of Scotland before the Union centered on the conflict between Highlands and Lowlands. But after the uprising of “Forty-five,” which became a symbol of Scottish independence, the cultural symbols of the minority Highlanders were adopted by the nation at large. Ironically, most of those involved in the failed rebellion of “Forty-Five” were Highlanders, whose cause at the time was not supported by the majority of the Scottish people. The Scots in general were dismayed by the rebellion, as seen in an article that appeared in the Scots Magazine during the uprising of 1745:

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33 Ibid., 4-5, 100-03.
[the Young Pretender’s army was] made up out of the barbarous corners of this country: many of whom are papists, under the immediate direction of their priests; trained up to the sword, by being practiced in open robbery and violence; void of property of their own; the constant invaders of that of others; and who know no law, but the will of their leaders.\textsuperscript{35}

Not only were the Highlanders considered outlaws and barbarians by the Lowlanders, but they were, and they continue to be, a small minority group. Once their violence was quelled and their traditions outlawed, they were eventually set up as the quintessential Scots.

Additional irony lies in the fact that the traditions appropriated from the Highlanders were largely “invented” to begin with. The four most prominent symbols of Scotland—the kilt, the tartan, the bagpipes, and the Gaelic language—have all been transformed in various degrees by both the Lowlanders and Highlanders who have adopted these signifiers of modern Scottish identity.

Hugh Trevor-Roper has shown that the kilt was actually invented by an English Quaker named Thomas Rawlinson during the early eighteenth century. He further shows that it became obsolete as a result of its being outlawed in 1745 and because the Highlanders had since become accustomed to trousers. The Kilt experienced a resurgence when the British army made it the official uniform of their newly formed Highland regiments and when wealthy urbanites found the formerly despised apparel to be fashionable.\textsuperscript{36}

The use of tartans to identify clans was propagated in the same fashion. The plaid design was not a common part of the kilt prior to 1745, but it was used later in the century to distinguish regiments of Highlanders. The aligning of tartans with clans was especially popularized by Walter Scott in his Waverley novels, and it was commercialized when George IV visited Edinburgh in 1822 and Scott organized the visit to include tartan kilts for the king and visiting Highland chiefs.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{35} Quoted by Chapman in \textit{The Gaelic Vision}, 21.


\textsuperscript{37} Trevor-Roper, 26-31.
In modern times bagpipes are commonly accepted as the national Scottish instrument. The instrument does not have its origins in Scotland, as it existed elsewhere in the world for centuries. But as the instrument faded in popularity in Europe, it survived in Scotland, in part because it represented a “historical” tradition that validated the Scottish identity. The old, loud, and, for some, obnoxious, instrument has become a cultural marker that helps separate Scotland from England with its more elegant and refined traditions.

Similarly the Gaelic language, another symbol of Scotland, has been adopted by the nation as an integral part of its national identity, in part to distinguish it from its English-speaking neighbor. The acceptance of Gaelic is ironic, since this “national” language is only spoken by slightly more than one percent of the modern population, and they reside primarily in the Highlands and islands.\textsuperscript{38} It has not been spoken by the majority of the populace since the twelfth century. The English are often blamed for the loss, but the Scots themselves have had a substantial role in its decline. Lowland lawmakers in the sixteenth century were especially embarrassed by the barbaric language and passed multiple laws that attempted to strangle the Gaelic culture, with some of the most detrimental measures implemented by James VI of Scotland when he became James I of England.\textsuperscript{39} Although political measures have contributed to the decline, the loss of language has more likely been the natural result of Gaelic speakers needing to learn the language of commerce to survive; their learning of the English language has been voluntary.\textsuperscript{40} However, intellectuals and cultural activists have nevertheless sounded the alarm over the “lost” vernacular, and the general public has adopted the “lost” language as a national language.\textsuperscript{41}

Recent legislation, the Gaelic Language Act 2005, has reacted to the impending disappearance of the language by making Gaelic an official language of Scotland, co-equal with

\textsuperscript{38}The 2001 census reported 1.2\% of the population spoke Gaelic.

\textsuperscript{39}Magnusson, 406-07.

\textsuperscript{40}Chapman, \textit{Gaelic Vision}, 10-12.

\textsuperscript{41}Chapman, \textit{The Celts}, 98. In \textit{Gaelic Vision} Chapman quotes the chairman of the then Scottish National Party, Billy Wolfe, as saying “I want to learn Gaelic. I see that as a symbolic assertion of my being Scottish” (12).
English and requiring public institutions to provide Gaelic materials for Gaelic speakers.\(^{42}\) Many public schools (primary, secondary, and post-secondary) also provide Gaelic classes, and a Gaelic-speaking high school was recently opened in Glasgow.\(^{43}\) Artists and the media have also recently given attention to the language, with the production of Gaelic television shows, Gaelic dramas, a Gaelic movie, and even a controversial Gaelic opera.\(^{44}\) With political boundaries more clearly marked due to the recent re-creation of the Scottish parliament, the Scottish people have pushed the advancement of an obscure language in an attempt to raise an even more distinct cultural border.

Exposing the ahistorical basis of these symbols of national culture, should not diminish their potency for Scottish culture. Culture inherently reveals itself through symbolism, and all cultures create or invent traditions to inform and preserve cultural identity. This outline of Scotland’s history and its created traditions facilitates an understanding of the appeal of these symbols to those outside of Scotland. As Cohen as observed, symbols are malleable, and each participant inserts her or his own meaning into symbol.\(^{45}\) These national symbols of Scotland may also be adopted and interpreted by individuals outside of the nation. Outsiders then actively find personal meaning in the history and symbols of Scotland and in their own way “invent” their own personal traditions.

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\(^{43}\) The Glasgow Gaelic School is still a relatively small school, but its steady growth has been stifled by the lack of qualified teachers who speak Gaelic fluently. Vivienne Nicoll, *Evening Times Online* (http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk/search/display.var.2393312.0.gaelic_school_a_victim_of_success.php; accessed 7/20/08).


\(^{45}\) *Symbolic Community*, 18.
Representing Scotland in Literature

So far we have considered the physical place of Scotland and its traditions drawn or invented from history. This tracing of the production of Scottish identity, from the physical through the historic to the symbolic, may be extended one further step to literature. Indeed, while the geography of place, historical events, and cultural traditions all have physical manifestations, the representation of place in literature is a semiotic representation. Yet these intangible ideas often have the greatest power in shaping perceptions of place. Literature allows readers to have the distinct physical and cultural features of Scotland revealed to them, while they sit in an enclosed room in a distant place.

Literature’s intangible representation is especially flexible and open to interpretation—the act of creating meaning. For individual readers the reaction in their minds to verbal descriptions of place creates an entirely personal landscape. For example, Walter Scott’s description of Loch Katrine in *The Lady of the Lake* summons a unique decoding and mental creation for every reader, and no two responses will be identical. The same might be said for musical representations, which will be discussed later.

When written about and published, these imaginary worlds of Scotland can subsequently inform other representations of place, so that individualized images build upon one another in ways that increasingly distance the writing from the actual place. Even for locals and tourists who have experienced the physicality of a particular place, literary portrayals can inform their perspective and physical interaction within that same space. Consequently, literature about a place may have a stronger influence on a visitor than the physical location itself. For example, Glencoe’s portrayal in history as a place where innocent families were massacred leads tourists to react to the glen with somber reverence. The event that occurred there more than three hundred years ago has been continually relived in literature, so that for visitors the damp rocks, dirt, and scraggly vegetation are imbued with a quality of tragedy. The description of Glencoe on a popular tourist website exemplifies how words can shape the experience of place: “Glencoe is the village lying at the western end of Glen Coe, whose spectacular scenery is overshadowed
only by its brooding atmosphere and bloody history.”

Literature and representations help shape space, or at least the way we perceive and interact with it.

Visitors to a place may, however, have their preconceived notions altered by its physical realities. Literature may describe a place as cold, wet, and rugged, but the description of climate and land does not necessarily translate from the mental imagination to the physical experience. Descriptions in Scottish literature of a foggy, cold, and windy glen sound romantic in print, but the physiological reaction to being in such a place can be more distressing and physically straining than romantic. Similarly, a visit to the slums of Glasgow can shock those who have read about and viewed images of Scotland from the coffee-table book. Such books tend to avoid portrayals of the places where the majority of Scots live, instead foregrounding the scenic, thinly populated areas of the Highlands and the Western Isles. But for some who see the industrialized side of Scotland, the experience may actually confirm their belief in the once pastoral land of Scotland. Chapman describes the tourists who do not find what they seek but simultaneously confirm their idyllic beliefs about Scotland:

[these tourists] find little of what they came for, outside of the carefully tended tourist environment. . . . They assume that they have got there just too late; and so, in a sense, they have: but if they were not too late, they would not have come.

A disruption of their Scottish vision may cause some dissatisfaction, but it may also increase their yearning for an earlier, more “authentic” time in the same place.

Even for those who are slightly disillusioned by visiting a place, literature may still frame the whole of their experience. Take for instance Mendelssohn’s visit to the Hebrides Islands. On the sea-voyage to the Isle of Staffa to see Fingal’s Cave, he became miserably seasick, and he never wrote anything about the visit. But his drawings of and music about Scotland overlook these moments of harsh reality and instead present them in an idealized light. His Hebrides

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47 For example, Dennis Hardley and Michael Kerrigan include in their book, The Secrets of Scotland (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2006), photographs from all of Scotland’s regions, but photographs of urban areas are conspicuously absent.

48 Chapman, Celts, 145.
Overture depicts rolling waves that are ominous at times, but ultimately the portrayal romanticizes nature (see Chapter 4). His preconceived notions, formed before his visit by literature, shaped his actual experience.\(^49\)

For those who never visit Scotland, their literature- and art-informed views of Scotland remain unsullied. These artificial worlds are their reality. Many of the musicians who are discussed in this study never visit Scotland. Their information came primarily through creative depictions contained in literature.

Travel guides are one of the main literary genres that describe the actual places of Scotland. Travel accounts of tours in Scotland, such as the one published by Samuel Johnson and James Boswell following their trip in 1773, informed future or vicarious visitors of the experiences to be had in the Highlands. By the turn of the nineteenth century several travel guides were published for tourists.\(^50\) These intended to lead visitors on a prescribed journey through selected areas that highlighted and reinforced notions of Scottishness.

Both travel guides and travelogues were available throughout Europe, but by far the greatest conveyer of the Scottish place was the novel. Fact-filled travel guides have not been, and presumably never will be, bestsellers. But Scotland has produced for Europe and the world several best-selling fiction works that have revealed vivid and attractive constructions of Scotland.

The most influential of Scotland’s writers have been James Macpherson and Sir Walter Scott, and their representations of Scotland will be briefly summarized. Although not as influential abroad, the poet Robert Burns, Scotland’s national poet, made significant contributions to the image of his native land, and his poems and songs appeared—and continue to appear—in many songbooks, so his descriptions of Scotland will also be examined. My approach to these authors will be chronological.

\(^{49}\) He seems to have been familiar with Macpherson’s Poems of Ossian and with some of Scott’s works. Indeed, while on his trip to Scotland he paid a brief visit to Scott. It seems likely that his reading of literature about Scotland may have been one of the factors that motivated him to tour the nation.

\(^{50}\) See Katherine Haldane Grenier, Tourism and Identity in Scotland, 1770-1914: Creating Caledonia (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2005).
James Macpherson

James Macpherson (1736-96) is one of the most maligned and misrepresented of Scottish writers, yet his works were very influential throughout Europe. As a young teacher in the Highlands he began to collect and transcribe the poems he heard recited by bards. His collecting activities eventually came to the attention of the Edinburgh literati. The group, especially the influential Hugh Blair, embraced the poems. Blair subsequently requested a meeting with Macpherson, who traveled to Edinburgh, where Blair pressed him to produce translations of these Gaelic poems. At first, Macpherson resisted, perhaps doubting his own ability to do justice to the Gaelic originals and questioning the genuine interest that scholars and the public in general would have in the rude poetry of the Highlands. Before long, however, Macpherson conceded, and he soon produced several more poems.

The resulting collection of fifteen poems was published anonymously in Edinburgh in June 1760 with the title *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and Translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language*. Despite its modest beginnings, it was immediately popular, and in October of the same year a second edition was printed.

Encouraged by this little volume’s reception, Blair was intent on publishing more of the poetry, this time in the form of an epic. Both Blair and Macpherson held the notion that an epic poem similar to the *Iliad* had at one time existed in the Highlands of Scotland, and this seems to have been Blair’s chief interest in the poetry. Macpherson further believed that this putative epic had become corrupted and fragmented during its oral transmission through the ages. He

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52 The bardic tradition had nearly died out by the eighteenth century, but it still existed, and Macpherson likely encountered bards, known in Gaelic as seannachaidhs (pronounced *shenachie*). See Stafford, *Savage*, 13.

53 Stafford provides details about the genesis of the poems. Ibid., 78-81.

54 Ibid., 98.
maintained that collecting and then liberally translating the poems was an act of restoring the poems to their original grandeur.\textsuperscript{55}

After the warm reception of the \textit{Fragments}, Blair encouraged Macpherson to continue his collecting and his search for the lost epic of Scotland. Macpherson set out on two different trips to the Highlands, one in August of 1760, and the other in June of 1761. Following his tours, in December 1761,\textsuperscript{56} he published in London \textit{Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem in six books; together with several other Poems, composed by Ossian, the son of Fingal; translated from the Gaelic language by James Macpherson}. This was followed slightly more than one year later (March 1763) by \textit{Temora, an Ancient Epic Poem, in eight books; together with several other Poems, composed by Ossian, the son of Fingal; translated from the Gaelic language by James Macpherson}. Both \textit{Fingal} and \textit{Temora} instantly became popular.

Compelled by their enthusiastic reception, in 1765 Macpherson published an edition that included both \textit{Fingal} and \textit{Temora} and was titled \textit{The Works of Ossian}. In 1773 he revised and reordered some of the poems and published a new edition titled \textit{The Poems of Ossian}. Again, their popularity continued for several decades, during which time the editions made their way to the Continent and to the Americas. Evidence of their popularity can be seen in the abundant imitations of \textit{Ossian}, the myriad unauthorized reprints, and the numerous and often liberal translations. The poems were translated into German, Italian, French, Spanish, Russian, Swedish, Bohemian, Polish, Hungarian, Danish, and even back into Gaelic.\textsuperscript{57} Many of these translations themselves were based on reprints and other foreign translations (thus translations of translations).\textsuperscript{58}

Following the publication of \textit{Fragments} Macpherson immediately met resistance from a few who doubted the authenticity of the poems. Some Scottish and Irish recognized Ossian as a

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 82.

\textsuperscript{56} Although the work was actually published in December 1761, the printed date is 1762. For the most thorough review of the numerous printings of \textit{The Poems Ossian} and its variants see Howard Gaskill, “Ossian in Europe,” \textit{Canadian Review of Comparative Literature} 21 (1994): 642-78.


\textsuperscript{58} The complexity of the translation issue is often overlooked, although Howard Gaskill has done much to clarify the labyrinth of details. See his article “Ossian in Europe” (n. 8).
bard-warrior purportedly from the third century, but some questioned whether poems from so long ago could have survived for fifteen hundred years. Others, particularly the English, accused Macpherson of fabricating the poems and claiming Ossian as the author in order to boost their popularity and Macpherson’s own income. The controversy has continued now for nearly two and a half centuries, with much being done to show that these claims of fabrication are exaggerated. While it is true that Macpherson did add much to the poems in the way of changes and embellishments, recent research has shown that the poems are based in Gaelic balladry.\(^{59}\) Moreover, focusing on the controversy, and often misunderstanding it, many scholars have overlooked or avoided the work. The poems were remarkable in and of themselves, and they had a significant impact on Western literature, politics, art, and music. For the purposes of this dissertation, the *Ossian* poetry is significant because in the course of its phenomenal distribution the work also propagated an evocative Scottish image.

Literature was substantially influenced by *Ossian*. Most notably, German pre-Romantic figures embraced and adulated *Ossian* as the equivalent of Homer and often esteemed him as greater.\(^{60}\) One of the earliest reviews of *Ossian* in Germany illustrates the reaction to the novelty of the poems. The reviewer was drawn to it because of its “grandeur and sublimity of thought, the spark of genius, the power of expression, the boldness of metaphor, the sudden transitions, the irresistible and unexpected touches of pathos and tenderness.”\(^{61}\) Germans drawn to its distinctive style and rich emotional imagery included Klopstock, Herder, and Goethe.

Klopstock and his followers believed Ossian to have been of German descent, and they embraced the poems because of their depiction of the ancient people of Northern Europe as fierce, noble, and yet tender.\(^{62}\) Herder’s book *Von deutscher Art und Kunst*, which many consider the manifesto of the Sturm und Drang movement, included an essay entitled “Auszug

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\(^{61}\) Quoted by Tombo, 75.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., 103.
aus einem Briefwechsel über Oßian und die Lieder alter Völker” (1773; “Extract from a Correspondence on Ossian and the Songs of Ancient Peoples”). Herder was disillusioned with the order and artifice of neoclassicism, which he associated with a lack of emotion and inspiration. In Ossian he found an unpolished and unsophisticated poetry, which for Herder made it more emotional. The poetry served as one of his models of folk poetry and folk song, and it motivated him and other Germans to search, like Macpherson, for the ancient poems of their own heritage.

The poetry of Ossian similarly influenced the writings of Goethe. Although he later expressed alienation from Ossian, it still made a significant mark on his Sturm und Drang writings. Most notably, his romance Die Leiden des jungen Werthers (1771; The Sorrows of Young Werther) includes a sizable quotation from Ossian during the scene in which Werther commits suicide. With the popularity of the novel, Goethe enlisted a generation of Ossian-loving German fans.

Ossian also intrigued writers from England. In their admiration, Blake and Coleridge, along with many others, wrote poems modeled after the style of Ossian. Although England displayed the most animosity towards Macpherson—and by extension Scotland—several of its own writers could not avoid the literary appeal of the poems.

Scottish writers were also attracted to Ossian and were influenced by it for more than a century. In Scotland Sir Walter Scott followed Macpherson in popularizing the Scottish Highlands. Although Scott at times discredited the poems, he also recognized their significance as literature. In his remarks included in the Highland Society Report of 1805—the conclusions of an extensive query into the fraudulence debate—he found Macpherson a remarkable poet, “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.” Following Macpherson’s lead, he helped popularize the Highland clan system. He also adopted many of the images in


65 Scott quoted in deGategno, Macpherson, 111.
Ossian and in so doing helped establish these images as the archetypal portrait of the Highlands and by extension of all things Scottish. Scott, widely acknowledged as the most important literary figure from Scotland, owes much to Macpherson for making Europeans and Americans intrigued by the image of Scotland.

American authors were likewise drawn to the poems. Edgar Allan Poe was an admirer of Ossian, as were Emerson, Thoreau, Longfellow, and Whitman. Admiring the poems, Thoreau said, “Ossian reminds us of the most refined and rudest eras of Homer, Pindar, Isaiah, and the American Indians. . . . Ossian seems to speak a gigantic and universal language.” Perhaps most heavily influenced was Whitman, who disregarded the controversy and simply accepted the poems as literature. Whitman’s free verse may even have been inspired by Macpherson’s rhythmic prose. Americans, like the Germans, English, and Scottish, embraced the novelty of Ossian and absorbed its characteristics into their own literary styles.

Another American enamored with Ossian was Thomas Jefferson. He so admired Ossian that he described him as the “greatest poet that has ever existed,” and he even made some attempts to learn Gaelic. Although it would be difficult to measure, Ossian’s portrayal of a benevolent primitive society may have contributed to the formation of Jefferson’s ideas about the equality of humankind.

Speaking to another politician in radically different ways, Ossian consoled and inspired Napoleon, who carried a copy with him on all of his military expeditions. The military heroes of Ossian inspired Napoleon’s own military and political campaigns. He even commissioned the

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69 Thoreau quoted in Carpenter, 406.

70 Carpenter, 413.

artist Ingres to paint an Ossian mural on the ceiling of his bedroom in the Quirinal Palace, Rome.\textsuperscript{72}

During Napoleon’s time Ossianic portrayals in visual art also flourished. Besides Ingres, French painters such as Harvey, Duqueylar, Gérard, Girodet, and Franque all painted images from Ossian. Other painters adopted some of the imagery of these Ossian paintings, resulting in what Albert Boime has described as an Ossianic mode.\textsuperscript{73} These paintings commonly included depictions of clouds, warrior heroes, melancholy, craggy landscapes, and moon-lit, “split-level arrangement[s] of dreamer and dream.”\textsuperscript{74} This combination of images was popular during Napoleon’s time, and Ossian has continued to inspire subsequent artists.\textsuperscript{75}

As in literature and art, Ossian also resonated in music. Several writers have noticed the abundance of compositions with explicit connections to Ossian, and by my count nearly three hundred pieces exist with reference to Ossian in text and/or title.\textsuperscript{76} It is also very likely that other pieces exist that allude to Ossianic images without explicit reference. Many of these pieces exhibit stylistic similarities that collectively form an Ossianic manner.\textsuperscript{77} Thus the text informed both writers and musicians, and it propagated a particular image of Scotland and its people that influenced the representation of Scotland in music.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Albert Boime, \textit{Art in an Age of Bonapartism, 1800-1815} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 54-71.
\item Ibid., 71.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Multiple reasons can be adduced to explain the popularity of the poems. The new literary style of the poetry certainly caught the attention of many, as did the extreme sentiments of the work. The exotic, almost other-worldly landscape described in the poems and inhabited by historical heroes of mythological status also captured the imaginations of audiences abroad.

Macpherson’s unorthodox writing style starkly contrasted with the orderly poetry of neoclassicism. The prose-poem form of Ossian in particular struck its audience as novel. Although the lines have some metrical pulse like those of standard poetry, they are written in prose. Further departing from neoclassical convention, Macpherson in his translation completely avoided rhymes. Instead he used another poetic device that he derived from Gaelic poetry: parallelisms.

The poetry also includes an abundance of epithets. The use of these epithets allied the poems to Homer’s epics and created a sense of the archaic. But many of the epithets diverge from Greek epithets by referring heavily either to nature or to rich emotional imagery. Instances of nature epithets include “the chief; the strong stormy son,” and Fingal, “king of the lonely hills.” Examples of emotional epithets include “Duchomar the most gloomy of men” and “Fergus . . . son of Rossa! arm of death.”

One of the most significant aspects of its popular reception was the poem’s appearance as both archaic and novel. As Fiona Stafford aptly put it, “Macpherson was at once an innovator and a traditionalist, his texts a curious synthesis of the ancient and the modern.” Had the work not been connected with the archaic, it would undoubtedly have failed. Macpherson introduced to his readers a new landscape with new characters via a newly created style, but by deriving this landscape and these characters from antiquity—making them not new at all—Macpherson

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76 Both the prose-poem form and the short, rhythmic phrases have their origins in Gaelic poetry, and according to Gaelic scholars, Macpherson was trying to reproduce the style and essence of the sung Gaelic balladry. Ibid., 26-27; Micheál Mac Craith, “The ‘Forging’ of Ossian,” in Celticism, ed. Terence Brown (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1996), 130-31.


78 These epithets come from “Fingal Book I” in Ossian, 55-59.

79 “Introduction” to Gaskill’s edition of The Poems of Ossian, xviii.
successfully bridged the gap of old and new and appealed to proponents of two aspects of the Enlightenment: neoclassicism and burgeoning Romanticism.

By introducing an exotic landscape with fresh characters, the poems reinvigorated the creativity of artists who felt mired in the pastoral conventions of neoclassicism. *Ossian* responded to the pastoral convention by fitting into this popular genre while also expanding it. Macpherson introduced a Scottish landscape that was pastoral and picturesque, but overshadowed with a twist of violence and isolation. Although pastoral, the landscape was barren and unpredictable—the action often occurring near crumbling castles, on lonely heaths, on desolate crags. The rural exoticness of the *Ossian* landscape was further populated with a fresh set of heroes: Fingal, Oscar, and Ossian were the northern answer to Achilles, Hector, and Odysseus. These curious heroes excited Europeans not because they were new, though unfamiliar, but because they claimed to be old.

The pastoral landscape of *Ossian* was infused with emotionally laden imagery. Hugh Blair, in his “Critical Dissertation” that was included in the printing of *Temora*, described *Ossian* as “The Poetry of the Heart.” 80 Although the epics *Fingal* and *Temora* both narrate the victory of Scottish warriors over their enemies, a general melancholy diminishes any sense of triumph. This melancholy results from the stories’ and heroes’ belonging to a glorious past that cannot be reclaimed. The bard Ossian, himself once a great warrior, tells these stories as the pathetic, blind, sole survivor of his people.

Ossian indulges in sentimental longing for the past. A recurring poignant phrase in the poetry is “the joy of grief.” 81 This paradoxical joy usually occurs as bards within the poetry relate the tragic stories of the past, and as they recount history, “memory awake[s] grief.” 82 Melancholic longing for the past is heightened by frequent expressions of loneliness. Many of the women in the stories are depicted in isolated landscapes, often hopelessly waiting for their lovers to return from war. In the popular “Songs of Selma,” for example, Colma vainly waits

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80 *Ossian*, 356.

81 Ibid., 61, 159.

82 Ibid., 15, 61.
“alone, forlorn on the hill of storms. The wind is heard in the mountain. The torrent shrieks down the rock. No hut receives [her] from the rain; forlorn on the hill of winds.” These images of loneliness recur throughout the poems, feeding the Romantic indulgence in melancholy and creating a Scottish identity that is laden with longing.

Tales of tragic heroes accompany these images of isolation and melancholy. Many of the heroes of the poems die not at the hands of their enemies but as the result of lost love or mistaken identities. For example, in one of the most popular poems Oscar, one of the mightiest warriors, kills his friend Dermid due to a rivalry in courtship. Following this death Oscar feels remorse and asks his lover to kill him. She complies, but she immediately commits suicide, so that all three perish. In the popular poem “Comála,” Fingal’s lover hears a false report of his death and vainly dies of sorrow. These tragedies intertwine heroism with love and death set against a Scottish landscape.

Intermixed with these stories of tragedy and loss are depictions of nobleness and tenderness. These virtues were especially attractive to the eighteenth-century audience, which was interested in moral education through the arts. Although the warrior heroes predictably dominate their enemies, they also exercise tenderness and mercy, even in the heat of battle. In the epic Fingal, for example, when the invading Scandinavians are overpowered and at the verge of complete destruction, Fingal stops the battle and spares his weary enemies. He then feeds their captured king and requests his bards to sing to the king so that his soul might be gladdened.

The melancholy and tender sentiments of the poems were enriched by dream-like images of nature and the supernatural. Nature imagery stands out as a dominating subject in the poems. Images of storms, moonlight, seashores, lonely heaths, and hunting are ubiquitous. For example,

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83 Ibid., 166.
84 Ibid., 16-17. This is from a popular poem in the Fragments called the “Death of Oscar.”
85 Carboni, 85.
86 Ossian, 101-4.
when Ossian describes the death of his son Oscar, he does so through similes and metaphors of nature:

He fell as the moon in the storm; as the sun from the midst of his course when clouds rise from the waste of the waves. . . . I, like an ancient oak on Morven, I moulder alone in my place. The blast hath lopped my branches away; and I tremble at the wings of the north.  

This portrayal of a melancholy pastoralism reflects a sentimentalized view of inclement Scotland.

Nature also serves as a haven for Ghosts. Often at night, during respite from the battle, phantoms appear to various characters to warn them of impending danger. The ghosts almost always appear amid wind and clouds. Winds and clouds thus acquire supernatural connotations in Ossian and almost become synonymous with ghostly visitations. For example, Fingal’s lover Agandecca visited him at night in the low, slow moving clouds of the coast:

she came from the way of the ocean, and slowly, lonely, moved over Lena. Her face was pale like the mist. . . . She often raised her dim hand from her robe; her robe which was of the clouds of the desert. . . . She departed on the wind of Lena; and left him in the midst of the night.

Ghostly visitations in the fog necessarily have some connection to the physical land and climate. Although the ghosts are fictitious, the fog in the poetry does derive from the factual cloudy and rainy climate of Scotland, especially in the Western Isles and the Highlands, where much of the poetry is set.

In addition to unsolicited visitations such as this, the characters, especially the bards, often address their deceased kindred, imploring their assistance. Visitations by ghosts signify a positive, although often bittersweet, experience. Macpherson combined the natural and supernatural in a way that appealed to foreigners and helped create an image of a sublime and spiritual place.

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87 Ibid., 16.

88 Ibid., 84.

89 For an example, see ibid., 85.
Robert Burns

Robert Burns (1759-1796) is primarily known outside of Scotland as the author of the traditional New-Year’s poem “Auld Lang Syne.” His influence outside of Scotland has not nearly matched that of Macpherson or Scott, although his works were circulated in Europe and America, but in Scotland he is celebrated as the national poet and esteemed above Macpherson and possibly Scott. Unlike Macpherson and Scott with their romanticized depictions of Scotland, Burns tends to presents a more native view of his homeland; thus his adoption as the national poet.

In contrast to the Highlander Macpherson, Burns was born and raised in the southwest Lowlands of Scotland. Due to his family’s farming occupation Burns received little formal education, but he learned through his own efforts and the guidance of his father. Later, when his poetry became popular, aristocrats in Edinburgh were fascinated with his “uncultured” upbringing. For them Burns fulfilled their Enlightenment notions of Rousseau’s and Adam Smith’s uncorrupted man, and he earned the moniker of the “Heaven-taught ploughman.”

Burns’s first publication, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, appeared in 1786 and was very successful in Scotland, enough so that it persuaded him to terminate his plans to move to Jamaica in search of work. Instead he moved to Edinburgh, where he was befriended by the aristocracy and the Edinburgh literati (including Hugh Blair, who had been so influential with Macpherson’s publications). While in Edinburgh he secured a job as a tax collector and published the second edition of his first book. Later it would be published in London, Belfast, Dublin, Philadelphia, and New York, evidence of his moderate popularity outside of Scotland.

While in Edinburgh, he also collaborated with James Johnson in collecting and editing native songs for the multi-volume work *The Scots Musical Museum*. Later he also contributed to Johnson’s rival George Thomson and his *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the*

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90 The Scots celebrate his 25 January birthday with a national holiday known as Burns Supper. It involves traditional clothing, singing, dancing, and reciting Burns’s poetry, such as his “Address to a Haggis.”

91 For biographical information I have drawn primarily from Raymond Bentman, *Robert Burns* (Boston: Twayne, 1987).

92 Ibid., 70.
Voice (see Chapter 3). As a contributor to both works he performed a number of tasks, including writing poetry, editing songs and poetry, and collecting songs. Consequently he became one of the most significant collectors of Scottish folksong, and his songs are still performed today by modern folk and Celtic musicians.

Living more than half a century after the Union of 1707 and slightly more than a decade after the uprising of “Forty-Five,” Burns was part of a renewed but more passive resistance to English co-rule. He was an ardent Scottish patriot. As a teen he had read the history of William Wallace, and in a letter he reported his response: it “poured a Scottish prejudice in my veins which will boil along there till the flood-gates of life shut in eternal rest.”

Many of his poems, such as “Scots wha hae,” reflect his passionate response to Scotland’s diminished political situation. He set this particular poem to the old tune “Hey tutti tatti,” which had been a patriotic tune sung in Scotland and France during the Hundred Years War.

Burns believed that Robert Bruce had marched his armies to this tune, and it inspired him to write a new stirring nationalistic text. In a letter to Thomson he described its creation:

There is a tradition . . . that [“Hey tutti tatti”] was Robert Bruce’s March at the battle of Banock-burn. –This thought, in my yesternight’s evening walk, warmed me to a pitch of enthusiasm on the theme of Liberty & Independence, which I threw into a kind of Scots Ode, fitted to the [tune] that one might suppose to be the gallant ROYAL SCOT’S address to his heroic followers on that eventful morning. . . . So may God ever defend the cause of TRUTH and LIBERTY, as he did that day!–Amen!

His “pitch of enthusiasm” with this tune has continued to excite the Scottish into modern times, and even non-Scottish composers such as Hector Berlioz and Max Bruch have quoted the song in their works.

Burns’s new text for the tune appealed to the patriotic sentiments of Scottish audiences by invoking the two great warrior-heroes of Scotland: Wallace and Bruce. Burns, setting the scene

93 Quoted in Bentman, 13.


96 Berlioz used the tune as the basis for his Rob Roy Overture and later in his Harold in Italy. Bruch used it extensively in the Scottish Fantasy. See Everett, 158.
in the Battle of Bannockburn—one of the seminal symbols of Scottish independence—unleashes a vivid portrayal, loaded to the hilt with pathos, of Bruce’s call for victory:

Scots, wha [who] hae [have] wi’ Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed
Or to victorie!97

The poem then calls for the non-patriots to leave before the battle begins and summons those with fervent convictions to rally in the cause of the Scots against the English oppressors:

Wha will be a traitor-knave?
Wha can fill a coward’s grave?
Wha sae [so] base as be a Slave?
Let him turn and flie.

Wha for Scotland’s king and law,
Freedom’s sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or Free-man fa’,
Let him follow me.

The poem ends with a powerful appeal to Scottish liberty and freedom even at the price of death:

By Oppression’s woes and pains!
By your Sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud Usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe;
Liberty’s in every blow!
Let us DO—or DIE!!!

The text is indeed stirring, made more so by the image of Bruce delivering such a speech. In some ways Burns was making a similar call to his contemporaries. Burns was a Jacobite, and several of his songs, including “Scots wha hae,” supported the Jacobite cause.98 But his presentation of Jacobite propaganda through the more casual art form of folksong—often viewed simply as amusing tunes by the aristocrats who purchased the song collections—actually helped

97 All of the song texts come from Donald A. Low, ed., The Songs of Robert Burns (London: Routledge, 1993).

98 Other songs include “Mary Queen of Scots’s Lament,” “Awa, Whigs, awa!,” “O, cam ye here the fight to shun?,” “What merriment has taen the Whigs,” “Ye Jacobites by name,” “Such a parcel of rogues in a nation,” and “There’ll never be peace ’till Jamie comes.”
sentimentalize the Jacobite genre. Italics


burns’s speaking through the persona of bruce in “scots wha hae” also reduces the potency of the text. although bruce is a powerful symbol of nationalism, he is a deceased voice, and burns abdicates responsibility for the text by having it spoken by someone from the past. in the end burns’s “scot’s wha hae” is not really a call to arms as much as a call to nationalism.

instead of using weapons to incite nationalism, burns used the powerful vernacular language. one of the most profound signifiers of nationalism is a distinctive language circulated in print. benedict anderson’s seminal work imagined communities shows how nationalism is dependent on “print-capitalism”—the circulation of vernacular publications. he argues that a significant, nation-wide distribution of vernacular print materials can unify people separated by space, so that individuals who have never met, and never will meet, can read something that shows a “simultaneous existence and community consciousness.” burns was one of the first to print in scots, a language that is distinct from english and gaelic, and his poetry has since been a rallying point for scottish nationalists.

english had been the dominant language in scotland for some time, partially because john knox and those involved with the scottish reformation had decided to adopt the english translation of the bible. whereas macpherson translated gaelic poems into english, and scott wrote his novels primarily in english, burns instead wrote in the more common scots—an english-related language common in the lowlands. he was not simply mimicking the slang of


100 invention of scotland, 101.

101 everett says that there are three prerequisites for nationhood: 1) a central ethnicity; 2) a recognized border; and 3) a vernacular literature. “national themes in scottish art music,” 153.


103 everett, 153-54.

Bentman, 16. By asserting a nationalistic language Burns’s vernacular alienated many outside of Scotland, who had difficulty translating portions of the poems—but the use of a national language naturally creates this type of boundary. Still, his works were circulated abroad, and they did contribute to the developing literary identity of Scotland.

Burns’s poetry primarily depicts the Lowlands, the place of his upbringing and adult residence. In contrast to Macpherson, whose poetry is set in the foggy, rugged glens and mountains of the Highlands, Burns’s Lowlands tend to be portrayed as a more sunny, temperate place with rolling hills and more domesticated valleys—true to its geographical and climatological nature. Yet the landscapes of both Macpherson and Burns agree in their portrayal of a rural nation.

Burns’s contribution to the literary identity of Scotland differs from Macpherson and Scott in that he depicts vignettes of isolated moments filled with personal emotion. His poems are like literary still-lifes, concentrating on specific locations or sentiments. By isolating intimate details, Burns rejected the common aesthetic of the time that called for the expression of universalities about human nature. Samuel Johnson expressed that universalist aesthetic through the voice of Imlac in *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia*, who says in his “dissertation upon poetry”:

The business of a poet . . . is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances: he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features, as recall the original to every mind; and must

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104 Bentman, 14-15.

105 For an unmitigated modern presentation of Scots, see Hugh MacDiarmid’s *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle*, ed. John C. Weston (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1971).

106 Bentman, 16.
neglect the minuter discriminations. . . . He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; . . . he must rise to general and transcendental truths. . . . He must consider himself as a being superior to time and place (sic).\textsuperscript{107}

Countering this English notion, Burns revels in the minute, examines the individual, and situates his poetry in local settings. Take for example his “Flow gently, sweet Afton,” where he describes a picturesque rural scene:

Flow, gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes [hills],
Flow gently, I’ll sing thee a song in thy praise;
My Mary’s asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

The poem draws on the pastoral tradition, but unlike traditional pastoral poems, which set generic characters in stock rural settings (like Arcadia), Burns’s text describes a very specific place—the small river Afton in the Ayrshire region of the Lowlands. The poem describes a bucolic landscape with “pleasant banks and green vallies below, Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow.” In describing the surrounding, it portrays this part of Scotland as a rural nation both “pleasant” and “wild.” It is indeed an attractive image. The verdant river valley is inhabited by only Mary and the narrator and a few sheep and birds. Furthermore the river itself is described as a pristine “chrystal stream” shaded by “sweet scented birk” trees.

Burns portrays the river Afton and its surrounding countryside as unsullied landscape. This idealistic locale by extension represents the whole of Scotland: the Afton becomes a metonym for Scotland. In a letter to a Mrs. Dunlop he sent a copy of the poem and included mention of his liking for Scottish scenery: “I have a particular pleasure in those little pieces of poetry such as our Scots songs, &c. where the names and landscap-features of rivers, lakes, or woodlands, that one knows, are introduced.”\textsuperscript{108} His personal interests not only had nationalistic sentiment, but even more important they also propagated a picturesque image of Scotland.


\textsuperscript{108} Quoted in Low, 329.
The people of his poetry are similarly agreeable. They are common folk with simple yet attractive features. In “Lassie wi’ the lintwhite locks” the chorus praises the beauty of a farm girl:

Lassie wi’ the lintwhite locks,
Bonnie lassie, artless lassie,
Wilt thou wi’ me tent [guard] the flocks–
Wilt thou be my dearie, O?

This innocent and “artless” girl with blond hair personifies the unsophisticated folk championed by enlightenment thinkers such as Rousseau. Burns’s editor George Thomson, however, found the image unattractive. In a letter to Burns he said that he could “scarcely conceive a woman to be a beauty, on reading that she had lint-white locks.”** Yet Burns persisted, producing a poem displaying unusual tenderness and personal intimacy, set against a backdrop similar to the one in “Flow gently, sweet Afton”:

Now Nature cleeds [clothes] the flowery lea [pasture],
And a’ is young and sweet like thee,
O, wilt thou share its joys wi’ me,
And say thou’lt be my dearie, O?
(chorus)

The primrose bank, the wimpling [twisting] burn,
The cuckoo on the milkwhite thorn,
The wanton lambs at rosy morn
Shall glad thy heart, my dearie O.
(chorus)

And should the howling wintry blast
Disturb my lassie’s midnight rest,
I’ll fauld thee to my faithfu’ breast,
And comfort thee, my dearie O.
(chorus)

Unlike the pastoral poems preceding Burns, which often reveal hollow sentiment, this poem is more sincere and personal, and it is as if we are granted a brief view into a tender romance.

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109 Quoted in Low, 683.
Indeed such a response is not unfounded, since Burns likely wrote this poem for his then lover Jean Lorimer, and it really was a personal love poem.\footnote{Low, 683.}

Although Burns’s writings counter Johnson’s method for depicting the universal, Burns’s specific descriptions may actually make his poems more universal. Penny Fielding argues that “Burns is universal because he is local.”\footnote{Penny Fielding, “Burns’s Topographies,” in \textit{Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism}, ed. Leith Davis, Ian Duncan, and Janet Sorensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 172.} Not only do his local settings communicate to a larger audience, but his intimate depictions, spoken in a common vernacular, create a more human poetry and consequently a more universal literature. His human themes have fostered a comforting Scottish identity for those within and out of Scotland.

\textbf{Walter Scott}

The final figure in the trio of Scottish image creators is the most influential of the three. Caroline McCracken-Flesher describes Walter Scott (1771-1832) as the “architect of cultural Scottishness.”\footnote{Possible Scotlands, 3.} He was influenced by the writings of both Macpherson and Burns, but unlike Macpherson he never faced charges of fraudulence, and unlike Burns he wrote primarily in English and not Scots (with some notable exceptions). He clearly published for a broad audience, and he was extremely successful at appealing to his readers, so much so that some have accused him of writing for purely commercial reasons.\footnote{For Scott’s biographical information I rely primarily on John Lauber, \textit{Sir Walter Scott}, rev. ed. (Boston: Twayne, 1989). For a summary of criticism against Scott, see Christopher Harvie, “Scott and the Image of Scotland,” in \textit{Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity}, vol. 2, ed. Raphael Samuel (London: Routledge, 1989).}

Scott was born and lived in the Lowlands, but his writings reflect an interest in both the Lowlands and the Highlands. His first major work, \textit{The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border} (1802), was a collection of ballads he had gathered in the Borders area of Scotland, but he is more commonly known for his depictions of the Highlands, as in \textit{The Lady of the Lake} (1810) and the Waverley novels (1814-29). He also wrote about Scottish history, English history, European
history, and novels about the East, but the bulk of his works are set in Scotland and propagated numerous literary images of Scotland to those within and out of the country.

His popularity was advanced by his ability to adapt to the changing desires of his readers. After his publication of ballads he published several narrative poems, including *The Lady of the Lake*, which were extremely successful at home and abroad. In comparison with Burns’s poetry, Scott’s descriptions tend to be more animated and action-oriented but emotionally superficial.114

When his sale of new poems declined, he turned to writing novels. His approach to novel writing was atypical for the time, but it proved to be immensely successful. He turned for his subject to Scottish history, creating fictional stories set against the Scottish landscape and couched in specific historical events. His first novel, *Waverley* (1814), is considered by many to be the first historical novel.115 Scott’s blending of geography and history with fictional characters encapsulates the way in which national identity can be drawn from the physical and given form in literature. In Scott’s novels the factual and the fictional are tightly intertwined, and the resulting image of Scotland is likewise a composite of fact and fancy. But it is Scott’s quasi-historical image of Scotland that has gained the most traction in defining Scottish culture. His depictions of Scotland are not entirely unrelated to those presented by Macpherson, but whereas Macpherson invoked controversy by claiming his folklore to be factual, Scott made his histories acceptable by calling them fiction.

His production of historical novels was prolific. Following *Waverley*, he successfully published novels such as *Guy Mannering* (1815), *Old Mortality* (1816), *Rob Roy* (1818), and *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819). Building on his success, he also wrote several historical novels set outside of Scotland, including his most popular work, *Ivanhoe* (1819). By the time he died at the age of sixty-one, he had written nearly a dozen narrative poems, more than two dozen novels, and several biographies—including a nine-volume history of Napoleon and the French Revolution.

Scott was arguably the most famous writer of his time. His biographer John Lauber claims that during his heyday as a poet Scott was the “most famous and successful living poet in

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114 Lauber describes Scott’s writings at this time as “superficial romanticism,” 3.

115 Ibid., 23.
the English language.”116 Later, when his skill as a poet was surpassed by his prominent contemporaries (especially Byron), he turned to novels, and again found fertile ground. Scott might have anticipated the popularity of Waverley in Scotland, but he could not have foreseen the warm reception that it received in England. In response to its remarkable success there, Jane Austen complained good-naturedly that

Walter Scott has no business to write novels, especially good ones—it is not fair. He has fame and profit enough as a poet and should not be taking the bread out of other people’s mouths. I do not mean to like Waverley if I can help it—but fear I must.117

His popularity points to his significance in propagating a literary image of Scotland. Only in recent times has his prominence diminished, but the imagery he set in motion continues to shape concepts of Scotland for those both in and out of the country.

Place plays a prominent role in Scott’s writings. Whereas landscape in the eighteenth-century novel was presented without specificity, merely supplying a generic backdrop for the action of the plot, the landscapes in Scott’s novels were real places with histories that actively informed his plots.118 Scott was a historian, and his novels provided opportunities for exploration into history. Place in the Scottish landscape was animated by the history that occurred there. The Scots writer Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) described the significance of place for Scott in his book Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes (1879):

The character of a place is often most perfectly expressed in its associations. An event strikes root and grows into a legend, when it has happened amongst congenial surroundings. Ugly actions, above all in ugly places, have the true romantic quality, and become an undying property of their scene. To a man like Scott, the different appearances of nature seemed each to contain its own legend made real, which it was his to call forth.119

Scotland’s remarkable topography has hosted an equally memorable history, and Scott calculatedly valued the cumulative effect of history and scenery. The potency of the

116 Ibid., 3.

117 Quoted in Lauber, 23.


combination—stunning scenery and captivating history—made Scott’s presentation of Scotland especially powerful.

His interest in place was especially drawn to the scenery and history of the Highlands, and his viewpoint oriented the gaze of his readers. His poem *The Lady of the Lake* broke sales records and captivated his European and American readers with its depiction of Highland scenery and Scottish gallantry.\(^{120}\) Set around Loch Katrine, northwest of Stirling, the poem describes the martial conflict between the Highlander Roderick Dhu and the Lowlander James V of Scotland in the sixteenth century. Scott’s depiction of the area mixes exotic imagery with Edenic scenery. Place names such as “Benvoirlich,” and the “wild heaths of Uam-Var” sound foreign and enchanting,\(^ {121}\) and at times he alludes to the exotic Middle East:

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The rocky summets, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or imaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever decked
Or mosque of Eastern architect.\(^ {122}\)
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Scott’s reference to the East is not a singular instance. In an essay published in 1816 he compared the Scottish Highlanders with the Afghan and Persian tribes, noting how their parallel states of civilization produced “similar manners, laws, and customs, even at the most remote periods of time, and in the most distant quarters of the world.”\(^ {123}\) Byron had earlier made a similar observation, comparing the dress and manners of the Highlanders of Scotland with the

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\(^{120}\) The work sold 25,000 copies in eight months and broke the record for the sale of poetry at the time. “Reception of *The Lady of the Lake*,” in Edinburgh University’s *The Walter Scott Digital Archive* (http://www.walterscott.lib.ed.ac.uk/works/poetry/lady.html, accessed 1/24/2007).


\(^{122}\) Ibid., 7.

primitive “Arnaouts, or Albanese [inhabitants of Albania].” Scott’s depictions reflect a mixture of nationalism and Enlightenment curiosity, and his views of the Highlanders reveal a growing fascination among the Lowlanders.

The poem also portrays Loch Katrine in a way that evokes a natural paradise that hints at a Garden of Eden image, albeit an old and rugged one:

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain’s child.
Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there. . . .
The wanderer’s eye could barely view
The summer heaven’s delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.  

Mighty warriors inhabit this dreamy landscape, but in the poem, and most of Scott’s literature, the Highlanders’ ferocity is contained by the Lowlanders—in the poem James V defeats the Highland chieftain. Despite their latent power, Scott praises the Highlanders as a virtuous and cunning people.

Here and elsewhere in Scott’s writings his political beliefs inform his stories. He was a staunch patriot, but he believed that the Union with England was in Scotland’s best interest. For him the Union promised economic prosperity, and it helped heal the internal conflicts that had previously divided Scotland: Highland and Lowland, Jacobite and Whig, and Protestant and Catholic. The plot of The Lady of the Lake narrates the end of the Lowland-Highland division by portraying the defeat of the rash yet noble Roderick Dhu, and by presenting the conflict as belonging to the past.

Waverley presents a similar story about the defeat of Highland rebellion. This time the protagonist is a wealthy Englishman, Edward Waverley, who joins the Jacobite cause in 1745, only to realize through hard experiences that the cause has no future. In the process of creating an image of a unified Britain, Scott showcases the Highlanders in a favorable light. Most readers

124 Ibid.

125 Lady of the Lake, 8.

126 Pittock, Invention of Scotland, 84.
were not consciously looking for Scott’s political motives, but they were captivated by his detailed accounts of the Highlanders and their traditions.\textsuperscript{127}

Indeed Scott himself was infatuated with Highland tradition. His quasi-castle Abbotsford was decorated with memorabilia from the Highlands and from Scottish history. When George IV made his state visit to Edinburgh in 1822, Scott was in charge of his reception, and his arranging for tartan and kilt uniforms for the King and visiting Highland chiefs launched the “Highland takeover”\textsuperscript{128} that has since dominated the Scottish image.

Scott’s authorship of Scottish culture\textsuperscript{129} has produced some objections. McCracken-Flesher admits that Scott is the “architect of cultural Scottishness,” but notes that he is also the “cultural bump in the road for modern Scottishness.” She continues, “Scotland is haunted by the corpus of Walter Scott. So much so, that even in a new millennium we must look to the productive body of Scott’s novels to understand some of the complexities that motivate Scottish identity.”\textsuperscript{130} Many have complained that Scott’s portrayal of Scotland through images of the past has created a permanent identity for Scotland that makes its image synonymous with the past. Some have claimed that he replaced a living culture with an image suspended in history,\textsuperscript{131} making it a latent nation with its power lying in the past.

There is a certain irony to all of this. Scott was an avid historian, who read history, wrote history, collected historical memorabilia, and even designed his home, Abbotsford, as a historic castle. He seemed immersed in a romanticized past. Yet in \textit{Waverley} the narrator clearly recognizes and even denounces the dangers of an imagination excited by bookish learning: “Edward’s power of imagination and love of literature, although the former was vivid, and the latter ardent, were so far from affording a remedy to this peculiar evil [an undisciplined mind],

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\textsuperscript{127} Lauber, 22.
\textsuperscript{128} Trevor-Roper, \textit{Invention of Highland Tradition}, 29.
\textsuperscript{129} It might more accurately be called Walter Scottish culture.
\textsuperscript{130} McCracken-Flesher, 4. Despite her adversarial position stated here, she argues that Scott does not relegate Scotland to the kitsch of the past, but that the time and position of his narratives constantly shift and create multiple realities and perspectives of Scotland.
\textsuperscript{131} This argument is summarized in the “Introduction” to \textit{Scotland and the Borders of Romanticism}, 7.
\end{flushright}
that they rather inflamed and increased its violence.” Edward’s overactive imagination urges him to engage in the folly of the Highland uprising of “Forty-five.” Only through bitter experience with reality does Edward realize his mistake and return home. Despite Scott’s moral in this story, his depiction of Scotland through books has informed many in their beliefs about Scotland. His literature has captured the imaginations of many, who, like Edward Waverley, want to visit Scotland—via a book, a movie, or a tourist visit—from whence they can later return to reality.

During the twentieth century writers such as Hugh Mac Diarmid (1892-1978), Irvine Welsh (1958-), and others have actively sought to create a new image of Scotland viable in the present and more representative of the economic and social turmoil in modern Scotland. However, the romanticized version presented by Scott, Burns, and Macpherson continues to assert itself in the popular imagination. One need only look at books available in a bookstore to see that their images still persist. History and tourist books dominate the Scottish literature market abroad, with history book titles such as *William Wallace: Guardian of Scotland* and *Before Scotland: The Story of Scotland before History*. Tourist books also abound with inviting titles such as *The Most Beautiful Villages of Scotland*, and *The Secrets of Scotland*.

### Conclusion

Explorations of the representation of Scotland, beginning with the physical land, moving through historical symbols, and ending with literature, set the stage for musical representations of place. Scenic description, historical narrative, and literary creativity create stylized representations that foreground and background certain aspects of reality. This interpretive act has produced a popular identity for Scotland, one constructed out of notions of ruralness,

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historicity, spiritualism, martialism, and counter-culturalism all presented with the vivid symbols of national “traditions.”

Writing about place and people requires a transformation of the material to the verbal. Each step of this process leaves the final product more distant from the physical, in terms of mental cognition about place. Music is similar to literature in that it also constitutes an abstract representation of place, but composers have often gotten their information about Scotland through literature, further distancing music from the represented place. Layers of depiction and interpretation through different means of communication culminate in a nested complex of meaning that produces identity (see Figure 2.3).

Conversely, the formed identity can influence visits to a place, subsequent writings of histories, and the literary, musical, and other artistic representations of that place. This reciprocal influence raises numerous questions about authenticity and reality, but it also creates a wonderfully dynamic terrain of meaning, beckoning for exploration.

Fig. 2.3. Complex of Identity Layers.
CHAPTER 3

SCOTLAND IN THE DRAWING ROOM

Scottish songbooks have received a fair amount of attention from scholars since they began to be printed nearly three centuries ago. Those who have surveyed this large and interesting repertoire have often focused on the histories of these songbooks as they relate to the music of Scotland. Folklorists have also been drawn to the field, as have Burns scholars, since he was at the nexus of songbook activity at the end of the eighteenth century. Some of these studies have identified reasons for the songs’ popular reception, but few have looked at the representation of Scotland in these books and the reasons that the images resonated with foreign audiences.

This chapter will begin by providing a general history of Scottish songbooks, focusing on four of the most important books: Allan Ramsay’s Tea-Table Miscellany (1724), William Thomson’s Orpheus Caledonius (1725), James Johnson’s Scots Musical Museum (1787-1803), and George Thomson’s A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs (1793-1841). Each of these songbooks was intended for a slightly different audience, and each depicts a somewhat different image of Scotland.

The setting for this music was the home, specifically the drawing room, where the music would have been performed. For foreigners these collections of songs were vistas into a land most had only heard and read of. I will similarly be using these songbooks as windows to view depictions of Scotland, while also peering through them to discover the audiences who purchased them. The chapter will conclude with ideas regarding the ways in which these publications functioned within the homes of the purchasing public.
Overview of Scottish Songbooks

The first books containing Scottish songs appeared in the latter half of the seventeenth century; these were published not in Scotland but in England. John Playford included Scottish tunes in his *English Dancing Master* (1650) and several more in subsequent publications (see Appendix A for a list of songbooks). Apparently the songs were popular enough in England that his son Henry published a violin book comprised solely of Scottish melodies in his *A Collection of Original Scotch Tunes* (1700). Purcell and D’Urfey also included Scottish songs (they called them “Scotch songs”) in several of their publications, including the first printed music and words of Scottish songs in the latter’s *Wit and Mirth: Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1698-1720). England often disdained its northern neighbor, but the abundance of “Scotch songs” in England during the next two centuries reveals England’s curiosity about Scotland.¹

Allan Ramsay’s *The Tea-Table Miscellany*

Scottish musicians and publishers finally began printing their own songs in 1718, when Allan Ramsay (1684-1758) published his *Scots Songs* in Edinburgh.² Ramsay’s more influential *The Tea-Table Miscellany* first appeared in Edinburgh in 1724. Without regard for the historical accuracy of the songs, Ramsay and a few peers composed new texts for old tunes, and with great success.³ This work and its numerous official and unofficial editions proved foundational for nearly every subsequent Scottish songbook. *The Miscellany* eventually comprised four volumes and went through no fewer than fifteen official editions. Many pirated editions also appeared, some including only three volumes, and others slimmed down to less than one hundred pages (see Appendix B for a partial list of editions). By the 1740s Ramsay’s work had become the

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¹ Roger Fiske observed that the English were so intrigued with Scottish, Irish, and Italian songs that their own native songs were neglected until William Chappell began collecting English songs in the 1850s; *Scotland in Music: A European Enthusiasm* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 79.

² Allan Ramsay was a wig maker by profession, and he professed little musical ability, but he was a very active patron and promoter of the visual, literary, and dramatic arts. See Martin Burns, *Allan Ramsay, A Study of His Life and Works* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931).

standard source book for Scottish songs. It was constantly plundered by other editors who were creating their own songbook collections, and it also became the source material for more complicated classical music arrangements, including several concertos by one of Johann Sebastian Bach’s famous sons, Johann Christian Bach.\(^4\)

In addition to influencing later songbooks, the work of Ramsay also filtered into theater and literary works. John Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* includes a few of Ramsay’s songs,\(^5\) and when Walter Scott published his novel *Waverley* in 1814, Ramsay’s *Miscellany* was fresh in his mind. In a discussion of literary tastes between two of the characters, Waverly and Mr. Bradwardine, the latter expressed his interest in the poems of the “periwig-maker” Ramsay.\(^6\)

Like most songbooks printed during the eighteenth century, the *Tea-table Miscellany* contained only the words of the songs. Music was not provided, although Ramsay did indicate the name of the tune to which each song should be sung (this was common for many songbooks during the century). The texts largely conform to the pastoral genre, with stock pastoral names appearing throughout, such as Chloe, Phoebus, Lydia, and Cynthia,\(^7\) and many of the settings include generic fields, meadows, and brookssides. But the places of Scotland also play a prominent role, many of the texts describing the swain and his nymph sitting not by the stream but by the burn or on the brae. Several of the songs identify specific Scottish settings, such as “Farewell to Lochaber” and “Highland Laddie.” Scottish names also appear throughout the songs, so that Jean, Jenny, Jockey, and Willie populate songs that appear next to other songs that feature their Arcadian counterparts. Ramsay brought Arcadia to Scotland.\(^8\)

\(^4\) Ibid., 141-42.

\(^5\) Ibid., 142.

\(^6\) *Waverly: Or, ’Tis Sixty Years Since* (New York: Signet Classics, 1964), 114.

\(^7\) See for examples songs on p. 15, 195, 340, and 38. For this study I have used copy of the 9th Edition, printed in London in 1733 and currently housed in the Allen Music Library at The Florida State University.

\(^8\) Matthew Benjamin Gelbart, “Scotland and the Emergence of ‘Folk Music’ and ‘Art Music’ in Europe, 1720-1850” (Ph.D. diss, University of California, Berkeley, 2002), 95.
Ramsay also laces the poetry with Scots words, so that the pastoral Mediterranean genre is transferred to Scotland, where the “The yellow hair’d laddie sat down on yon brae.”⁹ To assist his readers with this curious vocabulary, Ramsay included a glossary of Scots terms at the end of his compilation. More will be said about Ramsay’s work later in this chapter.

Ramsay’s work was soon competing with William Thomson’s successful *Orpheus Caledonius*, published with music in London in 1725 and marketed to Britain’s elite. Ramsay was outdone by Thomson’s printing of the music, and he responded the following year with an addendum to his book that included music with harmonizations by Alexander Stuart.¹⁰ He was particularly incensed by Thomson’s unacknowledged borrowing of many of the *Miscellany’s* texts. However, Ramsay’s work still maintained its popularity, and he gently reproached Thomson in the preface to his ninth edition (1733), saying he “ought to have acquainted his illustrious list of subscribers, that most of the songs were mine, the music abstracted.”¹¹ It is an interesting sign of Ramsay’s generosity that he is included in the list of subscribers to Thomson’s second edition, printed in London in 1733.

**William Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius***

Thomson (c.1684–c.1760) was born in Scotland but moved to London, where he was a court musician known for his singing of Scots songs.¹² His *Orpheus Caledonius* is the first known publication of Scottish songs with music by a Scotsman, and it was very successful. Even before the work was printed, he had a large list of subscribers. They purchased 292 copies, covering his costs before the work was printed. For the second edition (1733) there were 598 subscribers, who purchased a total of 693 books before printing.¹³ The collection was printed in

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⁹ This is a song title found in the *Miscellany*, 201.

¹⁰ *Musick for Allan Ramsay’s Collection of Scots Songs* is now an extremely rare publication, and it does not seem to have had much success; Johnson, *Lowland Scotland*, 251.

¹¹ *Miscellany*, vii.


¹³ Farmer, “Foreword” to *Orpheus*, iii, v.
two handsome volumes, with the first dedicated to Queen Caroline and the second to the Duchess of Hamilton. Thomson held the attention—and money—of Britain’s elite, even securing a royal license from the king to hold the rights to the publication for fourteen years (including the rights to the songs by Ramsay). Although successful, its popularity was relatively short lived, and it never underwent as many editions as Ramsay’s *Miscellany*.

Following Ramsay and Thomson, other publishers both in and out of Scotland gradually began producing more songbooks, so that over the course of the eighteenth century the output of Scottish songbooks would crescendo. A list of Scottish songbooks is provided as Appendix A. The list is inevitably incomplete, but it represents the output of books in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Such a list cannot include all of the reprints and editions of the various songbooks. Some books likely had only one printing, but others, such as Ramsay’s *Miscellany*, underwent a dizzying number of printings, and so the list is also not comprehensive of publication activities during any given year. However, a summary of the initial printings of books shows a trend that reveals the ebb and flow of the interests of audiences during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see Figure 3.1). Furthermore, a review of the songbook titles highlights some of the attractive themes of the books.

Songbook production was fairly minimal during the first decades of the eighteenth century, but beginning in the 1730s the number of publications increased from an average of two books per decade to a peak of seventeen books in the 1780s. It dropped

![Fig. 3.1. Scottish Songbook Production, 1700-1850.](image-url)
to thirteen during the last decade of the century, and by the middle of the nineteenth century it had tapered back to only a few new publications produced every decade. A summary of the books also reveals a fairly equal distribution in and out of Scotland. Edinburgh was the favored location for printing, while the vast majority of songbooks printed outside of Scotland were printed in London. The balanced production between Scotland and England shifted after the turn of the nineteenth century; Scotland’s interest in its own music understandably remained fairly steady, while the English penchant for native Scottish music took a downturn.

Many contextual factors influenced the trends in the production of songbooks. Britain became increasingly wealthy as the century wore on, so that the wealthy were more lavish in their purchasing. Politically, Scotland became less threatening to England later in the century. The union of the two nations in 1707 certainly caused significant dissent on the Scottish side, but despite the minor military conflicts of 1715 and 1745 Scotland gradually became a generally congenial partner in the British union, so that by the 1780s, and the spike in songbooks, the two earlier revolts came generally to be regarded as romantic memories instead of signs of imminent violence.

At the same time, however, Scotland was also seeking its own voice and history to distinguish it from its powerful neighbor, and its musicians and publishers turned to native music to help form a Scottish cultural identity. It was during the 1760s that James Macpherson first published his Poems of Ossian. The work may be seen as an attempt to establish a Celtic identity for Scotland that distanced it from its Anglo-Saxon neighbors, but for those outside (and many inside) of Scotland, the Poems of Ossian were a(n) artistic and historic phenomenon that incited interest in their own folk tales and folk music. Claire Nelson has claimed that Ossian led to a flood of Scots songs, and my statistical summary confirms that this may have indeed been a

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15 Matthew Benjamin Gelbart has written an interesting study on Scotland’s prominent role in the emergence of the distinction between folk music and art music, and he claims that Ossian played an important role in this gradual process. “Scotland and the Emergence of ‘Folk Music’ and ‘Art Music,’” 110-18.

catalyzing factor in the increased number of songbooks near the end of the century, especially considering that Macpherson continued to print editions into the 1790s.

Turning to native music served two different functions for the two contrasting nations. For the Scottish, looking to music of the past shored up their independent history and cultural identity; for the English, these simple songs appealed to their growing interest in romanticizing other places and the past.

The titles of the songbooks reveal an increased fascination with the past. The songbooks from the first half of the eighteenth century simply purport to be collections of “Scots Tunes.” By the 1740s James Oswald published works with titles that refer to “Curious Collections” and “The Best Old Scotch . . . Songs.” Reference to “curious,” “old,” “ancient,” and “original,” become increasingly common during the last half of the century, with several claiming to contain songs “some of which [have] never before [been] printed.”

James Johnson’s The Scots Musical Museum

At the peak of songbook production, in 1787 James Johnson began publishing his multi-volume The Scots Musical Museum. The publication is one of the most famous, in large part because Robert Burns was a major contributor to the work. However, his role in the publication is not apparent in the title page of the first volume, and only a few of his actual contributions are credited to him in the table of contents. For whatever reason, Johnson initially downplayed Burns’s participation. The songbooks sold well, in part due to Burns’s skill at writing. In actuality Burns had a larger role than Johnson in compiling the pieces, and it was only in subsequent volumes that Johnson acknowledged Burns’s contributions.

A Scottish engraver, Johnson (1750-1811) originally intended to publish two volumes. Burns joined in the venture when the first volume was being published, and he became the

17 See Appendix A, specifically George R. Kinloch’s Ancient Scottish Ballads Recovered from Tradition (1827) and publications by Martin (1769) and Boyack (1772).

18 Henry George Farmer says that the collection was the “most favoured of all the collections,” primarily because “Burns lent his magic pen to Johnson’s venture.” History, 255.

Farmer, History, 255. The respective volumes were printed in 1787, 1788, 1790, 1792, 1796, and 1803; Farmer, “Foreword,” Museum, xvii.

21 J. Cuthbert Hadden, George Thomson, The friend of Burns: His Life and Correspondence (London: John C. Nimmo, 1898), 141.

22 Quoted by Farmer, ibid.


24 Farmer, “Foreword” to Musical Museum, x.

25 Farmer admits that “obscurities . . . have clouded the Museum from the birth. . . . God forbid that anyone should devote a lifetime–it could not be done in less–in attempting to collect and collate a complete corpus of every issue of the Museum.” Ibid., xxiii.

primary editor, compiler, and writer for what would amount to a six-volume work containing some 600 songs. In meeting the aims proclaimed in the title–to collect and present a museum–Burns was primarily concerned with collecting Scottish songs and not with selling them to the English aristocracy. Burns was more concerned with patriotism, and he continually insisted that he not be paid for his work, even when he needed financial support. In a letter to another editor, George Thomson, he refused payment, saying it would be “downright sodomy of the soul!”

He wrote in a letter to “Clarinda,” his Edinburgh mistress, about his efforts to preserve and record the songs of Scotland: “This you will guess, is an undertaking exactly to my taste. I have collected, begged, borrowed and stolen all the songs I could meet with.” Some of the songs came from other collections, such as Ramsay’s Miscellany, while others he collected aurally.

The publication was fairly simple. It included melodies set to a simple, figured accompaniments by Stephen Clarke (who is not acknowledged in the publications). Yet despite its simplicity, or perhaps because of it, each volume sold out and was reprinted several different times and in multiple locations, including Edinburgh, London, and Glasgow.

The texts are far more Scottish than those in the Miscellany. Arcadian places and people have almost completely disappeared, and the place names of Scotland regularly appear. The names of the lads and lassies are almost all Scottish (Jenny, Johny [sic], Jamie, Jocie, etc.), although an occasional nymph or swain wanders into the scene. The themes are similar to those
found in pastoral poetry, but they have a rough candor about them that distinguishes them from the idyllic Arcadian genre. Burns, like Ramsay and W. Thomson, continued to use the Scots vocabulary, intermingled with English, but in his masterful poetic style Burns crafted lyrics that seem less trite than much pastoral poetry.

To illustrate this difference, we may compare two representative songs. Ramsay included in his book a song titled “Old lang syne,” and Johnson included a song with the same title, but Burns crafted a new text that is far superior to Ramsay’s original. Ramsay’s text reads:

Should auld [old] acquaintance be forgot
Tho’ they return with fears?
These are the noble hero’s lot
Obtain’d in glorious wars:

Welcome, my Varo, to my breast,
Thy arms about me twine,
And make me once again as blest,
As I was lang syne.

Methinks around us on each bough
A thousand Cupids play,
While thro’ the groves I walk with you,
Each object makes me gay:

Since your return the sun and moon
With brighter beams do shine,
Streams murmur soft notes while they run,
As they did lang syne [old times] . . .

Ramsay’s description of Cupids playing and everyday objects illuminated with love smacks of hyperbolic affection. The poetry is typical for his time, with the exception of his Scots vocabulary. Burns completely transformed the poem in his publication for the Museum. He abandoned the love play and focused on the sentiment of memory:

Should auld [old] acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne [old times]?
For auld lang syne, my jo [joy/dear],
For auld lang syne
We’ll tak a cup o’ kindness yet,
For auld lang syne. . .

We twa hae [two have] run about the braes [hills]
And pou’d [pulled] the gowans [wild flowers] fine;
But we’ve wander’d mony [many] a weary fitt [path],
Sin auld lang syne. . .26

Instead of two lovers, he describes two friends who are relishing a stock of shared memories. The thick use of Scots and the absence of hyperbole make the poem far more sincere than Ramsay’s version.

Many of the songs in the Museum deal with the theme of love, but those by Burns again reveal a more genuine expression of feeling. In Burns’s song “Bonnie wee thing,” for example, he praises his lover in the poem, but instead of using unrealistic adjectives, he describes her with the endearing title of “bonnie wee thing.” The Museum also includes songs of mourning, as is common to the pastoral genre. Many sorrowful pastoral songs are about a jilted lover hoping to manipulate his way back into a relationship, but Burns’s songs express sorrow more sincerely. In Burns’s “Ae fond kiss,” he writes a touching depiction of a parting between lovers:

As fond kiss and then we sever;
Ae farewell and then for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I’ll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I’ll wage thee,

Who shall say that fortune grieve him
While the star of hope she leaves?
Me, nae cheerfu’ twinkle lights me;
Dark despair a-round benights me.

The lyrics seem heartfelt because of Burns’s skill, but also because this was a parting poem written to his Edinburgh lover “Clarinda.”27

26 The song appears in the Museum, # 413. There is some discussion about whether this text was actually by Burns, or whether he heard it from a native singer. See Donald A. Low, The Songs of Robert Burns (London: Routledge, 1993), 310-12.

27 The song appears in the Museum, # 347. See Low’s commentary regarding Clarinda in Songs, 452-53.
Other songs portray lovers in unflattering ways, such as “My wife’s a wanton wee thing.” These types of texts are seldom if ever seen in pastoral poetry; but it is partly the sincerity of Burns’s poems and partly their accurate depictions of life that make Johnson’s *Museum* so attractive.

**George Thomson’s *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs***

Burns also was also the primary contributor to George Thomson’s *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*, which also eventually comprised six volumes (1793-1841). Unlike Johnson, Thomson (1757-1851) was a very active editor in the process, making specific demands on his text and music contributors. Ironically, Thomson was inspired to collect and publish the songs of Scotland when he heard the Italians Tenducci and Corri sing Scottish songs for the Edinburgh Musical Society:

Thomson was an amateur musician and connoisseur of fine European music, particularly admiring Handel’s music, and he was very active in the concert life of Edinburgh. His *Select Collection* reveals his musical tastes, and in the work he hoped to elevate Scottish music to a higher artistic standard. To achieve this aim he secured the assistance of the most prominent composers in Europe. By the end of his monumental work he had enlisted Pleyel, Kozeluch, Haydn, Beethoven, Hummel, and Bishop to write arrangements of the Scottish songs with accompaniments and introductory and concluding “symphonies.” He also turned to well known poets Burns, Scott, Hogg, and Byron to assist with the lyrics.

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28 The primary biographer of Thomson is J. Cuthbert Hadden, *George Thomson, the Friend of Burns* (London: John C. Nimmo, 1898).

29 Quoted in Hadden, 20. Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci (c.1735-1790) was a castrato and composer who spent much of his career in Britain. J. C. Bach arranged several Scotch songs for Tenducci, which he performed at Bach-Abel Concerts, and these were likely what Thomson heard in Edinburgh. Wolfgang Mozart also wrote an aria for Tenducci (lost). Signora Corri is likely Sophia Giustina Corri (1775-c.1830). Roger Fiske, “Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980); and Peter Warren Jones, “Corri,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980).
Thomson worked on the *Collection* in his spare time and financed the project primarily with his own money. Yet this government clerk had no difficulty critiquing his esteemed contributors and requesting alterations. He was conscious of the general lack of musical proficiency among his potential patrons, and in many of his letters he requested that the composers simplify their accompaniments to suit the amateur British musicians. The issue became a particularly contentious and recurring one with Beethoven. In one letter to Beethoven, dated 30 October 1812, Thomson wrote,

> But my dear sir, there are some which are much too difficult for our public. There is not one young lady in a hundred who will so much as look at an accompaniment if it is ever so little difficult. . . . Don’t think that what is easy for you is easy to us also; for in music you are in very truth a giant, and we are but pygmies.”  

Responding to a similar request several months later, Beethoven replied, “I regret I am unable to oblige you. I am not accustomed to tinker my compositions.” Yet Thomson continued to make similar requests. Beethoven’s last known letter to Thomson in May 1819 showed his frustration with the amateur’s demand:

> My Dear Friend, You are always writing “easy,” “very easy”; I do my best to satisfy you, but–but–the fee will have to be more “difficult,” or I might say ponderous!!!!! . . . I wish you may always have a real taste for true music; if you cry “easy,” I shall retort with “difficult” for your “easy”!!!

Poor Thomson, in his efforts to raise the standard of Scottish music he incurred the ire of Beethoven.

In general he tried to preserve the original lyrics of the songs, but he also felt compelled to sanitize any songs that were too bawdy or ribald. In adding “improved” accompaniments and lyrics, Thomson hoped to outdo his competitors. He remarked concerning other songbooks that there were no symphonies to introduce and close the airs, and the accompaniments (for the piano or harpsichord only) were meagre and commonplace, while the words were in a great many cases such as could not be tolerated or sung in good society.  

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30 Ibid., 324.

31 Ibid., 325

32 Ibid., 344.

33 Ibid., 23.
He was particularly critical of Johnson and his *Museum* (he may have not been aware of Burns’s high level of participation in the work, or his criticism would likely have been tempered, since he admired Burns’s writing). Johnson had begun printing a few years before Thomson produced his first volume, but the bulk of their volumes were being printed during the same time period. Both editors printed first in Edinburgh and then in London, with the same printer, T. Preston.

Part of Thomson’s criticism of Johnson may have been due to jealousy. Thomson produced lavish folio volumes with engravings and high quality printing. Each piece was set for voice, pianoforte, violin, and cello; the latter parts were published in a second book that could be purchased separately. Despite the high quality of the publications, Thomson’s books struggled with sales. Johnson’s volumes were small and simple, scored for voice and pianoforte, with accompaniments by the unnamed and relatively unknown Stephen Clarke. In a letter written in 1821 Thomson complained that the *Museum* was “an omnium gatherum in six volumes, containing a number of tawdry songs which I would be ashamed to publish,” and furthermore it was “brought out in a miserable style and without letterpress,” but it still “had a good sale at seven shillings per volume.” 34

In another letter more than a decade later he wrote to another publisher again criticizing Johnson’s songbook:

I am sorry you put my work into the same sentence with . . . Johnson’s *Museum*, which I conceive will be very short-lived, containing as it does such a number of tawdry and vulgar lilts, unfit for woman’s eye or ear, and only suited to alehouse topers over their midnight potations. It degrades my name to place it in such company. 35

Thomson was intent on elevating culture, while this was not the desire of Johnson and Burns, but by doing this Thomson overestimated the aspirations of the musical culture in Britain. Thomson was wrong in his prediction, and in fact Johnson’s *Museum* is better known today than Thomson’s *Select Collection*.

What Thomson lacked in business and artistic sense, he made up for in enthusiasm and determination. In his correspondence with Burns he wrote that he intended to publish every

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34 Ibid., 28.

35 Ibid., 86.
Scottish air and song worth singing.\textsuperscript{36} Over the course of nearly half a century he worked on his collection of Scottish tunes and later on a collection of Irish and Welsh songs. But despite his industry and high aims, he is known more today for his correspondence and collaboration with some of his great artistic contemporaries than for his musical contributions.

The musicological reception of the \textit{Select Collection} has been mixed, with most scholars deprecating the musical value of the works. David Johnson describes Thomson’s work as a “monstrous white elephant,” and Roger Fiske more reservedly states that he “failed, financially without a doubt and perhaps artistically too.” Even his own biographer, J. Cuthbert Hadden criticized him as having “either . . . a defective ear, a deficient imagination, or an exaggerated sense of propriety.”\textsuperscript{37} The volumes have been poorly received partially because it makes both folk and classical scholars uneasy, since the pieces are an unusual hybrid of both. Certainly classical composers have used folk tunes in their compositions, but Thomson’s acute prescriptions for these arrangements may have constrained their compositional and artistic potential. Barry Cooper has been a recent lone voice calling for a renewed consideration of Beethoven’s settings of Thomson’s tunes, calling them “compositions” (using Beethoven’s own word) and not “arrangements.” He has analyzed the pieces for their creativity and concluded that the pieces are significant and should not be overlooked.\textsuperscript{38}

Thomson was at times aware of his failings, but he hoped that his publications would eventually be considered estimable by future generations. In one letter he mused that “My publications are not the flimsy productions of a day, but works that will ever stand the test of

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 30

\textsuperscript{37} Johnson, \textit{Lowland}, 146; Fiske, \textit{Scotland}, 58; Hadden, \textit{Thomson}, 114. Hadden later says without restraint, “The comparative failure of the work was clearly a puzzle to Thomson. . . . It never once occured to him that the fault might lie at his own door. . . . The fact is that Thomson made a gigantic mistake in the matter of the accompaniments to his songs. . . . To put it frankly, it was the acme of absurdity to go to these eminent continental composers for accompaniments to Scottish airs. Such airs required intimate treatment if any ever did; and, although Thomson could not be brought to realize the fact, it was far more likely that his despised native musicians should do them more justice than his much-vaunted Apollos. Beethoven and Haydn, as composers, might be—indeed were—all that Thomson declared them to be; but they failed nevertheless in the great majority of instances to catch the characteristic style of the music. Beethoven especially failed, proving once more that the greater the genius, when misapplied, the more signal the failure,” 119-20.

\textsuperscript{38} Barry Cooper, \textit{Beethoven’s Folksong Settings: Chronology, Sources, Style} (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994).
examination.” So far, his hope has only been minimally achieved. Several authors have taken up the topic because of Thomson’s connections with Pleyel, Haydn, Beethoven, and Hummel, and it is this association that has helped the work stand the “test of examination.”

**Songbook Audiences**

Scholarly reception aside, I will now focus on the public reception of these four songbooks at the time of their publication. I particularly want to identify the audiences of the books and then consider some reasons that audiences were attracted to the publications. Each book slightly differs in content and presentation, and these details reveal some of the features that were appealing to the purchasers.

The audience for these songbooks was somewhat homogenous. Because of the high costs and the requirement that purchasers at least be literate, preferably musically literate, the patrons of the books were necessarily the educated and wealthy. The majority of British citizens were struggling to fill their bellies and could not afford music books, let alone lessons to learn to read and perform music.

The songbooks were expensive. Each volume of George Thomson’s high-quality *Select Collection* cost one guinea, with the supplemental violin and cello parts costing an additional 6 shillings (because of lackluster sales he later reduced the price of each volume to 15 shillings). Johnson’s *Musical Museum* was of a much lower quality and sold for 7 shillings per volume. Yet even the latter price was too high for the masses. At the turn of the eighteenth century poor

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39 Hadden, 117.


41 Roy Porter in *English Society* reports that everyone below the skilled craftsman in the eighteenth century was undernourished, 29.

42 Hadden, 28, 118.
laborers received about ten pounds a year. The wages increased during the course of the century, so that by the end of the century a laborer would earn about eight or nine shillings a week, or more than twenty pounds per year. A book that cost most of a week’s wages remained beyond the reach of the masses who were required to put their whole income towards purchasing the necessities of life.

Some craftsmen, law men, and clergy may have been able to purchase a book, but only if their other obligations were met and if the songbooks held high value for them. George Thomson as a veteran government clerk earned 150 pounds per year in 1797, so that a songbook, like the one that he produced (with the supplemental parts), would have cost about .9% of his income and possibly strained his financial means. At the turn of the nineteenth century less than 20% of the population lived in families that earned 150 pounds or more each year. It was the aristocrats and the growing merchant and banking class that could afford the luxury of songbooks. By the end of the eighteenth century, even a lowly baron might earn 4,000 pounds per year, so that a songbook was well within his means.

Both men and women purchased and used the books. Some songs, including several in Ramsay’s collection, included a singing dialogue between a man and a woman, and it can be assumed that the songs may have been performed accordingly. However, the songbooks were primarily marketed to women, who were expected to cultivate their musical talents as a sign of their femininity and cultural status.

The place of music among upper-class women can be observed in the aristocracy of the time. Even a stoic Protestant such as Queen Mary II at the end of the seventeenth century valued

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43 Porter, 63, 108. Porter also reports that during the latter part of the century a peck loaf (four pounds) of bread cost about one shilling two pennies, 108. A guinea was equal to one pound and one shilling; a pound was equal to twenty shillings.

44 For a modern comparison, if a civil servant today made $50,000 annually, .9% of his or her income would be $450.

45 These statistics are based on census reports in England at the turn of the nineteenth century. Approximately 278,804 heads of family (with an estimated total of 1.603 million people in these families) earned 150 pounds or more each year. The actual number would be lower, since salary statistics are based on average incomes of occupations. The total population at the time was 8.664 million. See Statistical Tables 1 and 6 in Porter.

46 Porter, 81.
music in her private hours, although she and her husband were infamously poor music patrons during their co-regency. John Hawkins gave an amusing account of Mary’s being entertained privately by Arabella Hunt and John Gostling singing songs by Purcell, who accompanied at the harpsichord. Mary grew weary of the songs and asked Hunt to sing the Scots song “Cold and Raw.” Hawkins describes Purcell’s dismay at his being set aside for a Scots song:

Purcell was all the while sitting at the harpsichord unemployed, and not a little nettled at the queen’s preference of a vulgar ballad to his music; but seeing her majesty delighted with this tune, he determined that she should hear it upon another occasion. Purcell subsequently used the tune as the basis of several pieces, including for her birthday song the following year, 1692.

The involvement of women in music, primarily as amateurs, continued through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and filtered down to women of lesser standing, who sought to associate themselves with their wealthier peers by engaging in the same displays of culture. The role of music in the lives of these women can often be seen in the novels of the time and their depictions of fictitious characters engaged in actual contemporary activities. Jane Austen’s novels abound with descriptions of women who displayed their marital potential through their competency at the keyboard. Her contemporary Walter Scott described similar scenarios. Songbook publishers clearly intended their book for young females like Austen’s Miss Bingley or Scott’s Rose Brandwardine.

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48 John Hawkins, A General History of the Science and Practice of Music, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1963, originally published in 1853 by J. Alfred Novello), f. 564. It should also be noted that Mary II, although of Scottish descent, had been raised for most of her life in Denmark.

49 Scott shows the catholic nature of domestic, female musicians by depicting in the novel Waverley the daughter, Rose Brandwardine, of a rather remote baron singing and playing the harpsichord imperfectly, but emotionally, for their rare English visitor, whom she eventually marries. Scott, Waverley, 117.
Ramsay included on the cover page a short poem by the seventeenth century poet Edmund Waller that describes a woman singing.\(^{50}\) According to the text, her song “fans the fire” of love and makes her irresistibly attractive to her male viewer. The poem portrays the qualities a man desires in a woman: she should have “bright eyes,” be “fair,” and sing with “sweet sounds.” Ramsay’s inclusion of the poem establishes a script for his female readers that suggests the way they should perform and interact in relationships with men.

In its physical appearance the *Tea-Table Miscellany* is rather small and plain, lacking any imagery or visual decoration (see Figure 3.2).\(^{51}\) The book is dedicated “To ilka [each] lovely British lass,” and includes a poem addressed to the “Dear Lasses.” The dedication praises his female audience, and the Ramsey describes himself “kneeling” and “craving” for their acceptance. He promises them that singing the songs may “ward you frae the sower [sour], and gayley vacant minutes pass.” The dedication also recommends that the songs may be pragmatically sung while their tea is cooling, hence the title:

\[
\text{E’en while the tea’s fill’d reeking round,} \\
\text{Rather than plot a tender tongue,} \\
\text{Treat a’the circling lugs wi’ found} \\
\text{Syne [then] safely sip when ye have sung.}
\]

Ramsay’s promising dedication and utilitarian proposal for these songs seems attractive and innocent enough for his audience.

The songs are amusing indeed, and their not-so-innocent themes would surely help make the minutes

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\(^{50}\) The excerpt comes from a poem titled “Of Mrs. Ardea” (C.1645). For a list of poems by Waller see Mark McDayter’s Indices to Seventeenth-Century Poetry (http://ett.arts.uwo.ca/poemindx/site/attrbtnfrstlns/attrbtnfrst_Edmund_Waller.html; accessed 7/22/08)

\(^{51}\) The copy of the *Miscellany* used in this study is a ninth edition (1733), printed in London, and currently housed at the Allen Music Library of The Florida State University. All of the digital photographs in this chapter were taken by the author.
“gayley pass.” Despite his promised censorship of bawdy themes, his book abounds in sexual
innuendo. In “The lass of Peaty’s mill,” for example, he describes a bonny lass,

Her Arms, white, round and smooth,
Breasts rising in their dawn,
To age it would give youth,
To press ‘em with his hand.
Thro’ all my spirits ran
An extasy of bliss,
When I such sweetness sand [sic]
Wrapt in a balmy kiss.

Such a poem would definitely amuse and would very likely drive away the “sowr” emotions of
an uneventful and idle day. Ramsay’s moderate censorship was sufficient for his audiences.52

He initially published the work in Edinburgh, where he assumed that his Scots
vocabulary and depictions of Scottish places (glens, burns, Highlands, etc.) would most resonate.
The work was successful enough that he eventually published the work in London and elsewhere
with approbation. The places of publication reveal the widespread audiences of the book. His
official editions appeared repeatedly in Edinburgh and London. He also arranged for publication
in Dublin, Aberdeen, and Glasgow. Numerous unauthorized prints appeared repeatedly
throughout Britain, and by the time of the ninth edition (1733) Ramsay reported in his preface
that he had received a letter from a friend in the Americas who said that the songs were being
sung in Virginia and “round all the globe.”53 Although its global circulation was limited, the
Miscellany did spread a considerable distance from Ramsay’s Edinburgh.

It is clear from the preface to his ninth edition that he was very aware of his audience and
their attraction to the music. He owed his success largely to the popularity of Scottish songs.
The songs tunes were apparently well known in and out of the country—perhaps due to the
distribution of chapbooks and broadsides. They were known well enough that Ramsay assumed
his patrons knew the tunes to which his texts could be sung, and thus he saw no reason for
printing the music. He believed that the book had been successful because Scottish songs have

52 It is difficult to know how much he actually censored the poems, since his sources are diffuse and often
unknown.

“an agreeable gaiety and natural sweetness, that make them acceptable wherever they are known, not only among our selves, but in other countries.”

William Thomson must have quickly appraised the success of Ramsay’s publication, since he soon pirated many of Ramsay’s songs for publication in his *Orpheus Caledonius*. Ramsay’s work was marketed to a general, literate audience, but Thomson’s was intended for the most elite members of English society. His 1733 London edition was published in two volumes, with handsome, gilded bindings, and marbled cover-pages. The paper is thick and of excellent quality, and the title page is in red and black ink (see Figure 3.3).

In addition to the fine printing and binding, Thomson’s dedication and preface reveal his aristocratic audience. As has been mentioned, volume I is dedicated to Queen Caroline, and the volume II is dedicated to the Duchess of Hamilton. In his dedication to the queen he claims that “Your majesty having heard some of the following songs, encouraged me to resolve on publishing them.” Encouraged by the queen, the collection was intended for her and other aristocrats.

In the prefatory poem Thomson addresses the “Beaus and Belles so fine and fair.” Thomson takes a pedantic approach, saying that young English lovers can benefit from these songs:

You Beaus and Belles so fine and fair,  
Here learn to love, and be sincere; . . .  
You falsly vow, and whine, and sigh,
And make no Conscience of a Lye;
Oh! How can Beaus fair Belles deceive?
Or why will Belles fine Beaus believe?

Love’s brightest Flames warm Scottish Lads,
Tho’ cooly clad in High-land Plads;
They scorn Brocade, who like the Lass,
Nor need a Carpet, if there’s Grass; . . .

His prefatory poem preaches that the English gentry can learn something about love from the simplicity of the Scottish people who need only grassy hills to express genuine love. Because of their simplicity the “Scottish lads” have “Love’s brightest Flames”; implying that they love more purely than the “fine and fair” English aristocrats.

Although some of the texts depict honest wooing, others exploit the idea that men are full of false flattery, claiming, for example, that seeing one’s lover causes temporary blindness and one’s “bosom to glow.” Some present amusing ways to seduce a lover in the cold weather of Scotland. In “Come hap me with they Petticoat,” we find a skirt-chasing song. The male narrator says that he is “starving cold, while thou art warm,” and he pleads for her to have pity on him and wrap him in that “charming petticoat of thine.” In a reversal of genders, a female narrator in “The Highland Laddie” makes a similar request of her male lover. In the verses of this song she praises the masculine qualities of the Highland laddie over his Lowland counterparts and pines, “When I was sick and like to die, He row’ed [rolled] me in his Highland Plaidy [cloak].” The sexual innuendo is obvious, and one must wonder if this sexual exploitation really meets Thomson’s promise to teach the English “beaus and belles” how to be more sincere in their courting.

These images of lower-class flirtations must have amused the social elite of Britain and inspired their own dalliances. Included in some of the editions is an informative list of subscribers who were drawn to the songs. The content and organization of the list reveal the social-economic strata of the patrons. The list is divided alphabetically, but under each letter the

55 See Song 5, p. 9, in vol. I.

56 The Allen Music Library at The Florida State University owns two copies of the 1733 edition. One of the copies includes a subscription list, the other does not.
names are organized first by social status and then alphabetically (see Figure 3.4). For example, under the letter “A” appears the Duke of Argyle, the Duke of Athol, then the Earl of Albermarie, who is followed by a series of lords and ladies, and the list is concluded by a number of names without aristocratic prefixes.

The subscribers to the second edition of the *Orpheus Caledonius* include approximately sixty-six members of the British peerage, including dukes, earls, counts, and barons (Appendix C includes a sample list of subscribers). Most of the subscribers are men, although many duchesses, countesses, and ladies also appear on the list. These aristocratic patrons hail from both Scotland and England, including the Duke of Montrose, the Duke of Newcastle, and the Duke of Kent. The Scottish Duke and Duchess of Hamilton were particularly ardent supporters of the book, purchasing five sets and six sets respectively.57

These elite are followed in their respective alphabetical listings by a significant number of landed gentry (without peerage) with the prefix of lord or lady, such as Lady Mainwaring or Lord Percival. These lords and ladies are followed by a number of names without aristocratic prefixes. Some of these individuals may have had aristocratic lineage, but they were not considered either part of the peerage nor as landed gentry. Many of the names are followed by the suffix Esq. and even the

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57 This is James Hamilton, the 5th Duke of Hamilton.

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occasional M.D. and “surgeon.” Individuals with military titles are also included, including
General Wade, who is famous for building a road system in Scotland to help subdue the
Highland rebels. Each alphabetical sub-list ends with a small number of names that have no
prestigious prefix or suffix to distinguish themselves, such as Mr. James Baird, Miss Adams, or
our Mr. Allan Ramsay (the editor of the Miscellany).

The organization of the subscribers lists in Thomson’s Orpheus Caledonius reveals the
power and status of the peerage and the landed gentry at the time and shows that they were the
targeted audience of the book. Inclusion of untitled patrons (the Misters and Misses) is
interesting in that it reveals a growing body of wealthy citizens who pursued the tastes and
practices of the lords and ladies, perhaps in an attempt to be like them. Others subscribers, like
Ramsay, were probably not trying to ape the gentry but were genuinely enthusiastic about the
subject and had the means to pursue such interest.

Johnson’s Scots Musical Museum was not marketed to the same readership as Thomson’s
Orpheus. The cover page announces that the work is dedicated to “The Society of Antiquaries of
Scotland.” Johnson (and the initially inconspicuous Burns) intended the work for those
interested in history. The Society of Antiquaries had been formed in 1780, and was
representative of the growing interest in cultural history. Thus the Museum, as its name reflects,
was concerned with collecting musical artifacts. In addition to being a serious endeavor, this
looking to the past was part of the developing neoclassical aesthetic that developed near the end
of the century.

Originally published in Edinburgh, the Museum was also published in London. It was
intended for the antiquarians of Scotland, but it tickled the fancy of a much wider audience in
both Scotland and England. The lower price of the volume, seven shillings, also made the work
affordable for the growing middle class.

On the cover page Johnson proclaims the authenticity of the book’s content: “In this
publication the original simplicity of our Ancient National Airs is retained unincumbered with
useless Accompaniments & graces depriving the hearers of the sweet simplicity of their native

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58 The Society has existed continuously since 1780. See the web page of The Society of Antiquaries of
Scotland (http://www.socantscot.org; accessed 7/17/07).
melodies.” Johnson was reacting to contemporary works by Domenico Corri, William Napier, George Thomson, and Peter Urbani, who embellished the simple tunes with abundant ornamentation or accompaniments. In reacting to what he perceived to be the corrupted nature of these songbooks, he may have initially suppressed Burns’s name as a writer because he wanted to preserve a sense of authenticity. Later in the simple preface Johnson claims that the other publications are too large, but that his work is intended to be a “pocket companion.” Thus the book was to be a practical book, portable and unsophisticated.

The poems in the Museum, like the Tea-Table Miscellany, were speckled with ribald language, which undoubtedly continued to amuse the wealthy consumers. But because of the work’s pretense of history, sexual innuendo was not simply base rhyme, as its aura of authenticity bolstered the acceptability of these occasionally blushing works.

Unlike Ramsay, William Thomson, and Johnson, George Thomson sought to edit out the sexual innuendos and present a work that would be acceptable to a more general and virtuous audience. In the Preface he says that he “has been scrupulously careful to remove those doggerel rhymes only by which the Music has been debased; giving place to none inconsistent with that delicacy of the Sex, which in too many publications of this sort has been shamefully disregarded.” Despite his high aim, he did include a few songs that might incite some blushed giggling, such as “Come Under my Plaidy,” which describes a 62-year old man successfully wooing a woman half his age. But the song is not explicit and thus maintains some modesty. He intended the work for the same elite class that William Thomson had published more than fifty years earlier, but his more sanitized publication shows that he was not aware of the sexual interests of the upper-class. He further moderated the Scottishness of the songs by providing alternative English texts, so that patrons could choose to sing either a Scottish or English text to the same tune. For example, in volume I he includes Burns’s song “Braw Lads on Yarrow Braes,” and on the same page provides the poem “Mary’s Charms Subdued My Breast,” by Andrew Erskine (see Figure 3.5). Thomson’s maintenance of the integrity of the song, while

59 Although the first volume was printed in 1787, when the sixth volume was issued in 1803 Johnson published all of the volumes again with a new preface. See Farmer’s “Foreword” to the Museum, xviii.

60 The song is found in volume IV:171.
allowing for textual flexibility, shows that in addition to trying to appease a wide audience, he intrinsically valued the tune above the text.

Although his marketing strategy seemed sound, it failed to resonate with his intended patrons, perhaps because they expected and enjoyed the colloqualism of the Scots language, which was confounded in Thomson’s Anglicized work. Thomson’s luke-warm reception may also have been partially due to his own lack of aristocratic connections. One of his original aristocratic backers was Andrew Erskine, the poet of the previous example. Erskine was the brother of the Earl of Kellie, and he had inherited some money and land but was not a title-holding aristocrat. He had shown a genuine interest in Thomson’s venture and had contributed to the first volume, but he took his own life in 1793 due to his compulsive gambling and financial failings, leaving Thomson without any high-profile connections.

Without aristocratic backing Thomson still spared little expense in creating a luxurious songbook with the hopes of alluring the wealthy. Printed on folio pages, the 15-inch-tall volumes were not marketed as tea-table books, but their large size resembles some of today’s coffee-table books, and he may have intended them to be displayed as such.

61 Hadden, 29.
Each volume also included one or two engravings that depict various figures in Scottish settings. The frontispiece of volume II, for example, depicts an elderly couple in their cottage (see Figure 3.6). It is a humble home with a set of bagpipes on a corner shelf, an oversized cat, and a kettle on the fire. The engraving, by Thomson’s brother Paten Thomson, is inspired by the song “John Anderson, My Jo [joy],” which describes an old married couple, with the wife doting over her husband and reminiscing about the past.

The engraving at the end of Volume II, also by Paten Thomson, portrays another scene with a similar theme but different setting. Subtitled “The “Birks [birch] of Ivermay” it depicts lovers seated beneath a birch tree (see Figure 3.7). She is reclined against his lap and looking dreamily towards the picturesque landscape to which he gestures. The landscape is not drawn with great detail, but the area is hilly and covered with sheep. Clearly the scene is pastoral; however, the figures are not dressed like shepherds and nymphs but in eighteenth-century clothing, so that the engraving portrays modern and more realistic lovers within a pastoral setting.

Clearly Thomson was publishing the lavish book for those who could afford such luxuries, and his inclusion of the engravings shows his intention to present a particular image of Scotland for a wealthy audience. The engravings and the music present a similar image. Both

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62 The song’s text is by Burns, and the accompaniment is by Kozeluch, 1:51.

84
The “Yellow-hair’d laddie” was originally included in Ramsay’s Miscellany. Thomson used the same melody in Select Collection but took its title from the first line of text, “In April when Primroses,” I:13.

portray scenes of domestic serenity and pastoral love, themes that had resonated with the wealthy for several centuries.

The sophistication of the music was also designed to appeal to its potential audience. The keyboard parts are far more elaborate that the bass lines of William Thomson and Johnson, although George Thomson states in his preface that “Instead of thorough-bass denoted by figures, which very few can play with any propriety, the harmony is plainly expressed in musical notes which every young Lady may execute correctly.” Here he identifies his targeted female audience, but his claim of simplicity is exaggerated. Although the accompaniments by Pleyel, Haydn, Beethoven, and others are not overly complex, they require a technical proficiency that may not have been as common as Thomson assumed. The introductory and concluding “symphonies” (really just a few bars of introductory and concluding material) often proved to be the most challenging sections of the piece.

Pleyel’s setting of the “Yellow-hair’d laddie” provides a good example. The introduction requires a fairly active left hand and a right hand that can play a quick sixteenth-note run of nearly two octaves (see Figure 3.8). The coda includes a series of thirds in the right hand that would challenge some amateur players (see Figure 3.9). Pleyel also set the song as a duet, and this requirement for two voices with adequate singing skills may not have allowed “every young Lady” to perform the piece with ease. Additionally, the song was given a violin and cello

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63 The “Yellow-hair’d laddie” was was originally included in Ramsay’s Miscellany. Thomson used the same melody in Select Collection but took its title from the first line of text, “In April when Primroses,” I:13.
accompaniment, and although these parts were optional, this may have also discouraged some from purchasing the book. Thomson hoped to create a high-quality songbook for the upper class, but his elitism may have been partially responsible for his modest success.

Songbook Attraction

The songbooks attracted subtly different audiences, but in general terms the patrons were fairly similar. I propose four general explanations for the interest in Scottish songbooks in the eighteenth century. The first two reasons, the eighteenth-century’s interest in history and its fascination with primitivism, provide a general aesthetic framework for the books’ reception. The two concluding explanations have more to do with the purpose and use of the songs for entertainment and social purposes.
History and Authenticity

For various political, aesthetic, and psychological reasons many people in the eighteenth century were interested in historical authenticity and purity. Motivated by the forming of cohesive national identities during the century, people and nations were looking to their historical roots to establish their individual, cultural, and political identities. This was particularly acute in Scotland during the century, as the Scottish were seeking to articulate their position in the new English-Scottish union.

Historians, writers, and artists portrayed a history of Scottish culture that helped unify the nation. One example of this nation-making was William Tytler’s investigation into the history of Scottish music, titled “Dissertation on Scottish Music.” In it he made quasi-academic arguments to show that Scotland had a credible music history. He pronounced that the “genius of the Scots has, in every age, shone conspicuous in Poetry and Music.” Although his claim can be disputed, his writing about the history of Scottish music echoes society’s increased interest in native antiquity during the century.

In addition to the political and cultural benefits accrued by writing history, recognizing one’s connection to the past provides a psychological grounding for members of any culture. The Scottish relished the collections of Scottish songs because they bolstered their own personal connection to something enduring. English citizens could also participate in singing Scottish songs and recognize a kinship with their British co-citizens. Scotland was, after all, now part of Britain, and so its history was now their history. Songbooks were of particular value because they presented authentic artifacts from history that could be recreated through performance, thus shoring up one’s personal connection to the past through active performance, rather than passive reading.

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65 Most authors on the subject discuss the way the Scottish songbooks contributed to a national identity (see Johnson, Lowland, 188), but none, to my knowledge, have adequately addressed the reasons that the English were also interested in the songs.
The movement to collect and publish songs was partially motivated by the fear that native oral songs would soon be lost. Some of the century’s empiricists, like Samuel Johnson, dismissed the integrity of an aural tradition, but others believed that this medium of transmission managed to propagate pure songs. Hawkins, in his History, noted his belief that the Scottish songs must have been originally written down, but had been lost and thus transmitted by tradition. He believed, however, that “they seem not to have been corrupted.” Hawkins’s logic may be fallible, but his belief in the purity of the Scottish songs was likely shared by his contemporaries. Although many songbook editors freely altered the texts, they were drawn from historical sources. And in the case of G. Thomson he thought changes in the texts were corrections and improvements to the songs. Ultimately it was the old Scottish tunes that were more valued for their historical purity, and the song texts were, as Burns said, only a “vehicle to the music.”

Primitivism

Related to the attraction to history was the eighteenth century’s fascination with primitivism. Theories about the advancement of humans from a primitive to a refined state became especially prominent during the last half of the eighteenth century. Interestingly, Scottish Enlightenment figures Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, John Millar, and William Robertson were foremost in the development of these social evolution theories. These “stages of mankind” applied to all societies, so that for “civilized” societies, “primitive” cultures were viewed as fossils of the past living in the present. Scotland, particularly the Highlands, provided an

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67 A lack of a written source was one of the chief complaints of Samuel Johnson in his charges of inauthenticity against Macpherson’s Ossian.

68 History, 563.

69 Hadden, 31.


observation deck within Europe of a society in the early stages of development. This constitutes one of the reasons for Europe’s fascination with Scotland during the century.

The Highlands experienced an increase in tourism at the end of the eighteenth century as a partial result of this popular interest in primitivism. John Lane Buchanan, a missionary for the Church of Scotland, wrote about his experiences living on the Isle of Harris in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. His account reads like an ethnography of a foreign people. He describes the customs and daily life of these primitive British citizens who lived in wood and mud huts that he and others thought worse than the living conditions of the American Indians.

Rousseau’s writings about the corrupt nature of advanced societies made primitive Scotland all the more appealing. The inhabitants of Switzerland were similarly viewed as living examples of a simple, more sincere society. Peter France, writing about Rousseau and primitivism, has observed that “both Switzerland and Scotland . . . could also figure as the mountainous refuges of old values and customs under threat from corrupt modern civilization.” Scottish songbooks fit well into Rousseau’s rubric, as they were seen as repositories of a simple society that was envied by many who were disenchanted with decadent urban life.

Charles Burney’s discussion of Scottish music in his General History (1789) reveals that he viewed Scotland in primitivist terms. He compared Scottish music with ancient Greek and Chinese music. After his entry on the Greek Dorian scale he wrote, “Now this is exactly the old Scots scale in the minor key; a circumstance which must strike every one who reads the passage of Plutarch, that is at all acquainted with the intervals of the Greek scale, and the Scots music.” He then compared Chinese to Scottish music, adding “Now no music can be composed from such a scale that will not remind us of the melody of Scotland, . . . [which is of ] a much higher

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72 Gelbart, 104, 109, 110.

73 John Lane Buchanan, Travels in the Western Hebrides, from 1782-1790, introduction by Dr. Alasdair Maclean (1793; reprint, Waternish, Isle of Skye, Scotland: Maclean, 1997).

antiquity than has generally been imagined.”

Evidence of the primitiveness of Scottish music was found in its artlessness. Social “evolution” was seen by some as regression, and many believed that artifice was necessarily shallow and corrupt, and that simplicity and gracefulness expressed something emotionally more pure. William Tytler commented in his “Dissertation” of 1783 that the music of Scotland was unburdened with the degenerative artifice of society and its philosophies. He claimed that “from their artless simplicity, it is evident, that the Scottish melodies are derived from very remote antiquity.” He later bragged that “As the Scottish songs are the flights of genius, devoid of art, they bid defiance to artificial graces and affected cadences.”

For Tytler and many of his contemporaries simplicity and even wildness were virtues. Lord Edward Fitzgerald believed in this notion and spent much of his short adult life in the Americas, whence he extolled in letters to his mother his enthusiasm for simplicity. In one missive he wrote, “Savages have all the real happiness of life, without any of those inconveniences, or ridiculous obstacles to it, which custom had introduced among us.” Fitzgerald’s beliefs can be transferred to his British counterparts at home who were less adventuresome but who were still curious about the genuine happiness of the savages across the Atlantic and the savages who inhabited the northern part of their own island.

The auditors of Scottish music generally agreed upon the primitive character of the music. John Dryden in 1700 had commented that “Scotch tunes . . . had a certain ‘rude sweetness’ . . . natural . . . though not perfect.” This was reasserted by Tytler in 1783, who said that the old Scottish songs were admired for their “wild pathetic sweetness,” and again echoed by the Englishman Joseph Ritson, who wrote that “The pastoral simplicity, plaintive wildness, and

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animating hilarity of the Scotish music, have long attracted universal attention; and the admiration of strangers."\textsuperscript{78} Here Ritson validates my observation that the music interested foreigners, and his, Tytler’s, and Dryden’s description of the music highlights the aesthetic and philosophical interest in the simple, melodic songs found in the songbooks.

Entertainment

Drawn to the music for its “artless simplicity,”\textsuperscript{79} patrons of the songbooks found the songs in most of the collections relatively easy to perform and very entertaining. Some were likely cognizant of the songs’ heightened philosophical status and their socio-cultural implications, but many were drawn to the songs simply because they provided entertainment. The ladies who purchased the books, or whose husbands purchased books for them, were not obliged to work or be involved with politics, so in addition to running the affairs of the home, they were charged with cultivating their talents and entertaining guests.

Entertainment often occurred after dinner, when the women would gather for a game or for a private musical performance. Sometimes both genders would join for entertainment, but it was also common for men and women to hold their own separate activities. During the century there was a market for entertainment books, some with music, and others comprised of a variety of games, poems,


\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
stories, and riddles. One of these books, titled *Fun for the Parlour* (1771), contains a frontispiece that depicts five elaborately dressed women gathering around an ornate table, while one reads from a book (see Figure 3.10). The cover page promises the book to be “Entertaining to read, pleasing to hear, powerful in raising the spirits, cheering [sic] the Heart, and brightening the Countenance: And are calculated to render Conversation agreeable, and to pass long Evenings with Wit and Merriment.”

Musical performance would have played a role in helping to pass the “long Evenings.” Henry MacKenzie recalled his father’s reminiscence that in the 1720s “the ladies of Edinburgh used to sing [Scots] airs without . . . any but a slight and delicate accompaniment at tea and after supper, their position at the table not being interrupted.” This scenario occurred throughout Britain and Europe, although the music would have varied.

Another reason that someone might want to entertain with a Scottish song—and for that purpose buy a songbook, chapbook, or broadside—is because they had heard a particular song performed by one of the popular singers of the day. As discussed earlier, George Thomson was inspired to collect songs after hearing the fashionable Italian Tenducci sing Scottish songs. Performances by Tenducci, Corri, William Thomson, and others inspired audience members to purchase the songs that had been sung by the most recent star performer.

**Social Development**

Participation in music education and performance was also seen as a way to increase one’s social accomplishments. This was particularly the case for women, for whom music functioned as a tool for distinguishing oneself socially and as a member of the “gentle sex.”

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80 The compiler of the book is anonymous. The full title of the work is *Fun for the Parlour: or All Merry Above Stairs. Consisting of a great and pleasing Variety of Comic Lectures, Deliver’d on various Occasions, By Right Heads, Wrong Heads, Feather Heads, Heard Heads, Wooden Heads, Brazen Heads, and by some Heads that are of no Use to their Owners* (London: S. Bladon, 1771). The image and quotes come from the electronic facsimile published by the database *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (Farmington Hills, MI: Thomson Gale, 2005; http://galenet.galegroup.com).

81 Quoted by Nelson, 599.

James Gillray’s 1809 caricature of an aspiring farming family satirizes the social climbing of those seeking to imitate the wealthy (see Figure 3.11). Titled *Farmer Giles and His Wife Shewing off Their Daughter Betty to Their Neighbours, on Her Return from School*, the print shows Betty playing the piano, with the music on the piano titled, “Bluebells of Scotland.” Above the piano is a painting of some rural scene. As satire, Gillray’s work reveals the popularity of Scotch songs for young women, and their families, with social aspirations.

Music was also thought by some to be beneficial for the development of moral values, and some songbooks, such as George Thomson’s *Select Collection*, were particularly focused on songs that engendered morality. A songbook printed in 1799 by George Nicholson Ludlow indicates in its preface that the songs contained therein were selected so that “Every subject presented possesses some perceptive rule, moral sentiment, or elegant thought.”

The subject was enlarged by H. R. Haweis in his lengthy *Music and Morals* (1871), but of course the topic was simply a continuation of conversation that had begun with the Greeks two millennia earlier. Certainly many who purchased the songbooks did not do so primarily out of

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83 The image comes from the on-line reproduction of the image found in the Library of Congress (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?ppall:@field(NUMBER+@1(cph+3f03803)), library call number: PC 1 - 114444.

84 *Ballads & Songs, Scotish [sic]* (London: George Nicholson Ludlow, 1799).

concern for moral development, but they may have believed in the value of music in shaping one’s character.

**Songbooks in the Drawing Room**

When these songbooks were used, it was often in drawing rooms (or parlors) of England, so that Scotland was represented through these books within an environment that was outside of Scotland.86 Within this English space the songbooks functioned in a way that fulfilled the personal needs of the participants. To understand the function of the books, in this section I will describe the setting and use of the books, and then to elucidate the function of the books I will compare the books to landskip paintings and to the Claude glass.

Queen Caroline, the dedicatee of William Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius*, hosted frequent evening entertainment in her drawing room. Thomson, himself a singer at the court, may have performed at these drawing-room activities. His performances there may have prompted her encouragement of Thomson to publish his collections, as he claims in the dedication. The preferred residence of Queen Caroline and George II was Kensington Palace, where the king and queen each had their own drawing room. These rooms were lavishly decorated with paintings, and a keyboard was included in the furnishings.

Caroline was not a native of England. Born and raised in Prussia, she lamented that she did not speak the language well, but still she was well known for her education and thoughtfulness, enough so that Voltaire described her as a “a delightful philosopher on the throne.” She was also interested in gardening, and particularly in the characteristic English style of making the landscape more natural. In her gardening endeavors she commented that her desire was in “helping nature, not losing it in art.”87

86 The songbooks were also distributed in Ireland, Wales, and the American colonies, but the primary locations of distribution were in England and Scotland.

Understanding her background helps in understanding her interest in Scottish songs. Undoubtedly the Scots vocabulary in the songs was even more challenging to this native German, but if her interest in music mirrored her interest in gardening, she would have preferred the coarse naturalness of the Scots. Since, as already noted, Thomson promised in the preface that the songs would teach the “Beaus and Belles” how to “love and be sincere,” the “rude sweetness” of the melodies would also have appealed to the queen’s aesthetic preference for simplicity.

Following dinner Queen Caroline and her attendants and guests would have withdrawn into her drawing room in Kensington Palace. The notion of a withdrawing room accurately indicates the function of the room; it was a place where a small group could disengage from the routines of the day and distract themselves from their daily cares. Cloistered within the luxuriously decorated drawing room in a palace that was in turn surrounded by acres of gardens, Queen Caroline and her attendants inhabited a space that was made quasi-sacred by its separation from the outer world.

For other wealthy patrons the songs would have also been performed in the drawing room. Their drawing rooms would be inferior to those at Kensington palace, but the room still would have been one of the most elegant rooms in the house, and it would similarly have been used as a retreat from daily activities. It was in the separated space of the drawing room that the Scottish songs would have been performed and the place of Scotland re-created. It was not created in replica, of course, but altered in its nature by its performance via music and further transformed by its being broadcast within another place. As the figures and place-names of Scotland were evoked, the image of Scotland was “re-emplaced” within the drawing room.88

Musical Landskip

To assist our understanding of the ways Scottish songbooks may have functioned within the drawing room I want to compare the books to landskips, as landscape paintings were commonly called during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.89 In previous centuries landscapes

88 I have taken the word “re-emplacement” from Edward S. Casey, whose writings on landscape painting have influenced my views on musical depictions of place. See Representing Place: Landscape Painting and Maps (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), xv, 19.

had often appeared as generic settings in European paintings. In the fifteenth century artists began to provide more detail to landscapes, although they still functioned primarily as backdrop.80 Eighteenth-century landskips increasingly focused on natural scenery, although people and buildings were also frequently part of the setting. These were sometimes painted on canvas, but they were often painted directly onto walls and furniture.81 The most common place for landskips was above the fireplace mantle. Other preferred spots were door panels, walls, harpsichord interiors, and chimney boards (decorative boards used to cover the fireplace when it was not in use (see Figure 3.12)).82 A landskip served as a decoration that brought the outdoors inside and nature to the urban dwelling. In describing the landskip as interior decoration, Edward S. Casey wrote, “Landscape is not just let in by the back door or by the side windows, it is allowed to flourish in the midst of daily living.”83 For someone like Queen Caroline, who was interested in landscape gardening, she would also have enjoyed viewing the landskip in the palace and drawing room.

The re-emplacement of nature indoors via landskip paintings parallels Scottish songbooks and their bringing the place of Scotland inside homes. Scottish songbooks, like the landskips, served in part as decorations. The handsome publications of William Thomson and George

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80 For example, Giotto’s and Simone Martini’s fourteenth-century paintings depict very little landscape. As painters added perspective to their paintings, landscapes became more detailed, as seen in the works of fifteenth-century painters like Jan van Eyck, Hieronymus Bosch, and Leonardo da Vinci.

81 Casey, 4, 12.

82 The image is from a portion of the chimney board. The image can be found online at the Victoria and Albert Museum (http://www.vam.ac.uk/), museum number W.12-1994. The painting of landskips on furniture seemed especially popular in the American colonies. For illustrations and a discussion of landskips see Nina Fletcher Little, *American Decorative Wall Paintings, 1700-1850* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1972).

83 Casey, 13.
Thomson were meant to be performed, but they were also meant to be seen. The two-volume *Orpheus Caledonius*, bound with an attractive cover and marbled page edges, and the six-volume *Select Collection*, with its large pages and engravings, were meant to be displayed as visual decorations. Even displaying the books, without performing them, was a way of bringing Scotland indoors.

Musical performances could also function as decorations, although transient and aural. Just as the owners of drawing rooms decorated and furnished the rooms according to their own tastes, they could also use music to construct an aural environment to their liking. Performing songs such as “The Highland Laddie” was akin to having a landskip painting of the Scottish Highlands hanging above the fireplace.

By constructing music into their environment, the songs’ patrons, like Queen Caroline, were expressing their ideals about their place of residence. These ideals of place and home were thus projections of their own personalities. Queen Caroline might have requested the music of Handel or J. C. Bach in her drawing room to establish more sophisticated notions of her own identity. At other times she may have requested a Scotch song to assert her taste for natural simplicity. Thus the music both projected and reinforced her notions about herself.

**The Claude Glass as Analogy for Scots Songs**

Another analogy that is helpful in understanding the function of Scottish songbooks is the Claude glass. Painters and tourists in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries regularly carried a small mirror device called a Claude glass. The mirror was named after the seventeenth-century painter Claude Lorrain, because painters used the glass to imitate the picturesque landscape paintings of Lorrain. To use the mirror a painter or tourist would turn his back to the object he wanted to view, and he would then hold up the mirror slightly to his left or right so that he could view the desired object in the mirror.94

The mirror thus framed the subject. It blocked out the less impressive landscape and other objects that might ruin the picturesque quality of the view or painting. Often the mirrors

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94 My ideas about the Claude glass are influenced by Malcolm Andrew’s discussion about tourism in Britain; see *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1989).
were oval and the lens convex, so that the image was circumscribed by a graceful line and the image was given a painterly perspective. The mirrors were often overlain with lenses colored gray, blue, yellow, or “hoar-frost,” creating an image that was tinted with a subdued and unifying hue (see Figure 3.13).

With their backs turned from the scenery, those who used the Claude glass were, to be sure, not looking at the real image. For those who traveled often great distances to see, and perhaps paint, the tourist attraction, the framed and tinted images in the glass were more picturesque than the actual place itself.

The Scottish songbooks functioned in a manner similar to the Claude glass. The patrons of the books were interested in the Scottish landscape and the music of its people but these drawing-room audiences were not actually listening to the authentic music of Scotland; they were instead listening to a framed and tinted version of Scottish music. Physically, the aural music was visually framed with musical notation, which was itself part of the framed shape of the page and book.

Music in all the songbooks was also altered to make it more “picturesque,” but also more domestic, for the listeners. Textual alterations have already been discussed, and these were abundant, but music alterations also occurred in the songbooks, with the exception of Ramsay’s book, which had no music. All of the editors applied musical “filters” to make the music sound more appealing to the projected patrons. Arrangements in William Thomson’s and Johnson’s books altered the music in less invasive ways, while George Thomson made significant changes in his attempt to elevate the music.

William Thomson’s Orpheus Caledonius included only melodies with a simple bass accompaniment without figures. Thomson made modest alterations in the tunes by adding some

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The image can be found online at the Victoria and Albert Museum (http://www.vam.ac.uk/), museum number P.18-1972.
basic ornamentation to the melody line, specifically trill marks. While the songs had probably been performed by native singers with various ornamentation, Thomson’s trills more likely reflect the early eighteenth-century fashions in melodic decoration.

Some of the songs show none of the characteristics of native Scottish music. One such piece is “The Lass of Peaty’s Mill.” Although the text is Scottish, the music lacks any of the stock Scottish features, such as a Scotch snap, a double tonic, or a pentatonic scale. This may have been because the piece had been altered before it came to William Thomson, or it may have had English or French origins before someone applied a Scottish text to the tune.

Other songs show Scottish origins, but they reveal Thomson’s tinkering to make the melodies conform to the diatonic scale common throughout Europe. For example, the melody of the “Highland Laddie” is clearly based on a pentatonic scale (G A B - D E)—one of the chief characteristics of Scottish music. Scottish melodies often emphasize the interval of a minor third, or the gap of the scale, and most scholars of Scottish music refer to the “gapped scale” as one of the central features of the music. The melody regularly skips the “missing” C and F of the melody, with only two exceptions occurring in m. 2 and 6, when the C is treated as a passing tone (see Figure 3.14). The inclusion of the C in m. 2 seems especially out of place, since it is part of the only sixteenth-note passage in the piece and functions as a short passing tone. Johnson’s

Fig. 3.14. “The Highland Laddie,” in Thomson’s Orpheus Caledonius.

96 “The Highland Laddie” first appeared in Ramsay’s Miscellany, and the text is by Ramsay.

97 David Johnson addresses the challenge songbook composers have had in trying to harmonize gapped scales, double-tonic sequences, and endings on notes other than tonic, see Lowland Scotland, 150.
arrangement (discussed in more detail later) does not include either “gapped” note. Although difficult to prove, it seems likely that the notes were added by William Thomson in his preparing them for his English audience.

Thomson’s bass line confirms that he was comfortable altering the harmonic make-up of the tune. Even though the bass line is simple, it completely alters the harmonic nature of the melody. Thomson treats the melody in G major, and he regularly employs the C in the bass line, which functions as either the root of the subdominant chord or the first inversion of the supertonic. Consequently the pentatonic tune is framed as a diatonic one, and the added harmonies obscure the Scottish characteristics of the melody.

The same piece in Johnson’s *Scots Museum* shows similar alterations. The melody is clearly pentatonic, although transposed down a fifth. Johnson’s version (really Stephen Clarke’s) also reveals that William Thomson’s is an abbreviated setting of the piece that includes only the chorus and not the verse of the piece (see Figure 3.15). The melodies of both songs are similar, so that one can recognize the tune, but they are also significantly different. Metrically and rhythmically both arrangements vary, with Thomson’s “Laddie” written in 4/4 time, while Johnson’s is in 2/2 time. The songs also have noticeable rhythmic differences throughout.

Johnson’s harmonic setting of “The Highland Laddie” also obscures the pentatonic nature of the melody. Late in the eighteenth century Clarke included a simple figured bass for the accompaniment. The melody is built upon the pentatonic scale C D E G A, and during the first part of the song (the verse), no foreign F or B appears in the melody. However, in the bass line an F appears regularly, although not as a subdominant, but as a non-functional supertonic (the chord serves as an upper neighbor tone). Several of the harmonies function awkwardly, with very disjunct motion and unusual chord progressions, and it seems that when Clarke is unsure of what chord to supply he simply omits the chord figure (6, 4, etc), so that only the melody and bass note appear.

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98 “The Highland Laddie” appears in the first volume of the *Museum*, p. 22.

99 The image used here is a facsimile of the original *Museum*. Reprint, Hatboro, PA: Folklore Associates, 1962.
During the chorus an F appears unexpectedly in the melody in m. 10 and spoils the pentatonic integrity of the melody (see Example 3.1). Here the F acts as the seventh of a dominant chord, which leads to a V₄ chord that then resolves to the tonic (C major) at the beginning of the next phrase. The dominant-seven chord does not appear again, even at the final cadence, so that this rather dramatic cadence in the middle of the piece seems out of place.
Clarke used the chord to emphasize the highest part of the melody, but instead of dramatizing the melodic peak the mis-harmonization undermines the intended effect.

Ex. 3.1. mm. 9-12 of Johnson’s “Highland Laddie.”

Although the two previous settings significantly alter the character of the music, George Thomson’s *Select Collection* contains the most radical alterations to the music. We need not judge here which version is most authentic, since all versions might be equally credible in an oral tradition, but they also might stem from nearly identical source, having been transcribed differently. The differences may reveal the transformation a piece undergoes when it is notated on paper. Folk-song scholars often describe and lament the “freezing” process that results from an aural song’s being transfixed in notation, but my tracking of this song in three songbooks over the course of a century shows that the text and the music continued to undergo alteration despite their already being notated and published. The music changed as a result of the editor’s and his patron’s personal preferences in a way that is similar to a “folk” performer who adapts his singing to correspond to the events and audience that surround him. Notated music can undergo some of the same changes characteristic of aural practice, and the songbooks themselves may be seen as part of a fluid tradition.100

We have already noted that George Thomson was more inclined to modify the texts than were other publishers, including newly written English lyrics that could be substituted for the Scottish text, and that he had the pieces arranged for keyboard, violin, and cello. To demonstrate

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100 See Johnson’s summary of the difference between folk and classical music in *Lowland*, 15.
George Thomson’s substantial alterations, I will also look at his setting of “The Highland Laddie.” Thomson asked Pleyel to write the accompaniment for the piece with opening and closing “symphonies.” In addition to adding the accompaniment Pleyel further transformed the piece by writing it as a vocal duet. The accompaniment is more meticulously worked out then those in the Orpheus Caledonius and the Musical Museum. It is lively, inventive, and harmonically lush—and functional. In adapting the work to his Austro-German style, however, Pleyel completely ignored the pentatonic nature of the piece and wrote it firmly in D major. The G that would be skipped in the pentatonic scale appears regularly in the vocal and piano lines, so instead of just working around the melody Pleyel altered it to conform to the diatonic scale (see the soprano line in mm. 1 and 3 in Figure 3.16). Musically the result is a piece with a harmonic and melodic integrity that far exceed that of the previous settings. But in making the piece stylistically and harmonically coherent, Pleyel re-wrote the melody so that it is devoid of one of its chief Scottish characteristics.

Fig. 3.16. Excerpt from Pleyel’s setting of “The Highland Laddie” in Select Collection.

He tried to make up for this rhythmically and metrically by adding the musical cliche of the Scottish snap and by writing it in a jig-like 6/8 meter. Interestingly neither of the two versions by the native Scots actually includes the snap, but the foreigner Pleyel, perhaps

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101 The song appears in vol. 2:78.
prompted by his editor, included several snaps to give the piece a Scottish sound (see m. 4 in Figure 16). Here Pleyel and George Thomson have thoroughly tinted and framed the music as if through a Claude glass. The opening and closing “symphonies” musically frame the Scottish tune, and the harmonic and rhythmic alterations tint the music to make it more fitting as art music.

**Conclusion**

For patrons in their drawing-rooms the songbooks not only framed the music and made them more “picturesque,” but they also kept Scotland and its wildness at a safe distance. Performing or listening to the music of Scotland in a drawing room was akin to a tourist experience within one’s own home. The Scottish songbooks were visual and aural decorations, like the landskip, that brought the image of Scotland into the room. They also functioned like the Claude glass regularly used by tourists to frame the images they saw on their journeys.

These drawing-room tourists were attracted to the historic, primitive, scenic nature of Scotland, but most did not have the time, means, or desire to observe the real thing and encounter the natives. When they wanted to be entertained with the place of Scotland, they would withdraw to a separate place; when performing Scottish songs they would momentarily imagine the people and places of Scotland. Kenneth Michael McNeil described a parallel process for visitors to the Highlands: “Travelers to the Highlands from the eighteenth century onward constructed themselves as outsiders to the Highlands who must, sometimes implicitly, journey into the Highlands from someplace else and eventually journey out.”

“Writing about his journey to the Highlands and western isles of Scotland, Samuel Johnson wrote, “We were now to leave the Hebrides, where we have spent some weeks with sufficient amusement, and where we had amplified our thoughts with new scenes of nature, and new modes of life.” Within the

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102 Kenneth Michael McNeil, “Inside and Outside the Nation: Highland Identity in Nineteenth Century Britain” (Ph.D. diss., The Ohio State University, 1998), 201.

drawing room the audiences of the songbooks could similarly open and journey into the books and spend time imagining Scotland and being amused with the “new scenes of nature, and new modes of life” portrayed in the songs, and then they could close the book and leave the place of Scotland. The songbooks tamed the “wildness” of the tunes and ultimately they tamed, in the minds of the patrons, the place and people of Scotland.
CHAPTER 4
SCOTLAND IN OPERA

Scotland became a popular subject for Europeans in the nineteenth century, largely because of the widespread popularity of *The Poems of Ossian* and the subsequent works of Walter Scott. European readers’ expectations of Scotland were primed and conditioned by these works, as expressed in a statement by Schiller, who died shortly before Scott’s ascent:

> Who does not prefer to feast his eyes upon the wild streams and waterfalls of Scotland, upon its misty mountains, upon that romantic nature from which Ossian drew his inspiration—rather than to grow enthusiastic in this stiff Holland?¹

Following on the heels of *Ossian*, Walter Scott was the most popular author in Europe during the 1820s and 1830s.² Perhaps with some jealousy Mark Twain called the wide-spread success of Scott the “Sir Walter Disease.”³

After the release of each of Scott’s works a stream of translations, imitations, narrative illustrations,⁴ and musical works would soon follow. The most famous musical work inspired by Scott is Schubert’s “Ave Maria,” although the average listener probably does not make the connection, since the text has little to do with Scotland.⁵ Jerome Mitchell has written extensively about operas based on the works of Scott, and, having identified more than fifty, he claims that next to Shakespeare Scott inspired more operas than any other writer. Interestingly, he


² Ibid., 115.

³ Ibid., 133.


documents that most composers who set Scott for the musical stage were from Italy, France, and Germany, while composers in England, Ireland, and Scotland seem to have been among those least interested. Because of the popularity of the Scottish image in Italian opera during this time, Italy will be the focus for this chapter.

During the early decades of the nineteenth century advocates of Romanticism encouraged Italian artists, writers, and musicians to abandon stale classical sources in favor of more immediate subjects such as the works of Walter Scott. Gioachino Rossini and Gaetano Donizetti each set some of Scott’s literature to music, and while most “Scottish” operas have faded into the recesses of history books Rossini’s La donna del lago and Donizetti’s Lucia di Lammermoor have become staples in opera literature.

Both plots are clearly shaped by place, and these Scottish plots communicate distinct depictions of Scotland to audience members. In La donna Scotland epitomizes a place of hospitality and chivalry, while in Lucia it represents a haunted otherworld. Despite their differences, place is central to each plot, and in both works Scotland represented an Other reality for Italian audiences. To examine the various ways the operas portray Scotland, I will first provide details about the operas and their performance in Italy, then identify the way Scotland is portrayed through the characters, plots, and settings in each opera, and I will conclude by showing ways that the quintessentially Italian music of both operas also projects an image of Scotland.

Lucia and La Donna in Italy

The prominent bel canto composers Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti each composed a number of works that showed a particular Italian attraction to British history. In addition to La donna del lago (1819), Rossini also wrote Elisabetta, regina d’Inghilterra (1815) and lesser

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known works based on Robert the Bruce and on Ivanhoe.\textsuperscript{8} One of Bellini’s most successful operas, and his last, \textit{Il puritani} (1835) is set in seventeenth-century England. The prolific Donizetti wrote four operas set in sixteenth-century England, including \textit{Elisabetta al castello di Kenilworth} (1829), \textit{Anna Bolena} (1830), \textit{Maria Stuarda} (1835), and \textit{Robert Devereux} (1837).\textsuperscript{9} \textit{Lucia di Lammermoor} (1835) is his only opera about Scotland, but it has become his most popular opera, and it is also the best known opera depicting Scotland.

Scott’s works were particularly popular settings for operas, in part, because they facilitated a relatively easy adaptation into librettos. His novels have a particularly theatrical quality, in that they often break down into a few big scenes and include characters whose lines are not especially memorable, unlike Shakespeare’s pithy lines, and thus easily adaptable. Scott’s lengthy descriptions of history and culture become the charge of the set and costume designers.\textsuperscript{10}

Rossini’s setting of \textit{La donna} was the first opera based on Scott’s well-known \textit{The Lady of the Lake} and indeed the first known opera inspired by any of Scott’s writing. Scott published the poem in 1810, and it was soon available in several European languages. Rossini’s libretto was based on a French translation made by Elizabeth de Bon in 1813. His opera appeared nine years after the poem’s English publication, but the poem had not yet garnered much attention in Italy. Within two years of the opera’s premiere two Italian translations were in circulation, so that Rossini’s popular opera appears to have helped establish the “Scott cult” in Italy.\textsuperscript{11}

Rossini wrote and directed the piece while serving as the music director of the recently rebuilt San Carlo theater in Naples—perhaps the most elaborate theater in Europe at the time. The libretto, by Andrea Leone Tottola, closely follows Scott’s poem. The characters and plot are

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\textsuperscript{9} For discussions of these works by Donizetti see William Ashbrook, \textit{Donizetti and His Operas} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 547-65.

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., 5-6

primarily the same, with the King of Scotland (James V), in disguise as James Fitz-James (Uberto in the opera), falling in love with Ellen (Elena), the famed lady of Loch Katrine, while she is already in love with the Highland rebel Malcolm. Malcolm’s character is slightly compromised by Rossini’s writing the part for a female contralto—a practice that was declining at the time. Elena’s father, Douglas, comes across as domineering and less magnanimous than in the poem, as he unsympathetically demands that Elena marry the Highland chieftain Roderick Dhu (Rodrigo). A notable alteration of the plot occurs when Uberto and Rodrigo challenge each other to a fight. In the novel the scene is one of the climactic moments, but in the opera the combatants take their fight off stage, so that the death of Rodrigo is only revealed later. The opera follows the primary outline of the plot in the end, with King James pardoning Douglas and Malcolm and uniting the latter with Elena in marriage.

Rossini had at his disposal some of the best singers in Europe, including the soprano Isabella-Angela Colbran (Elena) and the tenors Andrea Nozzari (Rodrigo) and Giovanni David (Uberto). Even so, according to his contemporary Stendhal, the opening night was disastrous. When Nozzari entered the stage, singing slightly off key due to his distance from the orchestra, the “young bloods” in the audience “went mad as hatters. . . . Nothing can give the least, the sketchiest idea of the rage of a Neapolitan audience insulted by a wrong note.” Later in the opera, during an orchestral section featuring the trumpet, the “gentlemen” in the audience pit began imitating the sound of a galloping horse with their canes, so that “soon this brilliant notion was taken up by the rest of the audience, and instantly, the whole theatre-pit became a bear-pit, the audience a screaming crowd composed of fifteen hundred schoolboys all busily imitating the noises of galloping horses.”

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13 For a detailed description of the opera’s variance from the poem, see Mitchell, 20-28.

14 C. Osborne, 93

15 Stendhal (Henry Beyle), *Life of Rossini* (Paris: 1824); new and revised edition, translated and annotated by Richard N. Coe (New York: Orion Press, 1970), 388. Charles Osborne is more cautious of Stendhal’s report and indicates that the audience was indifferent until roused by Elena’s final rondo; see Bel Canto, 94.
A disappointed and angry Rossini left that night in for Milan, but along the way he deceitfully told everyone that the opera had been very well received. Yet, as Stendhal recounts, he was actually telling the truth, because the production the very next night was received with “violent enthusiasm.”16

Its success continued, so that over the next few years the opera was performed all over Europe, with performances throughout Italy, Dresden, Munich, Vienna, Budapest, Barcelona, Lisbon, St. Petersburg, Paris, Amsterdam, and London.17 Ten years after its premiere it was performed in New York and New Orleans.18 It remained a favorite for several decades. After a lull during the first half of the twentieth century it has recently received several revivals,19 although the difficulty of the intense, coloratura vocal parts will likely hinder any robust revival of the work.20

Sixteen years after La donna’s premiere, when Donizetti and the librettist Salvatore Cammarano (1801-1852) set Scott’s The Bride of Lammermoor to music, they were pursuing a story that had already been set several times by others. Donizetti’s setting was the last in a series of Bride operas created during the previous eight years, and it is the only one that has survived time’s corrosion.21 Donizetti composed the opera when he was at the height of his success. He had succeeded Rossini at San Carlo in 1822, when Rossini married Colbran and left Naples to escape the unhappy circumstances of having to work with the impresario Domenico Barbaia (c. 1778-1841), Colbran’s former lover. Donizetti achieved his first great success with Anna Bolena in 1830, and because of his prolific composing (he composed more than sixty operas) and his

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16 Stendhal, Life, 389.
17 C. Osborne, 94.
19 C. Osborne, 94.
20 For an interesting interview with modern performers who discuss the challenges of the music see David Shengold’s review of New York City Opera’s 2007 production of La donna del lago; Playbillarts, 19 March 2007 (http://www.playbillarts.com/features/article/6178.html, accessed 7/02/08).
21 Mitchell, 105.
uncanny ability to write a constant stream of memorable melodies he was the leading composer in Italy until Verdi’s ascent in 1842.²²

Cammarano made substantive changes to Scott’s Bride when he adapted it for his libretto. Although he has been criticized for his alterations, some have argued that the Donizetti-Cammarano setting vastly improved the work by eliminating reams of Scott’s tedious extraneous material.²³ Scott himself professed a dislike for his own novel, calling the work “monstrous, gross, and grotesque.”²⁴ Although the novel was fairly successful during its time, it can be argued that Donizetti’s and Cammarano’s setting elevated and immortalized the story.²⁵

Scott claimed that The Bride was based on actual history, but he altered the time (he set it at the turn of the eighteenth century), the location, and names. As expected of Scott, he included abundant descriptions of Scottish culture, language, and Jacobite politics. The opera abandoned most of the details regarding Scottish culture—making the task of identifying the Scottish aspects of the opera challenging and interesting. Cammarano also eliminated many characters, compressing all of the Ashton family into the figure Enrico, who demands that his sister Lucia comply with his arrangement of a marriage for her. Enrico coerces his sister because he believes the marriage will ensure his success and the further downfall of his sworn enemy Edgar Ravenswood. The heart of the novel remains the same, with Lucia secretly in love with Edgardo, in a Romeo-and-Juliet-like fashion, and with Lucia going mad after her forced marriage to Arturo and her stabbing the groom. Unlike the novel, in the opera Arturo actually dies of his wounds. Donizetti’s setting also enlarges Lucia’s mad scene to make it the lengthy climax in the opera. Finally, instead of having Edgardo die in quicksand on his way to a duel with Enrico,

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²³Schmidgall (p. 137), Abarbanel (p. 223), and Mitchell (p. 144), all argue that Donizetti’s Lucia is superior to Scott’s Bride.

²⁴ Abarbanel, 223.

²⁵ Ibid.
Cammarano and Donizetti created a new scene where Edgardo learns of Lucia’s death and then stabs himself so that he can join his deceased lover Lucia.\textsuperscript{26}

The dark, double tragedy of the opera made it especially appealing to the growing Romantic movement in Italy. After its premiere, Donizetti wrote of its warm reception:

\textit{Lucia di Lammermoor} has been performed, and kindly permit me to shame myself and tell you the truth. It has pleased and pleased very much, if I can believe the applause and the compliments I have received. I was called out many times, and a great many times the singers, too. The king’s brother Leopoldo, who was present and applauded, paid me most flattering compliments. . . . Every number was listened to in religious silence and spontaneously hailed with shouts of Eviva!\textsuperscript{27}

The opera’s immediate success can be gauged by a run of twenty-two performances in the autumn of 1835 and winter of 1836.\textsuperscript{28} Within a decade it had been produced in all of the major opera houses in Europe, and even in Havana (1840), Mexico City (1841), New Orleans (1841), and New York (1843).\textsuperscript{29} Performances of the opera have continued unabated since its premiere.

Several reasons account for the work’s unusual longevity, such as the Romantic nature of the drama and the numerous aria and ensemble gems in the opera, including the sextet at the end of Act II, which has been hailed as “the most famous ensemble in all opera.”\textsuperscript{30} One of the primary factors for its popularity has been the famed mad scene of Lucia, with its unparalleled, coloratura double aria. Because of the mad scene the role of Lucia has been a signature role for some of the most famous coloratura sopranos of the twentieth century, including Lily Pons, Maria Callas, Beverly Sills, and Joan Sutherland, whose fame was launched by her success with the role.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{26}Mitchell provides the most comprehensive discussion of the differences between Scott’s \textit{Bride} and Donizetti’s \textit{Lucia} (pp. 6, 142-44).

\textsuperscript{27}Quoted and translated by Williams Ashbrook, \textit{Donizetti and His Operas} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 98.


\textsuperscript{29}Abarbanel, 225; and C. Osborne, 241.

\textsuperscript{30}C. Osborne, 243.

\textsuperscript{31}Abarbanel, 225; and C. Osborne, 241.
Historically the mad scene has not always been the focus of the opera. In the nineteenth century Edgardo’s final aria was for a while more famous than Lucia’s, and Lucia’s arias were often substituted with arias from other operas, as was typical of the time. But as the century progressed, Lucia’s mad scene became the opera’s focal point, so that in some cases Edgardo’s final aria was eliminated in order to make Lucia’s aria the finale. The famed cadenza of the mad scene, with the voice and flute intertwined in haunting coloratura flights, was actually not written by Donizetti, but was likely introduced in 1889 when it was sung by Nelly Melba. Despite the changes to the mad scene, or perhaps because of them, the scene has become the signature moment in the opera that has become the most prominent “Scottish” opera.

**Portraying Scotland through Setting, Characters, and Plot**

The mad scene in *Lucia* creates an interesting interplay with place. The scene helps define Scotland as a place of bizarre events, and for the audience, primed by *Ossian* for ghostly expectations of Scotland, the use of Scotland provided an effective setting for irrationality. Similarly, *La donna’s* depictions of a renowned female beauty paints a flattering portrait of Scotland, but audience perceptions of Scotland’s primitive grandeur likely enhanced the expectation that beautiful women resided in such sublime settings. In both operas Scotland becomes defined as a place of exceptional scenery, people, and events.

Evidence of the Italian audiences’s awareness of Scotland can been found in Stendhal’s contemporary account of the opera and in *La donna’s* references to *Ossian* characters and imagery. In the opening act Elena hears hunting horns and believes it is the sounds of the sons of Fingal, the hero in the *Poems of Ossian*. Later in the act the chorus sings the praises of Elena, describing her as more beautiful than “the Damsel of Inibaca who one day made Trenmor, terror

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33 Ibid., 26.

of the north, burn with an immense passion” (see the chorus, “D’Inibaca, donzella”). Neither the Fingal nor Trenmor text occurs in the Scott poem. They were inserted by Tottola because he and the Italian audience were familiar with the references. At the end of Act I a chorus of bards with harps appears in another allusion to Ossian, although Scott’s text also includes bards. Stendhal certainly seems to have been familiar with Ossian when he saw the premiere of the opera, and this colored his perception of the opera and sparked his awareness of the setting in Scotland:

The decor of the opening scene showed a wild and lonely loch in the Highlands of Scotland, upon whose waters the lady of the lake, faithful to her name, was seen gliding gracefully along, upright beside the helm of a small boat. This set was a masterpiece of the art of stage-design. The mind turned towards Scotland, and waiting expectantly for the magic of some Ossianic adventure.

In his assessment of the opera Stendhal concluded that “its essential construction is epic rather than dramatic, and [it] retains a kind of Ossianic flavor, and a certain barbaric energy which is characteristically stimulation.” At the time of La donna Scott had not yet become a staple in Italy, although by the time of Lucia both Ossian and the works of Scott were widely known and colored the Italian perception of Scotland.

Rossini’s and Donizetti’s settings differ in their depiction of Scotland. Rossini’s opera itself contains two contrasting settings. It opens in the Highlands at Lake Katrine with herdsmen, hunters, and Elena contributing to a portrayal of a pastoral place of unusual beauty. When Elena meets the lost Uberto, she takes him to her hut in an island on the lake. The primitiveness of the location is made exotic by its isolation: Elena inhabits a hut on an island in a lake in the midst of mountainous wilderness; and the Highland wilderness occupies the remote northern corner of the much larger island of Britain. Lake Katrine’s primitive exoticism amplifies Elena’s beauty and makes her all the more attractive to the outsider Uberto and by extension to the Italian audiences who similarly gaze at Elena and her native Scotland. The bulk of the opera then involves a series of other Highland locations, where we see the Highland rebels preparing for war and later

35 The story of Tenmor comes from Book IV in the Poems of Ossian. The Italian libretto is as follows: “D’Inibaca, donzella/ che f’l’immensito amore/ struggente un di Trenmor,/ terrors del Norte.”

36 Stendhal, Life, 387.

37 Ibid., 389.
retreating from the Lowland forces that have preemptively attacked the rebels. The Highlands are contrasted by the final setting at the Lowland palace of King James, so that Scotland contains both the wilds of the Highlands and the refinement of a European palace.

Ruralism can also be found in Donizetti’s opera, but instead of idyllic beauty the settings of Lucia portray a gothic location. In La donna most of the activities occur during the day, with the opening chorus of shepherds heralding the beauty of a new day, but in Lucia most of the action occurs at night. In the opening scene huntsmen search for Edgardo, who flees in the night. Later, at the fountain scene, Lucia awaits and then meets Edgardo before dawn and his departure for France. At the fountain Lucia tells her assistant Alisa about her vision of a ghost at the fountain, saying that it appeared on a dark, clouded night (see her aria “Regnava nel silenzio”). The final act also occurs at night, with both Lucia and Edgardo committing their ghastly deeds in the same night.

The most haunting of Donizetti’s settings occurs at the beginning of Act III at the isolated residence of Edgardo, known as the tower of Wolf’s Crag. Alone in his tower and devastated by Lucia’s marriage to Arturo, Edgardo seethes as a storm rages in the night, only to be interrupted by the affronted Enrico, who challenges him to a duel. The Wolf’s Crag scene certainly recalls the Wolf’s Glen scene in Weber’s Der Freischütz. Donizetti’s Wolf’s Crag does not share the same demonic intensity or surreal quality of Weber’s Wolf’s Glen, but its gothic atmosphere similarly separates it from reality.

Edgardo’s suicide in the finale also occurs in a macabre setting among the tombstones of his Ravenswood ancestors. Liminal settings such as this, enhanced by night, establish a haunting connotation for the land of Scotland in general. Although La donna’s sunny and beautiful settings contrast Lucia’s dark and semi-surreal settings, both depict Scotland as a place of extremes and as an Other place different from that of Italy.

The Othering of Scotland continues with the characters and plots of the operas. Elena portrays a captivatingly beautiful Scottish woman, who finds herself in the unhappy or happy--depending upon one’s perspective--situation of being sought after by three men. All of the principal men in the opera, including the three suitors and her father, exhibit admirable qualities. The chieftain Rodrigo commands the respect of all Highlanders as an extraordinary warrior and
leader. Her true love Malcolm is also an admired Highland warrior, who remains devoted to Elena despite the domineering presence of Rodrigo, Uberto, and her father Douglas. Uberto, the Lowlander and King of Scotland, possesses even more remarkable skills in swordsmanship than Rodrigo and Malcolm, but despite his power as warrior and king he also possesses an unusual meekness, exhibited by his pardoning of his enemies and giving Elena in marriage to his former foe. When Douglas demands his daughter’s obedience in his arranged marriage, he appears to be domineering, but when he later turns himself in to the King as an appeasement for peace, he assumes a more generous and noble role. Consequently the characters in the opera display a sense of independence, beauty, martial heroicism, and benevolence that creates a characterization of all of the inhabitants of Scotland.

Lucia’s characters possess less positive qualities. The despicable Enrico is engulfed in his hatred for the Ravenswood family, so that ultimately his sister and others become consumed by his rage. Nearly every aria of Enrico’s focuses on rage, hatred, and oaths of vengeance (see his arias “Cruda, funesta smania” and “La pietade in suo favore”). Edgardo expresses a willingness to make amends with Enrico early in the story, but when he learns of Lucia’s marriage he becomes equally angry and also swears an oath of vengeance (see his aria “Qui del padre ancor respira”).

Lucia and Edgardo exhibit fidelity, but Lucia buckles under the coercion and deceit of her brother and agrees to marry Arturo. However, her decision drives her to insanity. Earlier in the opera Lucia exhibited hints of instability, when at the fountain scene she describes seeing a ghost and the fountain bathed in the blood of another woman murdered by a Ravenswood.38

Madness is certainly not exclusively a trait of Scottish women in the theater. Mad women had been stock figures in operas and plays since the Baroque period, and the figure of a woman gone mad because of love became common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These women commonly dressed in white dresses, had untidy hair, were slow and deliberate, had a stony gaze, abruptly shifted from fits of tears to laughter, and claimed to hear voices and

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38 William Ashbrook provides an analysis of how “Regnava ne silenzio” emphasized Lucia’s mental instability. Donizetti, 378-79.
music. Lucia possesses an unusually dangerous case of madness. Most Romantic madwomen maintained an Ophelia-like aura of virginal purity that made them docile and incapable of violent actions, but Lucia, while exhibiting some of the madwoman conventions, commits a violent deed that astonishes the onlookers at the wedding and in the audience. For some feminists Lucia’s madness is really her exercise of power and freedom from male domination, but ultimately her freedom is curtailed by her own death, so in the end she is silenced. Her aberrant behavior, instead of repulsing audiences, actually enthralls them and intensifies their gaze.

Edgardo also exhibits insanity when he commits suicide. Although it is not commonly referred to as a mad scene, the on-looking chorus describes his act as madness, and he speaks to Lucia as if she were present. Donizetti also incorporated the flute theme that was played during Lucia’s mad scene, further linking the scenes and their characters together. The plot and the Scottish characters depict an irrational place, yet the love and devotion of the protagonists redeems them and even elevates them—and Scotland—in the eyes and ears of the Romantic audience. Lucia and its mad scenes could have been set anywhere, but the place of Scotland was a particularly conducive place for such a plot. The Ossianic-influenced perceptions of Scotland made it ideal for an opera with ghosts, a double mad scene, and a double tragedy all propelled by love.

Despite the differences between the two operas they share several striking commonalities that further characterize Scotland. Rivalries between Scottish groups form a central part of the conflict in each opera, and the theme of hatred agitates the plot of each so that Scotland appears as a divisive place characterized by passionate barbarism. Water also plays a role in the operas in that both heroines meet their lovers (or aspiring lovers) at or near water: Elena meets Uberto at the lake and Lucia meets and later envisions Edgardo at the fountain. The association with water conforms with the watery nature of Scotland’s many lochs and rivers, and its own status as an island. More interestingly, both operas center on a woman who is at the mercy of a man who

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40 Publiese, 28.
demands her marriage to another, and although the theme is not unique to the place nor the time, the operas do reveal a place of beautiful but helpless women and domineering men. Lucia and Elena are further depicted as examples of purity, with Elena portrayed as a virgin and Lucia dressed in white even after the murder. By focusing primarily on the true love of these women, both operas romanticize the plots, and consequently Scotland.

Despite their similarities, the two women are different from one another, with Elena portrayed as a primitive beauty and Lucia as a mad beauty, but both incur the gaze of their male suitors and of their audiences. Scotland has similarly captured the attention of outsiders intrigued by her Otherness. Thus Elena and Lucia embody Scotland, as their female bodies draw the attention of the curious male anxious to possess these mysterious women. A parallel can be drawn between the gazers in the opera and tourists visiting Scotland during the same time period. Acting much like audience members, tourists were similarly drawn to explore the beautiful (Elenic) and enigmatic (Lucian) land of Scotland.

Scottishness in Italian Music

Scotland is represented in these operas by setting, plot, and characters, but not by her music. Donizetti and Rossini only wrote Italian music for these operas. Perhaps their Italian audiences would not have recognized Scottish tunes, as would the English, but the inclusion of folk song would, in any case, likely have made the operas less successful. Henry Bishop included Scottish folk songs in several of his musical dramas that have since faded. Italian audiences would have found the simplicity of such songs unacceptable. Bel canto singing was the expected aesthetic for the time, and audiences attended the opera expecting to hear sensuous, often extravagant singing.

Despite the absence of Scottish music, a few instruments help to signify Scotland. La donna begins with the sound of hunting horns—a common symbol for pastoral Scotland—and

42 Mitchell, 10-11.
43 Schmidgall describes the desire of audiences to experience “elaborate, sensual, even sometimes meaningless beauty,” and he quotes accounts of individuals being moved by coloratura. Schmidgall, 111-13.
Lucia features horns in its introduction, although aside from these brief instrumental appearances the horns do not play a prominent role in either opera. The harp plays a more integral role in both operas in establishing characterizations and the creation of a Scottish atmosphere. The harp had become a recurring symbol of Scotland with The Poems of Ossian,\textsuperscript{44} and was likely more strongly associated with Scotland than the Highland pipes at this time. One of the most famous numbers in La donna is the bards’ chorus at the end of Act I that serves as a clear allusion to the bard Ossian and his harp. Rodrigo summons a chorus of bards to motivate the warriors as they prepare for war, and Rossini’s introduction to the chorus features a solo harp that accompanies them in their war hymn. The number, “Già un raggio forier,” was later appropriated as a favorite of Italian patriots in their pursuit of Italian unification.\textsuperscript{45} The harp returns near the end of Act II, when Elena hears Uberto playing his harp offstage and singing a simple aria. His brief aria “Aurora! Ah sorgerai” is folk-like in its simplicity, although it still retains an Italian style (see Example 4.1). The aria is based on one sung earlier by Elena, “Oh mattutini albori,” at her initial appearance on the lake, although her rendition includes more florid passages.

Ex. 4.1. Uberto’s folk-aria “Aurora! ah sorgerai,” with harp accompaniment, in La donna.


\textsuperscript{45} R. Osborne, 226.
The harp also plays a specialized role in Lucia at the fountain scene. It begins with a brief orchestral introduction that features florid runs of the harp. Here the harp relates more closely to Ossian. In the poems the bards, singing with their harps, often evoked dream-like scenes as they recounted stories of the past, and these visionary episodes often related the encounter of ghostly visitors. Consequently, florid harp passages in the nineteenth century often function as inducement to a dream-like state. The harp functions in this way at the fountain scene (see Example 4.2). Alluding to Ossian and Scotland, it signals a movement to a dream world, as Lucia recalls her seeing a ghost at the fountain. Although the harp introduces the scene, it is silent during the aria “Regnava nel silenzio,” but it reappears as the accompaniment to the subsequent aria “Quando rapito.” In this aria the harp functions more as simple accompaniment to Lucia’s text about longing for Edgardo and has no Ossianic function. As in Elena’s folk-aria the harp here characterizes the simplicity and purity of the female protagonist (see Example 4.3).

Ex. 4.2. Harp introduction to Lucia’s fountain scene in Lucia di Lammermoor.

Ex. 4.3. Lucia’s harp accompanied aria “Quando rapito in estasi.”

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\(^{46}\) Moulton, 45-49, 60-62, 68-72.
One of the most unusual instruments appears in Lucia’s mad scene. Donizetti originally included a glass harmonica in the score, which would have created an especially eerie effect, but he replaced the part with flute.\(^{47}\) The flute and soprano act like duet partners as they imitate each other and then sing together, but the flute makes the mad scene lighter and less haunting than it would have been if the glass harmonica were used.

The operas exemplify the sensuous bel canto style, with coloratura embellishing arias in both operas. Bel canto arias and coloratura often relate very little to the plots of the opera, as passages display the ability of the singer and provide sensuous pleasure for the listeners but do not necessarily assist with plot development. However, an examination of the arias in both operas shows that these do contribute to character development and by extension to the portrayal of Scotland through their exhibition of extreme affects.

Rossini did not believe that music should follow or imitate the text, as did some of his younger contemporaries, but that music should remain autonomous.\(^{48}\) David Kimbell has summarized the task of the bel canto composer, saying that his purpose was

> not to imitate what the words were already saying sufficiently clearly, but by the resources of his own art to render the hearts and minds of the listeners more susceptible, to attune them to the situations of the story and the passions and destiny of the characters.\(^{49}\)

Although somewhat autonomous from the music, Rossini’s coloratura passages do have some purpose in character development and in increasing the excitement of the plot.

Generally in La donna, the more impassioned the moment the more abundant the coloratura, as in the trio at the beginning of Act II, when Rodrigo discovers the distraught Elena and dejected Uberto together. All three singers exhibit their agitation through coloratura (see Example 4.4). However, the construction of coloratura does not always match the emotion of the

\(^{47}\) C. Osborne, 244. It is uncertain why Donizetti switched the score to flute, but practically speaking glass harmonicas were, and still are rare, as are the performers. Some modern performances have reintroduced the glass harmonica. The Metropolitan Opera in 2007, with James Levine conducting and Natalie Dessay as Lucia, used the instrument, see the archives of the opera company (http://archives.metoperafamily.org/archives/frame.htm, accessed 6/30/08).


\(^{49}\) Ibid., 455.
moment. A passage in a moment of rage does not sound all that different from a passage
expressing joy. In Uberto’s aria at the beginning of Act II, preceding the trio, he passionately
expresses his love for Elena and the sweetness of being in love. The florid passages contain
some of the same figuration that occurs in the agitated trio (see Example 4.5).

Ex. 4.4. Trio excerpt at beginning of Act II in La donna. Here the characters express sorrow
and agitation through coloratura.

Ex. 4.5. Excerpt, Uberto’s love aria, “Oh fiamma soave.” The figuration is similar to
passages in the trio, as seen in Ex. 5.4.

The primary characters in Rossini’s La donna display a certain vocal ferocity, or what
Stendhal described as “barbaric energy.” Some of the arias of Uberto, Rodrigo, Malcolm and
Elena tax the vocal flexibility, range, and fluidity of even the greatest voices in a way that is lofty

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Stendhal, Life, 389.
by the already challenging standards of operatic singing. For example, Elena’s rondo in the finale contains a constant run of very rapid passages that requires extreme vocal agility and accuracy (see Example 4.6). In these flights of coloratura Rossini’s characters express an extraordinary passion that contributes to the Othering of Scotland.

Coloratura also occurs in *Lucia*, but Donizetti did not write coloratura with the same intensity or frequency as Rossini. Donizetti’s arias generally seem more purposeful and connected to the text. For example, in the fountain scene Lucia’s description of the ghost is enriched by Donizetti’s sensitive setting. “Regnava nel silenzio” begins simply and hauntingly in D minor as Lucia describes the dark and stormy night (see Example 4.7). Coloratura is used sparsely but purposefully in the aria. In the first part of the piece it only occurs at the moment she describes seeing the ghost at the side of the fountain. The brief passage includes an octave jump capped by a fermata that allowed for improvisation, followed by a rapid descent of more than an octave that emphasized the drama of the text (see Example 4.8).
Lucia’s description of the ghost at the fountain scene could be interpreted as a mad scene, but her famous mad scene after the murder also contains some of the most effective coloratura. “Il dolce suono” features a plaintive flute and voice melody that haltingly rises as she imagines hearing Edgardo’s voice, followed by a repeated figure (see Example 4.9). The instrumentation and melody, set in a minor key, create an emotional sense of someone dazed and hallucinating. The aria begins in minor, but it quickly turns to major as she becomes consumed by her vision. The blissful melody momentarily vanishes when Lucia imagines seeing a ghost by a fountain, and a series of fully diminished chords emphasize her horror. But the specter vanishes when she imagines her marriage to Edgardo, and a new blissful melody accompanies her fantasy in the aria “Ardon gl’incensi.” During “Il dolce suono” coloratura is sparse and only occurs at cadences, but in “Ardon gl’incensi” the coloratura matches Lucia’s hallucinatory joy as it increases in frequency, climaxing in the cadenza.

Edgardo’s mad scene in the finale also contains some of the most effective arias in the work. Edgardo’s “Fra poco a me” and “Tu che a Dio spiegasti l’ali” passionately portray his despair and devotion to Lucia. They contain little coloratura, but the melodies and harmonies effectively portray the meaning of the texts. The latter aria is particularly interesting, because he
addresses the deceased Lucia with his longing to be united with her, making his mad scene remarkably similar to Lucia’s mad scene.

Expressive arias occur elsewhere in the opera, and indeed Donizetti wrote an astounding number of memorable pieces in the work, but most of the other numbers do not seem as directly connected to the text. For example, nearly every aria sung by Enrico expresses revenge and hatred, but the music in all of his arias expresses very little of these emotions. In his Act I aria “Cruda, funesta smania” he sings of his cruel torments and longing for revenge, but Donizetti set the text in a way that seems more appropriate for a vow of love. Written in G major and set to a bouncy triple meter with dotted rhythms, the piece displays Enrico’s masculinity, but there is nothing tormented or cruel about the music (see Example 4.10). Edgardo’s aria of vengeance in the Wolf’s Crag tower is similarly disconnected from the text. “Qui del padre ancor respira” is also set in a major key (D major), and the tune of revenge is one of the prettiest tunes in the opera (see Example 4.11).

Ex. 4.10. Enrico’s vengeance aria “Cruda, funesta smania.”

Ex. 4.11. Edgardo’s vengeance aria “Qui del padre ancor respira.”
The irony here is that Donizetti showed in the fountain and mad scenes that he was very capable of writing music that matched and even heightened the sentiments of the text, but for some reason he chose not to link the affect of lyrics and music in all arias. Whatever the reason, the most affective moments in the opera are scenes involving “insanity”: the fountain scene with Lucia and the ghost, Lucia’s mad scene, and Edgardo’s mad scene. In comparison, the arias about vengeance seem hollow and disconnected from the emotions of the texts. The result is that the mad scenes have a greater connection to reality (although not realism). Donizetti’s musical emphasis on insanity contributes to his portrayal of Scotland as a place of irrationality.

In Romantic terms irrationality is inviting. Rossini’s and Donizetti’s use of the bel canto style helps to characterizes the Scottish people as sensuous, sometimes irrational beings. In La donna the use of coloratura in moments of either rage or joy augments the intensity of the plot and consequently portrays a passionate people. In Lucia the arias are most effective when portraying moments of ghostly visitations or love-caused insanity, making Scotland a sentiment-rich rather than a rational place.

**Conclusion**

La donna and Lucia were both products of the Italian fascination with Walter Scott’s writings. In the literature and the operas Scotland plays an integral role in shaping the plot and characters of each story. And in turn, La donna and Lucia portray Scotland as the place of Other. In some ways the operas depict Scotland similarly. The plots each portrays a land inhabited by a passionate people who pursue love and vengeance with heroic and, at times, barbaric drive. Female protagonists especially stand out as extraordinary women: Elena seemingly drives men mad with her beauty, while Lucia goes mad because of male manipulation.

Scotland’s identity also varies in each opera. It is a place of idealized beauty in La donna, and a place of haunted, semi-surrealism in Lucia. Brightness encompasses actions of heroism in one, while darkness enshrouds ghastly tragedy in the other. It is a place of merciless men or compassionate men, of joyful women or violently mad women. But what better place for the setting of extremes? Scotland was itself a place of spectacle, a land of intense settings, characters, and behaviors very fitting for Romantic Italian opera.
CHAPTER 5
SCOTLAND IN THE CONCERT HALL

Nestled in the centers of cosmopolitan cities, concert halls were removed from natural Scotland, and the orchestral sounds heard in these halls were also a far cry from the “native” sounds of Scotland. In the nineteenth century these new venues witnessed the most admired productions of music depicting Scotland: Mendelssohn’s Hebrides Overture, his “Scottish” Symphony, and Max Bruch’s Scottish Fantasy. Without words to guide the imagination, the constructed instrumental sounds, set in an artificial environment, created the most abstract and yet celebrated representations of Scotland.

The well-known literary scholar Edward Said has described performances of classical music as highly “concentrated, rarified, and extreme occasions.”¹ Orchestral depictions of Scotland in the nineteenth century in the “extreme” setting of the concert hall facilitated an imaginary transformation of the place of Scotland. Sound depictions of Scotland related only distantly to the reality of the place but were instead portrayals of an idealized world that appealed to distant audiences. I will first consider in theoretical terms the representation of place within the concert hall space and show how the sonic projection of place within this specially organized space heightened Scotland’s appeal to audiences. I will then use the Scottish symphonic works by Mendelssohn and Bruch to show the way concert halls can act as a liminal, quasi-sacred space for envisioning distance places like Scotland.

Representations of Place within Concert Hall Space

A study of Scottish music in the concert hall discloses interesting details about the representation of Scotland in music, but it also reveals much about the way music functions on the orchestral stage. Alan Merriam wrote about the difference between the “use and function” of music in his seminal *Anthropology of Music*. While “use” is the basic purpose or application of music, the “function” of music relates to a deeper level of “what it does for people” and the way it forms meaning for individuals. It is helpful for the purposes of this study to consider the function of Scottish symphonic music for audience members. The function of the concert hall must similarly be investigated, for it is in the contextual web of performance and space that music assumes meaning. Thus the building, the seating arrangement of the audience and the orchestra, the activities of the conductor, the apparel of the participants, and myriad other factors all form a context of meaning for the representation of place within a defined space and activity.

Some of these contextual aspects assume a ritualistic nature, and, indeed, considering the ritualistic aspects of Western art music is an especially fruitful study. By doing so I have no intention of demeaning the music and its participants; instead I think this perspective amplifies the signification of the music for both the performers and the audience. Christopher Small, in his provocative *Musicking*, is one of the few musicologists to view Western art music as ritualistic. In his analysis of the rituals of the concert hall he cynically concludes that the music falters because the silent and immobile audience does not actively engage in the music-making process. Although I agree with his identification of some of the rituals in the concert hall, I disagree with his conclusions, arguing instead that the audience members’ passive participation also has meaning.

Before I begin my analysis of the functions of the rituals of the concert hall, I must comment about the history of these rituals. The activities that accompany a modern performance of orchestral music in a concert hall have a fairly recent history of approximately 200 years. In

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the early history of symphonic music no baton-waving conductor existed and audience members actively talked with their neighbors while the performance occurred. Indeed the early Romantic critic E. T. A. Hoffmann said that conversation was an essential part of the concert experience, and that the music actually encouraged conversation.\(^4\) By the time of Mendelssohn many of the conventions of the modern concert hall were actively being formed. Mendelssohn was one of the first conductors to stand in front of the orchestra and wave his baton, and he was instrumental in establishing this tradition (or ritual) in London. Also occurring in London at the same time, The Royal Philharmonic was known to austerely require silence from its audience members during performances, in contrast with other European orchestras.\(^5\)

In my analysis I will draw from the conventions of the concert hall in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but my readers should be aware of the genesis of these traditions during the first decades of the nineteenth century and know that some of these traditions may not have been uniformly adopted in every concert hall in Europe during this time. Yet the formation of these rituals at this time was not purely circumstantial, and indeed the timing is very revealing. Some of the activities, like conducting, have technical purposes, but they also have deeper meanings or functions that both reflect and propagate the Zeitgeist.

Concert Hall as Ritual Space

The concert hall is even more of a structured space than the drawing room. Whereas the drawing room was fairly informal and private, the concert hall was more formal in activity and architecture. Christopher Small has described the concert hall as “grand ceremonial space” and “sacred space,” and Edward Said has called concerts a “social ritual.”\(^6\) The design and uses of the concert hall indeed set it apart from the activities of everyday life and make it a ritual space.

The separation of this space from the activities and spaces of regular life correspond with what Mircea Eliade described as the separation of sacred and profane spaces. In his notable work


\(^6\) Small, 22, 24; Said, 3.
The Sacred and the Profane  Eliade demonstrates that even non-religious activities may “preserve traces of a religious valorization of the world,” and people who are nonreligious still retain a “stock of myths and degenerated rituals.” The religious aspect of Eliade’s comments are less important than his observation that people attempt to make sense out of their world by organizing “homogeneous” spaces into “nonhomogeneous,” hierarchical spaces. He says that people have an “ontological thirst” for being and a “terror of the chaos that surrounds [their] inhabited world,” and so “if the world is to be lived in, it must be founded–and no world can come to birth in the chaos of the homogeneity and relativity of profane space.”7 These sacred spaces need no religious connection. Louis P. Nelson says that in addition to religious spaces, public monuments and museums, the home, and geography of the land form a sacred landscape, and that “these boundaries can be defined visually and verbally.”8 I would add that music can also establish these boundaries. The creation of the concert hall space and the establishment of unique practices within that space make it a “sacred space” distinct from the “profane” space that surrounds it.

Concert halls are typically built in prominent locations and architecturally designed to differm from other buildings. The use of elaborate performance spaces for orchestras began in the nineteenth century, and is evident in concert halls like the Vienna Konzerthaus (1913) and the more recent Los Angeles Walt Disney Concert Hall (2003). Indeed the architectural detail, furnishings, expense, and size of these buildings are perhaps most comparable with the lavishness of cathedrals.

Often occupying space in the center of urban areas, concert halls, like Walt Disney Hall, are surrounded by the chaos of busy city life. When audience members step off the street (profane space) into the building of the concert hall, they usually first enter into a distinct lobby area (liminal space), where they prepare for their transition into the inner sanctuary of the hall itself (sacred space). In the lobby casual talking with the other participants is expected, as the

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audience members prepare for the concert, often purchasing or picking up tickets. They then must proceed past the ticket attendant, who acts as the gate keeper to the sanctuary. Once they have crossed over the threshold into the grand auditorium participants are expected to speak in reverential tones and prepare themselves for the performance by reading a guide to the works to be performed.

The organization of the space within the concert hall furthers the function of the hall as a ritualistic place. The interior is lavishly decorated, the lights are typically dimmed, and there are no windows, all separating the space from the activities occurring in the profane spaces outside the walls. The seating in most halls all face towards the stage, and the seats themselves have a hierarchical organization, with the best seats costing more money, and those furthest away from the sounds and sights costing less. Since one need not look at the performers in order to listen to music, the organization of the seats fulfills the ritualistic function in the concert of focusing attention on the positions and actions of the performers (unlike a restaurant with live music); its hierarchical organization also reinforces the social positions of those in attendance.

Seating in this fashion is unlike that used in everyday life. The only other places that require such seating organization are the school, theater, and the church; and theaters and churches are not as different from one another as one would think. Western theater has its origins in the Greek Dionysian dramas, where audience members would sit in a semi-circle around the “orchestra” (i.e., stage), that was a vestige of a Dionysian altar. Modern theater productions still serve a teaching and moralistic purpose that is not unlike the purpose of a church. Hence the seating at orchestra concerts parallels the ritualistic roots of the theater and the church, and the seating facilitates a similar function. Instead of a concert being a physical and verbally rich activity, the seating encourages participants to focus their attention on the music. Those in physical proximity around them become peripheral to the performance at the front of the concert hall, so that the sound of the concert becomes both theater and ritual.

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9 See Small’s description of the lobby and the entry into “a grand ceremonial space,” 22-24. Small’s description of the concert hall parallels several of my observations. See his Chapter 1 in his Musicking.

10 Some of the most famous concert halls, particularly those built in the nineteenth century, even have an exterior design inspired by classical (i.e. Greek temple) architecture, such as Boston Symphony Hall, Royal Albert Hall, and the Konzerthaus Berlin.
Participants in concerts also have a ritual-like dress code and a prescribed behavior, although in modern times more latitude has been given with the dress code. In the nineteenth century audience members were carefully screened before they could even become members of a society such as the Philharmonic Society (the group that hosted the London premieres of Mendelssohn’s *Hebrides* Overture and “Scottish” Symphony). The members of the latter group were vetted based on their social position and their capacity for “enjoying and appreciating the new wonders of the musical art,” and they were expected to dress and act with the highest of standards. Performers have an even more stringent dress code. Dressed in the same costume, the members of the orchestra are expected to perform and act alike. Not only are they to act together, but the many musicians are to be united, as if one body, in the production of one sound.

Spacial organization and lighting on the stage also holds symbolic meaning for the performance. On the stage the concentric seating, and those who inhabit the seats, are organized in a stringent hierarchical system, but ordered in such a way that all seats face the podium and conductor. The stage itself is elevated above the ground and often framed above with a proscenium arch creating a hierarchical structure that further separates it from profane space (see Figure 5.1). Lighting on the stage is also brighter than that in the auditorium, further separating the activities on the stage from those in the audience. Once illuminated the framed stage becomes a window into another world.

The organization of the space within the hall facilitates the ritualistic function of the musical performance, and conforms with what David M. Knipe has described as the human need to “found, integrate,

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12 The image is from the public domain.
and order space, and to allow for divine-human interactions in a sacred area or complex.”13 The “divine” aspect of musical performance has less emphasis in this study, but the act of performing music in the concert hall does function as a ritual whereby organized sound may become a window into another world, a sacred sound world separate from the noises and distractions of the profane world.

Performing a Sound Cosmos

Within the organized space of the concert hall, music adds another more metaphysical layer of organization to the sacred space, in that it organizes a sonic world through time. Tuning the orchestra serves as the ritual that brings the unstructured sounds of the world into an ordered cosmos of music. Many of the world’s rituals involve re-enacting the creation of the universe by the gods,14 and in a non-religious way the tuning of the orchestra similarly organizes the raw materials of sound into a music world. It also serves the purpose of unifying the various performers into one body of sound.

Once tuned and organized, the conductor, and perhaps soloist, appear and initiate the performance. The activities of the conductor are a singular phenomenon. He makes no sound, yet the rhythmic motions of his body directs and unifies the sound of the orchestra, so that the sound is “humanly organized sound”15 directed by a non-sounding body. The conductor functions at the center of the activity as if a clairvoyant speaking through the orchestra.

The baton was only just being introduced during the time of Mendelssohn, and he used it with good success in London. Certainly the baton has a practical purpose, but its appearance at this time, as the rituals of the concert hall became formulated, may also have a deeper function. Wilhelm Adolf Lampadius, an earlier biographer of Mendelssohn, described Mendelssohn’s conducting in a way that reveals that purpose of the conductor was more than pragmatic:

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14 Eliade, 31.

15 This is John Blacking’s famous phrase, Music, Culture, and Experience: Selected Papers of John Blacking, edited by Reginald Byron (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 53
When once his fine, firm hand grasped the baton, the *electric fire of Mendelssohn’s nature seemed to stream out through it*, and be felt at once by singers, orchestra, and audience . . . but Mendelssohn conducted not only with his baton, but also with his body. At the outset, when he took his place at the music-stand, his countenance was wrapped in deep and almost solemn earnestness. You could see at a glance that the *temple of music* was a holy place to him.\(^16\)

Lampadius’s account of Mendelssohn’s use of the baton and “electric fire” streaming out of it cannot help but cause one to wonder if the baton’s magic-wand appearance is more than coincidence. His description of the concert hall as a “temple of music” also shows that some were consciously aware of the ritualistic functions and sacred nature of the concert hall.

Other contemporary accounts further reveal the way some audience members believed in and participated in the ritualistic activities of the concert. The *London Illustrated News* reported regarding Mendelssohn:

> It is a beautiful sight to see him conduct a full orchestra. We shall never forget the impression he produced at the great Birmingham Festival, on the occasion of the production of his famous Hymn of Praise. The magnificent band followed him *as if under a spell*, which his genius alone kept unbroken. With every action of his hand the sounds and harmonies seemed marshalled in a grand and solemn order, which no intrusion could disturb. They eyes of the musicians were all, as if it were, focussed within his own; *he communicates with them as if by electricity*—made them sympathize with his spirit, catch the impulses, and partake of the emotions of all that was to be interpreted before the thronging multitude, who were listening with blended awe, excitement, and admiration, to every feeling symbolized and every thrill evoked.\(^17\)

Mendelssohn’s capacities as a conductor were phenomenal—in the true sense of the word—and his conducting elevated the status of the conductor in unprecedented and influential ways. Carl Dahlhaus claims that Mendelssohn was largely responsible for organizing the orchestra in London in a semi-circle around the conductor, who faced the orchestra, rather than the audience, as was common before Mendelssohn’s appearance there.\(^18\) The function of the conductor, not to mention the quality of the performance, would be altered if he faced away from orchestra, but

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\(^{16}\) Emphasis added. Quoted and translated by Carse, 349.

\(^{17}\) Emphasis added, 18 June 1842, Quoted by Carse, 350.

with his back to the audience he becomes more effective, but also more mysterious with his face hidden.

Small has described the conductor as the “magus, the shaman, who immerses himself in the sacred book [the score] and summons up the spirit of the dead composer.” His remarks may not be too far afield, considering Schumann’s description of Mendelssohn’s conducting: “in his eyes we read beforehand the mental windings of the composition and its shadings; like a seer he forewarned us of what was to come.”19 John Thomson wrote in the Harmonicon in 1830 of Mendelssohn’s status as a composer and rhetorically asked, “Is it too much, then, to anticipate for him the proudest niche in the temple of Apollo?”20 And the English critic G. A. Macfarren’s review of the “Scottish” Symphony heaped praise on Mendelssohn, saying that he is “a fellow-worshiper with Mendelssohn of the same Goddess,” and that Mendelssohn was “the high priest of her temple.”21 Mendelssohn’s status as composer made him a “seer” and a “high priest,” and for conductors who have since led the ritual of the concert hall, they assume the same mantle.

One of the clearest ways that a performance of music creates a sacred sound experience is its ordering of time. Blacking described the special ability of music to create a new sense of time: “We say that ordinary daily experiences take place in a world of actual time. The essential quality of music is its power to create another world of virtual time.”22 The concert season itself is a seasonal ritual, not unlike other cultural rituals, with the height of the English concert season falling in May-July when the members of Parliament convened in London.23 More pointedly, the organization of time within a performance distinguishes the act from the time of daily life.24 The ability of music to manipulate a sense of time with a variety of rhythms and tempos creates a sacred time that is aided by the absence of reminders of time, such as clocks and even windows.

19 Emphasis added, quoted by Carse, 350.
21 Emphasis added, ibid., 402.
22 Blacking, 34.
23 Todd, A Life in Music, 206
24 Eliade identifies the reorganization of time as an intrinsic part of rituals.
With a new time established by music, a cosmos of tones is then revealed. Mahler wrote in a letter that “to write a symphony means, to me, to construct a world.” At another time he wrote regarding his second symphony:

Don’t you understand how this absorbs my whole being? I am so deep in it that one becomes dead to the world around. Now think of a work so big that the whole world is reflected in it—one is a mere instrument on which the universe plays. . . . The whole of Nature begins to speak in it, telling us of mysteries that are perhaps sensed in dream. Some passages make me feel strange as if it was not I who wrote the work.

And in another letter he expressed a similar belief in the ability of music to organize a sound world:

In my own case I know that as long as I can express an experience in words, I would certainly not express it in music. The need to express myself in music, that is symphonic music, only comes when indefinable emotions make themselves felt—when I reach the threshold that leads to the “other world”—the world in which things are no longer subject to time and space.

These letters show that Mahler, at the end of the nineteenth century, very much believed in the transcendent nature of music and its ability to create an “other world” comprised of sound.

Music’s ability to communicate with and depict the other world—a platonic world—was not just an image in the metaphysical musings of Mahler, it was a central part of the Romantic aesthetic. E.T.A. Hoffmann, the early spokesman of the movement, showed that music, if it was of value, moved the listeners, even transporting them into another world.

In his story “Ritter Gluck” (1809) Hoffmann has the old composer describe the privileges of the composer to commune with the other world and achieve a temporary state of enlightenment:

We are the chosen; we have reached the goal!’ Through the Ivory Gate one enters the land of dreams. Few even notice the Gate; fewer still pass through! What an adventure! Behind the Gate intoxicating shapes sway back and forth. . . . They exist only behind the Ivory Gate. Once entered it is difficult to leave this realm. . . . Only a few . . . pass

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27 Emphasis added, Ibid.
through the dream-world and advance on high to the moment of truth, the highest moment there is, contact with the eternal, the inexpressible!  

In a non-fictional account, Hoffmann described in his diary his attendance of a performance and his out-of-body reaction to the performance of an aria:

. . . finally the ritornello of an aria began. It was tenderly performed, suggesting in simple but heartfelt tones the desire of the pious soul to raise itself towards heaven and rediscover there all that is dearly beloved, yet lost on this earth. Like a celestial light the bell-like voice of a girl rose above the orchestra. . . . How can I describe the feelings that gripped me? My pain was transformed into melancholy desire. A divine balm healed my wounds. All was forgotten as I listened raptly to those tones descending as if from another world to embrace me.

Hoffmann’s imaginative, but evidently heart-felt, reaction to the music was not a singular reaction, as will be shown in reviews of Mendelssohn’s works. For audience members like Hoffmann, the tones of a symphonic world were brought to life by specialized performers and an oracle-like conductor, so that the activity, performed in the sacred space of the concert hall, assumed a ritualistic function.

The Scottish Sound World Depicted in Three Orchestral Pieces

Having established the ideas of the concert hall as sacred space and the performance of music in that as ritual, I now focus on three orchestral pieces and show how each portrays a sonic world of Scotland. In this process I will summarize the inception and premiere history of each work and then draw conclusions relating to the ritual of the concert hall. The three pieces each portray Scotland differently, although the two pieces by Mendelssohn have much in common. Mendelssohn’s Hebrides Overture was written fairly early in his career (1829-30), while his “Scottish” Symphony was completed more than ten years later, while he was at the zenith of his popularity. Since their premieres both pieces have continued to be among his most often-performed works. Bruch’s Scottish Fantasy was written a half-century later, and it has remained

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28 Quoted in Schaffer, Hoffmann and Music, 34.

29 Ibid., 56.
A few days before the premiere Mendelssohn referred to the piece as Die Hebriden, but the program of the premiere listed the title as Overture to the Isles of Fingal. Although these
related titles are programmatic, the piece has never been accompanied by a written narrative or program.\(^{35}\) Without a program to guide our understanding, we must rely on the laconic titles and the music as text.

The music portrays a sonic world that is dramatic and often tumultuous. It begins with a subdued statement of the primary theme in B minor, played by the dark-timbred violas, cellos, and bassoons. The wave-like theme (See Example 5.1) is a repeating series of falling notes made somber by the low orchestration that introduces it. With each descent and return to the top of the figuration the piece foments a sense of agitation that periodically crests with dramatic crescendos and an ascending melody, only to ebb quickly away (mm. 13-16 and 17-21). Underneath this theme, beginning in m. 8, a constant figuration of sixteenth notes creates an accompaniment of commotion. The wave-like motion and agitated accompaniment of the opening theme may relate to the maritime reality of the Hebrides Islands, or on a personal level it may describe Mendelssohn’s oceanic trip to the Islands, but none of this can be certain. Whatever the extra-musical connotations, the music itself portrays tempestuousness.\(^{36}\)

![Ex. 5.1. Wave gesture, Mendelssohn, *Hebrides*, mm. 1-6.](image)

Additionally, Mendelssohn’s emphasis on intervals of the perfect fourth and fifth communicates a primitive, archaic sound. The opening theme is built upon a series of inverted triads that in sequence create parallel fifths. Todd describes the effect of these parallel fifths:

\[^{35}\text{Ibid., 78-83.}\]

\[^{36}\text{Roger Fisk asserts that “What Mendelssohn wrote is essentially sea music. At no time are we conscious of being in a cave or anywhere else on land;” *Scotland in Music*, 137.}\]

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“Such a sequential procedure and its thinly concealed parallel progressions are extraordinary for Mendelssohn, and indicative of the artless, natural quality he wishes to convey in the overture: refined thematic techniques here give way to a primitive motivic construction.”37 The theme recurs throughout the piece, infusing it with an archaic sound.

The framed form of the overture also establishes a sense of distance, which the hearer understands as temporal, as well as spatial. The piece begins with a hushed statement of the primary theme set against a drone-like violin line, while the end of the piece crescendos to a fortissimo, only to drop suddenly to a brief pianissimo statement of the primary theme. The fading in at the beginning and out at the ending creates a musical impression of memory. Within this memory-like frame is contained a series of musical images: a stormy primary theme, a pastoral second theme, various horn fanfares, and a development that is at times reminiscent and at other times dramatic in its presentation of material. These contrasting themes progress to form a musical plot contained within the piece’s framed form. Similar to the fading that introduces and concludes the piece, the boundaries between the main sections of the piece are also indistinct. Todd has observed that the “principal structural divisions are deliberately blurred and drawn out of focus.”38 The effect of the form is that the piece evokes the experience of remembering something from the past.

The audience at the premiere received this stormy, reminiscing piece warmly. In a letter to his father Mendelssohn recounted that the performance “went admirably. . . . The audience received both me and my work with extreme kindness.”39 However, the critics were somewhat mixed in their reaction. The write-up in the Athenaeum complained that “Towards the end it was well worked . . . –but as descriptive music, it was decidedly a failure.”40 The review suggest that the reviewer expected more literal sound effects. The review in The Morning Post was reserved in its praise, with the critic taking issue with the title:

37 Mendelssohn the Hebrides, 64.

38 Ibid.


40 Athenaeum (London), 19 May 1832.
The . . . composition of Mendelssohn must be better understood before its beauties can be appreciated. We think it has a very vague and unmeaning title, which renders the music neither more nor less intelligible than if denominated simply “Overture.” There were parts of it which flowed most charmingly, and its finale was bold and effective.\(^{41}\)

In contrast, *The Harmonicon* praised the piece as being like an “angel’s visit,” and went to great detail to praise the piece and describe the imaginative response of the critic:

The idea of this work was suggested to the author while he was in the most northern part of Scotland, on a wild, desolate coast, where nothing is heard but the howling of the wind and roaring of the waves; and nothing living seen, except the sea-bird, whose reign is there undisturbed by human intruders. So far as music is capable of imitating, the composer has succeeded in his design; the images impressed on his mind he certainly excited, in a general way, in ours: we may even be said to have heard the sounds of winds and waves, for music is capable of imitating these in a direct manner; and by means of association, we fancied solitude and an all-pervading gloom.\(^{42}\)

If we are to believe Mendelssohn’s assessment of the audience’s “kind” reception, and then balance this with the critics’ varied comments, it becomes obvious that the piece was generally well received but interpreted by audience members in diverse ways.

An analysis of the audience and their reception of the overture can indicate the reason for their attraction (or lack thereof) to music about Scotland. The piece was premiered by the Royal Philharmonic Society, an elite, wealthy group. The Society’s status can be observed in their purposeful exclusion of middle and lower classes. Only 600 subscribers\(^{43}\) were allowed membership, and the concerts were “not open to the public.”\(^{44}\) Ticket prices also limited those who could join the society. The season of eight concerts cost a subscription price that ranged from three to four guineas,\(^{45}\) making each concert cost approximately half a guinea, which was

\(^{41}\) *The Morning Post* (London), 16 May 1832.

\(^{42}\) *The Harmonicon* (London), June 1832.

\(^{43}\) *Harmonicon*, July 1832.

\(^{44}\) Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic: A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 17. Ehrlich includes a photograph of a program from 20 March 1820; it mentions that at the previous concert several people “improperly gained admission,” and it forcefully reminds members that “Tickets are not transferable, and that any violation of this rule will incur a total forfeiture of the subscription,” 18.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., 17.
equivalent to nearly two weeks’ worth of wages for a common laborer.\textsuperscript{46} Additionally the non-wealthy were excluded by a strict dress code.\textsuperscript{47} So the question arises, why would an elitist wealthy class in London be interested in a piece of music that describes Ossianic islands off the northwest coast of Scotland?

The answer partially lies in the vivid description of the overture in the \textit{Harmonicon} review. The anonymous critic was apparently aware of this remote part of Scotland and perceived it to be a “wild, desolate coast, where nothing is heard but the howling of the wind and roaring of the waves,” a place “undisturbed by human intruder.” The musical image presented by Mendelssohn seemed to reaffirm the critic’s \textit{a priori} perception of western Scotland. In the music he claimed to hear “the sounds of winds and waves . . . [a] fancied solitude and an all-pervading gloom.” His interpretation reveals his decidedly romanticized perception of the Hebrides.

Scotland was not viewed as the land of wartime adversaries (the last uprising had been put down in 1746), nor was it the land of a despised, poverty-ridden people (as the English in the past may have believed). For this Londoner the desolate, depopulated “Islands of Fingal” likely represent the antithesis of crowded, fast-growing London.\textsuperscript{48} It is probably the presentation of this rural image that drew the enthusiastic response of some audience members at the London premier.

For critics who were less satisfied with the piece, and audience members who felt the same, their reaction may have been due to their failure to relate the music to the piece’s title. Instead of assisting the audience’s comprehension of the work, the programmatic title hindered their acceptance of the piece. The critic of \textit{The Morning Post} states that the piece was “vague” with an “unmeaning title,” and the writer for the \textit{Athenaeum} complained that “as descriptive music, it was decidedly a failure.” In both instances, the critics do not take issue with the music work itself. The author of \textit{The Morning Post} review even praises the music, saying “there were parts of it which flowed most charmingly, and its finale was bold and effective.” Musically the

\textsuperscript{46} One guinea is equal to one pound and one shilling, and there are twenty shillings in one pound, so that a guinea is equal to twenty one shillings. In 1830 the average worker received a wage of seven shillings per week; see Norman McCord, \textit{British History, 1815-1906} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 105.

\textsuperscript{47} Ehrlich, 17.

\textsuperscript{48} London in 1801 had a population of more than a million. By 1831 it had nearly doubled; see McCord, 80.
piece merited praise, but any dissatisfaction seems due to the critics failing to find explicit musical images that resonated with their perceptions of Scotland. Without a sympathetic image already existing in the minds of some of the audience members the piece failed to elicit a positive response.

Understanding or failing to understand the title of the overture not only influenced its reception by audience members, but it led to the numerous name changes that the piece underwent. The several manuscript copies include a variety of titles referring to the Hebrides: Mendelssohn referred to it in one of his letters from Scotland as his *Hebridengeschichte* (Hebrides tale).\(^49\) In a letter from 1830 he called it his *Einsame Insel* Overture (Lonely Isle),\(^50\) and a few days before the premiere he called it *Die Hebriden*.\(^51\) None of the known manuscripts refers to Fingal’s Cave, although at the London premiere it was titled *Overture to the Isles of Fingal*. Reference to the cave first appeared in 1833, when the Leipzig publisher Breitkopf and Härtel published a piano-duet arrangement titled *Ouverture aux Hébrides (Fingals Höhle)*. This was the first known use of the title connecting it to Fingal’s Cave, and Todd speculates that the title may have been the publisher’s creation.\(^52\) When the score was first published in 1835 the piece was called *Die Fingals Höhle*.

At this time the Hebrides Islands, and by extension all of Scotland, were viewed by many through Macpherson’s Ossianic window. For some foreign audiences Scotland’s identity was synonymous with the romantic tales of *Ossian*. In distant Leipzig, in the offices of the publishers, the general and vague Hebrides were transformed into a piece that represented the more specific and more imagination-laden location of Fingal’s Cave.

At that time Fingal’s Cave was the major attraction in the Hebrides Islands, made famous by *Ossian* and its Celtic hero Fingal. The cave had been “discovered” in 1772 by explorer Joseph Banks, twelve years after Macpherson’s first *Ossian* publication, reporting that the

\(^{49}\) Todd, *Mendelssohn Overtures*, 30.  
\(^{50}\) Fiske, 142.  
\(^{51}\) Todd, *Mendelssohn Overtures*, 34.  
\(^{52}\) Ibid., 35.
natives called it the Cave of Fingal.\textsuperscript{53} In an 1834 review of the Overture the \textit{Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung} unquestioningly asserted the piece’s relationship to Fingal’s Cave:

The splendid Fingal’s Cave, pierced by the undulating sea and grandiously adorned on both sides of its 170-foot high arch with lofty basalt columns, was believed by the Highlanders to have been built by giants for their old, legend-encrusted hero, the father of Ossian. The cave lies on the west coast of the tiny, uninhabited, treeless Isle of Staffa . . . The emptiness of the celebrated island, its marvelous columns and misty beckoning from a splendid, strange, ancient time, reinforces the ghastly, sublime impression. –The title ‘zu den Hebriden’ is thus far too general and probably owing to the fear that only few would remember the desolate island. That can hardly be helped, and besides, every educated person knows it. Thus in listening to this music one should think of Staffa and its famous cave. All of the music bears witness to its simple greatness.\textsuperscript{54}

The Hebrides title is dismissed out of hand for being “too general,” and the cave becomes the subject of the piece. Perhaps in grappling with the vague and unknown the reviewer focused on something more commonly known to Continental Europeans, Fingal’s Cave.

True to his own philosophy that music is more articulate than words, Mendelssohn did not include a program with his overture,\textsuperscript{55} but the critic created his own program, and published it in his review. The transformation of the title from the more general Hebrides to the specific Fingal’s Cave is emblematic of the imaginative and communicative processes that a piece of music can undergo. Without a clearly recognized place to associate with the overture, audiences either turned from the piece or created their own interpretation.

Undoubtedly Mendelssohn’s composition was effected by his own preconceived notions of Scotland, which certainly came from his own reading of Macpherson and also Walter Scott. In turn, the musical ideas and the piece’s title were interpreted in various ways by those outside of Scotland. Those who were most attracted to the work saw in it a confirmation of their own romantic ideas about Scotland.

\textsuperscript{53} Fiske, Scotland, 54. In actuality Fingal’s Cave has little to do with Macpherson’s \textit{Ossian}. It is not mentioned in the poems, although the native’s name for the cave helps verify that Macpherson’s character Fingal was part of Highland mythologies and was not of his own fabrication.

\textsuperscript{54} Quoted and translated by Todd, \textit{Mendelssohn Overtures}, 36.

\textsuperscript{55} See Todd’s summary of this philosophy, Ibid., 69-71.
Performed in the ritualistic setting of the concert hall space in London in 1832, with Mendelssohn conducting with the “electric fire” of his baton, the Hebrides Overture provided audience members with the opportunity to romanticize about Scotland in their imaginations. The enthusiastic Harmonicon review confirms this. The critic approached the music with a Hoffmannesque attitude when he wrote, “we may even be said to have heard the sounds of winds and waves, . . . [and] we fancied solitude and an all-pervading gloom.” His response shows that the music inspired him to emotionally and mentally transcend the physical confines of space and the literal sounds of the orchestra and create his own image of the winds and waves of Scotland.

**Mendelssohn: “Scottish” Symphony**

Mendelssohn’s “Scottish” Symphony evokes a similar image. Before commencing their trip into the Highlands, Mendelssohn and Klingemann spent some time in Edinburgh. On the evening of July 30 they visited historic Holyrood Palace, once the residence of several Scottish monarchs, including Mary Queen of Scots. The visit was very moving to Mendelssohn, as wrote in a letter to his family:

> In the evening twilight we went today to the palace where Queen Mary lived and loved; a little room is shown there with a winding staircase leading up to the door; up this way they came and found Rizzio [Mary’s secretary] in that little room, pulled him out, and three rooms off there is a dark corner, where they murdered him. The chapel close to it is now roofless, grass and ivy grow there, and at that broken alter Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland. Everything round is broken and moldering and the bright sky shines in. I believe I found today in that old chapel the beginning of my Scotch Symphony.

Mendelssohn’s report shows that he was drawn to the place through its history, and that the story of Queen Mary and her secretary David Rizzio imbued the ruins with a vivid image that moved his emotions nearly three hundred years after the murder. His description also shows an attraction to the “broken and moldering” structure, grown over with “grass and ivy.” For Mendelssohn these relics of history made the place alive with memory.

His observations of the previous day show his consciousness of the interface between the past and the present. Upon observing a parade of bagpipers pass in front of the “half-ruined gray castle . . . where Mary Stuart lived in splendour and saw Rizzio murdered,” he reflected, “I feel

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as if the time went at a very rapid pace *when I have before me so much that was and so much that is.*

His symphony, when it was finally written, would be reflective of this intersection of the past and present.

Although he sketched out the opening of the symphony at the time, it was not completed until more than twelve years later, on 20 January 1842, and it is uncertain when he worked on the various parts of the piece in the interim. While in Italy in 1831 he complained of a lack of "schottische Nebelstimmung," or the "foggy mood" of Scotland to inspire his completion of the work. Evidence regarding the completion is sparse and problematic, but most scholars agree that the piece appears to have received most of its attention in 1841.

Thomas Schmidt-Beste has zealously argued that because of the lengthy interval of time, and because of the posthumous application of the piece’s title, it is questionable if the piece is about Scotland at all. But considering Mendelssohn’s fascination with the past of Scotland (this was one of the reasons he went to Scotland), the deferral of more than a decade must have done little to diminish his perceptions of Scotland. The passing of nearly thirteen years may have actually amplified what he was trying to evoke in the Symphony: a view of the past through the present.

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57 Emphasis added, Ibid., 50.


59 Douglass Seaton discovered a draft of the exposition of the first movement, and postulates that it may have been written in 1834. See his article “A Draft for the Exposition of the First Movement of Mendelssohn’s ‘Scotch’ Symphony,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 30, no. 1 (1977), 129-135. Thomas Schmidt-Beste believes that this draft was completed in 1836 and that the remainder of the piece was not completed until the winter of 1841-42; see “Just how ‘Scottish’ is the ‘Scottish’ Symphony,” 157-58. See a summary of the writing of the piece in Todd’s, *A Life*, 430.

60 Schmidt-Beste seems intent on showing that the “Scottish” Symphony really isn’t about Scotland, basing his argument on the fact that the piece was not given its programmatic title until several years after his death, p. 147. He acknowledges that Mendelssohn had his initial inspiration in Scotland, but argues that by the time of its completion it was no longer about Scotland. He states that during Mendelssohn’s lifetime “no mention was made of any supposed association with Scotland,” p. 147. See my discussion and dispute of this later in the chapter.
When Mendelssohn visited Holyrood, its remnant structure became a window to the past. His “Scottish” Symphony, in A minor, similarly created a vista into history. Because of the re-creative nature of music and its ability to suggest an emotion or experience through time, this interface with the past can be experienced time and time again.

The first movement is framed by a theme that, like the ruins of the chapel, evokes the past. The lengthy Introduction: Andante con moto begins with a brooding, melancholy theme (see Example 5.2) that is countered by a more lively though slightly tortured melody. The themes ebb and flow, with the middle section becoming more animated, bordering on celebratory. After reaching a sforzando peak (m. 45) it quickly dissipates, and the somber and tortured themes return subdued at the end of the Introduction, which fragments and fades.

Ex. 5.2. Andante theme, first movement, “Scottish” Symphony (mm. 1-4). The first four notes form a motive for subsequent themes.

The Allegro un poco agitato that follows presents the subdued Introduction Andante theme in an invigorated variant. The primary theme is introduced at the onset and is based on the first two measures of the Andante theme. Here the skeleton of the Andante melody has been fleshed out and transformed into something animated and vibrant (see a comparison of the Andante theme and the primary theme of the Allegro in Examples 5.2 and 5.3).

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The theme is initially played pianissimo, but it is then repeated five times in various forms, gradually growing louder and building to a climax that leads into the fortissimo transition. Todd has noticed several similarities between the movement and Gade’s *Echoes of Ossian* concert overture and has postulated that Mendelssohn may have been influenced by Gade’s work. In addition to the features Todd has noted, the crescendoing repetition of the primary theme here also resembles a similar process in Gade’s overture. In Gade’s piece the program indicates that the growing animation of the theme suggests the voice of the bard returning from the past. A similar process occurs here, as the rhythmically animated theme grows in vitality as if the past is approaching the present.

With the past conjured, the transition theme displays a war-like image, deriving from a rhythmic martial quality and the prominent role of the trumpets and trombones. Although the motive from the Andante section is not present here, melodic fourths derived from the original motive occur regularly in the war-like scene and provide motivic unity.

The secondary theme is a fragmented, remorseful aside, and it is simultaneously juxtaposed with a hushed return of the lively primary theme. The secondary theme also derives from the original Andante motive (see Example 5.4), adding musical unity to the piece and furthering the idea that this is a piece about resurrecting the ruins of the past.

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Two new themes are introduced in the closing section of the exposition. The first is robust, like the transition theme, and occurs with the countermelody of an altered P theme (mm. 159-61), while the second is a yearning, cantabile theme seemingly reminiscent of the musical scenes that have just passed in view. The motivic connection to the movement is confirmed by the latter’s derivation from the Andante motive, with its melody based on the second, third, and fourth notes of the motive (see Example 5.5). Hence, nearly all of the major themes of the movement are derived from the introductory theme.

As expected, the development section of the piece contains a tumultuous recasting of the previous material, adding additional drama to the work. An additional dramatic moment occurs in the coda, with the chromatic wave theme (mm. 450-75), which is created by a rising and falling chromatic scale and a gradually descending bass line. Although the wave theme has been
criticized by some, and may be considered a cliché today, at the time it was a very innovative gesture. In the piece it adds another image to Mendelssohn’s window into history and also builds excitement for the return of the martial T theme that was excluded from the recapitulation.

The T theme returns with bursting fortissimos that suddenly fade (m. 504) as the flute, clarinet, and bassoon play a flagging, descending line. Then the original Andante theme of the Introduction returns in abbreviated form, quickly fading until it disappears, creating a framed form. The framed form, like a window into history, creates a narrative interface for the recalling of past memories into an animated existence in the present.

The various musical images in the movement may create a sense of a story line, but they may also relate to the idea of a panorama of images. When Mendelssohn first arrived in Edinburgh he climbed the prominent hill called Arthur’s Seat and surveyed the surrounding scenes. He described looking in one direction and seeing the city, Edinburgh castle, mountains and rivers in the distance, and Stirling Castle nestled upon a far mountain. Turning to the other side of the hill he described a scene that “is simple enough, it is the great blue sea, immeasurably wide, studded with white sails, black funnels, little insects of skiffs, rocky islands, and such like.” He then drew some conclusions about what he had seen and compared it to a God-made painting: “Why need I describe it? When God Himself takes to panorama-painting, it turns out strangely beautiful.” In addition to being a composer, Mendelssohn was also an artist, and he observed nature with the eyes of a painter. His symphony reflects a similar painterly perspective.

The second movement, Vivace non troppo, acts as the scherzo in the piece. Like the first movement, it also has a framed sonata form, although more subtle. It begins with the strings playing repeated sixteenth notes, creating a lively, shimmering effect. Then in mm. 4-5 a series of brief horn calls appears among the winds and brass, playing an ascending fourth. These horn calls return again only as the piece fades and concludes (mm. 262-64). Considering the dance-like nature of the movement, the horns evoke hunting horns and a scene in the countryside.

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65 Quoted in Jenkins and Visocchi, 43-44.
Appropriately the framed scherzo movement resembles a Scottish dance, but instead of the triple meter common for scherzo movements it is in duple meter, with the pentatonic primary theme containing a combination of sixteenth note runs and dotted rhythms (see Example 5.6). Mendelssohn seems to have been intent on avoiding cliché quotations of folk material and instead created his own traditional-sounding tunes. The theme evokes a Scottish dance, but defies classification as a conventional dance form. Instead it seems a hybrid of Scottish dances. The dotted rhythmic gestures resemble the traditional Scottish hornpipe, and the run of sixteenth notes mimics the traditional quickstep. The sixfold repetition of the primary theme also imitates the repetitive nature of traditional dance music.

Ex. 5.6. Primary theme, second movement, “Scottish” Symphony (mm. 8-12). This theme imitates a Scottish dance.

The Adagio movement appears to be another vignette of either the past or a landscape, although likely both: a scene from the past. Like movements already discussed, it contains a framed form, with similar material at the beginning and end that fades in and out and evokes a sense of remembering. It begins harmonically and melodically unsettled. Tonally the piece vacillates between a first-inversion D-minor chord and an E-major chord (iv6 - V7- iv6 - V7 -V7 - I), highlighting a descending half-step bass motion (F to E), before finally resolving up a fourth to the tonic of A major in m. 10. A melody in the slow introduction, if it can be called such, appears in the first violins and also emphasizes a descending half step (notes A to G-sharp) (see Example 5.7). Interspersed between the segments of the halting melody is a repeated dotted figuration in the horns that connotes a martial sound.

66 Todd has made a similar observation in A Life in Music, 433-34.

Melodic and harmonic ambiguity resolve with the entry of the primary theme (m. 10; all of the movements are in sonata form). The theme is based on the fragmented introductory melody—with similar rhythms and pitch contour. The theme develops what was a one-measure melody into a lush eight-measure theme (see Example 5.8). Similarly, the short horn theme in the introduction foreshadows the secondary theme, which is a funeral-march theme. The emergence process of the primary and secondary themes creates a sense of remembering, with blurry introductions that then come into focus as fully developed themes. Sonata form and the inclusion of the contrasting secondary area add a sense of drama to what is otherwise a peaceful Adagio, making it a piece with memories of sorrow and tranquility.

Ex. 5.7. Introduction theme, third movement, “Scottish” Symphony.

Ex. 5.8. Primary theme, third movement, “Scottish” Symphony (mm. 10-17). The theme is based on the introduction of the Adagio movement (compare with Ex. 5.7).

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68 Todd describes this theme as a “dirge-like procession in the winds over a descending ‘lament’ bass,” *A Life in Music*, 434.
The final movement, *Allegro vivacissimo*, is the most dramatic yet troublesome movement in the work. It contains several vivid musical themes that act as characters and serve as foils to one another. It begins with the incessant march of quarter notes that continues throughout most of the primary key area. Over this march appear two contrasting martial themes (1P and 2P). The first (1P) jumps up an octave and then descends with dotted rhythms that sound similar to a series of Scotch snaps (see Example 5.9). The second (2S) has a steady rhythm and seems to be of an entirely different quality (see Example 5.10), and the contrasting themes played over the incessant beat form an evocative scene of drama. For listeners like Hoffman, the two opposing themes may inspire images of opposing armies (Scottish vs. English), or the march of intruders who have come to capture and kill Rizzio.

Ex. 5.9. Martial 1P theme, fourth movement, “Scottish” Symphony (mm. 2-6).

Ex. 5.10. Martial 2P theme, fourth movement, “Scottish” Symphony (mm. 15-18).

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69 In a preface to the 1843 score of the piece Mendelssohn indicated that the fourth movement should be marked “Allegro guerriero.” Grey, 61.
The secondary theme area also contains two contrasting themes. The first (1S) is a hushed and sweet, yet melancholy, melody played by the oboes and clarinets (see Example 5.11), while the second theme (2S) presented with the brass and strings portrays a regal character (see Example 5.12). Hence, the hushed 1S theme seems a meek contrast to the proud 2S theme, but as the movement plays out, it is the 1S theme that takes a more prominent role. Could these be Queen Mary\textsuperscript{70} and Queen Elizabeth themes? Considering that Mendelssohn was originally inspired by the story and the palace of Mary Queen of Scots, this may be a possible scenario.

![Ex. 5.11. Regal 2S theme, fourth movement, “Scottish” Symphony (mm. 82-86).](image1)

![Ex. 5.12. Hushed 1S theme, fourth movement, “Scottish Symphony” (mm. 67-73).](image2)

The extra-musical references, if Mendelssohn intended any at all, are interesting but less important than the drama between the musical characters that unfolds in the movement. Interestingly, the 1S theme appears in the development (m. 225) with much more force than at its initial appearance. This time it is accompanied by the marching beats associated with the primary themes, while the 2S theme does not recur in the recapitulation. The 1S theme also plays a prominent role in the coda of the piece.

The coda ends much like the first movement began, and indeed it may be seen as the counterpart or bookend to the opening Andante that introduced the symphony. It contains its

\textsuperscript{70} Todd speculates that the funeral-like activities of the Adagio movement may “plausibly allude to the tragic figure of Queen Mary,” Ibid., 434.
own dramatic process built around the 1P theme of the fourth movement, but after a bold climax it then fades into near nothingness (mm. 347-360). When all is hushed with the strings playing pedal tones ppp, the 1S theme reappears, played by the lone clarinet. This return is like a ghostly apparition returning from the past. The theme is then transferred to the bassoon, so that the already ghostly theme becomes even more of a shadow, as it drops an octave and then fades, fragments, and ends in complete silence.

And so the piece seems to end the way it began, like a memory fading in and then out. But Mendelssohn added an unexpected second coda, Allegro maestoso assai, that functions like a final short movement. In a preface to the publication of the score in 1843 Mendelssohn even specified that this section should be titled “Finale maestoso.”\(^{71}\) The coda/finale has received abundant criticism, since it seems to have little connection to the rest of the work. Gerald Abraham considered the second coda a “sham triumph,”\(^ {72}\) and Greg Vitercik said that Mendelssohn “simply did not know when to stop, and buried one of his most impressively romantic cyclic designs under a mass of Victorian bouquets.”\(^ {73}\) Others have found some meaning in the second coda and seen it as a song of victory following a battle.\(^ {74}\) Peter Mercer-Taylor quotes Mendelssohn in a letter to Ferdinand David where he said he hoped that a performance it would sound “properly clear and strong as a male chorus,”\(^ {75}\) and Mercer-Taylor has postulated that the finale emulates a German male chorus that is commenting on the status of German music at the time.\(^ {76}\)

I concur that the Allegro maestoso Finale of the symphony acts like a chorus, as indicated by Mendelssohn, but considering the original impetus for the creation of the symphony and the

\(^{71}\) Grey, 61.

\(^{72}\) Quoted, Ibid., xxi.


\(^{74}\) See Todd’s and Mercer’s summary of the criticism. Todd, A Life in Music, p. 432-3; Mercer, 69-70.

\(^{75}\) Quoted by Mercer-Taylor, 70.

\(^{76}\) Ibid., 77-79.
unity of the previous movements, I believe that the final chorus is commenting on what has happened not just in the preceding movement but in the whole of the symphony. Mendelssohn indicated that all of the movements should be played without pause between them, and each of the preceding four movements is distinguished by various memory-evoking devices, including a framed form for each. On a larger scale all of the movements are encased within a larger frame, with the opening Andante movement and the coda of the fourth movement acting as bookends (see Figure 5.2).

![Diagram of symphony movements]

Fig. 5.2. The outer and inner frames of Mendelssohn’s “Scottish” Symphony, with the Allegro maestoso existing outside the frame.

The Allegro maestoso has no framed form, and it stands outside this structure acting as a contemporary commentary on the preceding historical episodes (see Figure 5.2). It is as if Mendelssohn says, “Ah, that was an exciting history to remember. What adventuresome days.” If this is a men’s chorus, then it is a commenting chorus, not unlike the chorus of a Greek drama or an opera. Considering that the last theme heard in the coda was the fading of what I have

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77 Grey, 61.

78 The Andante theme and the S1 theme of the fourth movement, which plays a prominent role in the coda of the movement, are remarkably similar to each other. Both are based on a similar pentatonic scale and employ similar rhythms. Although the latter theme may allude to the Andante theme, it is not a direct quotation or variation of the theme.
labeled the Mary theme (1S of the fourth movement), then perhaps the finale is a tribute to Mary and her memory. Ultimately it is an approving, even celebratory appraisal of the tonal vignettes of Scottish history.

Although some modern critics have disdained the Allegro maestoso, the critics at the time of its premier had the highest praise for the piece and its ending. The first performance was in Leipzig on 3 March 1842, and due to the performance of all of the movements without pause, the audience was somewhat bewildered about when to applause (at this time audiences routinely clapped between movements of multimovement works). But at its second performance two weeks later, the audience interrupted the movements with boisterous applause.\textsuperscript{79} At its premiere in London on 13 June 1842, the critic for the \textit{Times} was enthusiastic about the ending: “what could be finer than the manner in which the whole symphony is brought to a close?”\textsuperscript{80} Robert Schumann wrote that the final movement was “most poetic; it is like an evening corresponding to a lovely morning.”\textsuperscript{81}

The reception of the work by audiences in Leipzig and London had little to do with its programmatic connections, since most were unaware of it Scottishness. Mendelssohn never titled it the “Scottish” Symphony during his lifetime, and it was only when his letters were published posthumously that it was clearly revealed that the symphony was indeed related to Scotland.\textsuperscript{82}

Thomas Schmidt-Beste has argued that none of Mendelssohn’s audiences seemed aware of the connection, claiming that “No one—inside or outside England—appears to have taken up the suggestion or have commented upon [a programmatic context].” However, Mendelssohn had hinted at the Scottishness of the symphony before its premiere in London on 13 June 1842. In the review of the concert in the \textit{Times} the critic indicated that he had some information given him that connected at least part of the Symphony to Scotland:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{79} Todd, \textit{A Life in Music}, 430.

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Times} (London), 14 June 1842, 5.


\textsuperscript{82} Schmidt-Beste, 147-52.
\end{quote}
Indeed the scherzo movement, which comprises the pleasing “reminiscences of Scotland,” alluded to by us yesterday, was loudly cheered, the delight of several individuals amongst the audience being most unequivocally expressed.

So it seems that at least some were aware of its programmatic origins, although the reviewer seems to have thought that only the second movement was about Scotland and that part of the work was about Switzerland. But assuming most audiences were not aware that the symphony was a Scottish one, the reception of the work is especially interesting, particularly when one assesses whether or not the symphony evokes the place of Scotland to those who were unaware of the derivation.

Robert Schumann’s write-up about the work in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* before the publication of the score is perhaps the most amusing of the reviews. Schumann had heard from a third party that the piece was written in Rome, and so he assumed it was about Italy:

> This is interesting to know in view of its very special character. Just as the sight of a yellowed page . . . conjures up a vanished time, . . . so must many lovely reminiscences have risen to encircle the imagination of [Mendelssohn] when among his papers he rediscovered these old melodies sung in Italian–until, . . . this tender tone picture revealed itself; a picture that . . . makes us forget for a while our unhappiness at never having seen that blessed land. And so it has been often said that a special folk tone breathes from this symphony.

Elsewhere in the article, Schumann says that he was especially struck with the “intimate connection of all four movements,” and by the scherzo, in which “the instruments speak like human beings.”

Although Schumann identified an incorrect place association, it is interesting that he recognizes that the piece is about a place. His attention to the “folk tone” of the work and his awareness of “old melodies” also shows that Mendelssohn successfully communicated both a sense of place and history in the symphony, and that a skilled musician, like Schumann, could

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83 *Times* (London), 14 June 1842, 5. The review referred to was of the rehearsal, and it sheds little light on how the writer learned about the connection, *Times* (London), 13 June 1842, 5.

84 Schumann, 204-5.

85 Ibid., 205-06.
decode some of the meaning of the work without the assistance of a program. Mendelssohn also successfully evokes an attractive place in the music, so that Schumann longed to see “that blessed land” revealed in “this tender tone picture.”

Other reviews at the premieres of the piece were extremely warm and full of praise, and one of the repeated sentiments among the reviewers was the desire to hear the piece multiple times to gain a deeper understanding of it. The unnamed critic for the Morning Post declared that the work was “a composition of transcendent power and exquisite beauty,” and then went on to describe the piece with a vivid imagination that connected the piece to Scotland, saying, “One moment is strongly redolent of the Scottish highlands.” The writer shows that Mendelssohn’s seemingly non-programmatic work evoked images of Scotland.

The writer’s identification of Scotland was not just a random guess. The piece was premiered in London while England had an unusual interest in Scotland. This was in large part due to the popularity of the writings of James Macpherson and Walter Scott. Tourism to Scotland had become increasingly popular during the nineteenth century (Mendelssohn’s visit exemplifies this), and in the same year as the premiere Queen Victoria began the first of her many travels to Scotland as queen. The review of the symphony in the Morning Chronicle of London is even followed by an announcement for “The Grand Caledonian [i.e., Scottish] Fancy Dress Ball,” showing that at the time Scotland was in vogue in England, and that Mendelssohn’s presentation of the symphony was timely.

Returning to the theme of the ritual of the concert hall, the Morning Post writer’s additional comments show that his listening experience in the concert hall was akin to Mahler’s and Hoffman’s expectation for music. The critic’s response was imaginative:

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86 Even modern audiences draw similar conclusions. I recently did an experiment in a music history course I taught at The College of Idaho. I played the symphony and asked the students to write down images evoked in the piece. I also told them the work was about a place and asked them to identify the place. Many of them repeatedly identified images of cold, rain, water, war, and the countryside, and guesses of place included Italy, Ireland, England, Germany, and Scotland.

87 She traveled to Scotland in August 1842. The Letters of Queen Victoria: A Selection from her Majesty’s Correspondence between the year 1837 to 1861, vol 1 (London: John Murray, 1908), 428.

88 Morning Chronicle (London), 14 June 1842.
A bold and martial air pervades the music; it is full of fire and animation, but never gay, while it breathes many wild and melancholy strains, and there is a sad solemnity in the close which seems to tell the termination of a tragic history. One moment is strongly redolent of the Scottish highlands. We hear the clang of the pibroch [bagpipes], mingled, as it were, with the tread of many feet and the eager cries of a host marching to battle; and the final movement produces a similar impression, though its warlike notes are blended with the wailing notes of grief and mourning.

The critic’s description of hearing the sounds of “winds and waves,” bagpipes, and warriors is interesting, since the piece does not attempt to mimic the sounds of winds and wave, bagpipes, the treading of feet, or the cries of a host. While listening to the music he allowed his imagination to be emancipated, while guided by the sound world of the symphony, to the point of having a transcendent experience. He describes his experience as if he were carried away in his mind to the middle of a battlefield in Scotland where he imagines some tragic history.

**Bruch: Scottish Fantasy**

Max Bruch’s *Scottish Fantasy*, like the two previous pieces, has become a staple in the modern concert repertoire and particularly in violin literature. The reasons for its longevity include the piece’s entertainment value and the virtuosity of the violin part. Undoubtedly, its caricature of a green and folksy Scotland have also contributed to the work’s canonization, but unlike the Scottish works of Mendelssohn, Bruch’s composition does not compel one to repeated listening to comprehend the work. The work is light and tasteful, but slightly saccharine.

The piece was written during the winter of 1879-80, while Bruch was in Berlin, and it was premiered in Liverpool on 22 February 1881. It was originally titled Concerto for Violin (Scotch), but the title was eventually changed to *Scottish Fantasy*, an abbreviation of its formal title, *The Fantasia for the Violin and Orchestra with Harp, freely using Scottish Folk Melodies*. Some were apparently unhappy with the original title of Concerto. In a London review of the piece in 1883 the writer for the *Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* was critical of the freedom and “abuse” of Scottish melodies displayed in the piece and thought that it should be

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89 Morning Post (London), 14 June 1842, 5. The same writer for the Post was most likely the critic for the Morning Chronicle since it includes an identical description in its review. Morning Chronicle (London), 14 June 1842.

called a Fantasia and not a Concerto. Bruch apparently responded to the criticism when he changed the name of the piece.

Bruch showed considerable anxiety and contempt for the critics, who were generally unsatisfied with the work, while the general public and other musicians responded enthusiastically to the piece. In one letter he wrote,

The Scottish Fantasy, which even gives pleasure to people like Brahms and Joachim, is torn apart everywhere by the mob of critics. One can bear all this for many years, but there comes a time when disgust and bitterness overpowers a creator, and one says to oneself, “how much longer do I cast pearls before swine?”

For the critics the piece provided little satisfaction, but for his audiences and friends the piece provided “pleasure,” if not intellectual stimulation.

The work begins with an Adagio cantabile movement. The opening bars are written in the style of a funeral march, featuring the low brass and percussion playing a slow march. Following the dirge, the tempo shifts to Adagio cantabile and the mood transforms from sorrow to consolation, as the violin pronounces a series of cantabile melodies based on the folk song “Auld Rob Morris.” This is the first of four Scottish folk-songs that appear in the piece, with “Dusty Miller” featured in the Allegro second movement and “I’m down for lack of Johnnie” in the Andante third movement. The final movement includes a lengthy rhapsody on the famous “Scots wha hae,” made famous by Robert Burns, who wrote the text to the old melody that was supposedly played at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

Bruch subjected the melodies to numerous variations that highlight the virtuosity and expressivity of the violin rather than a dynamic transformation of the themes. The orchestra serves an accompanimental purpose, and even the harp specified in the title has no special distinction and instead functions like the rest of orchestra.

91 Musical Times and Singing Class Circular (London), 204/482 (1 April, 1883), 193.

92 Fifield, 198.

93 Fifield has identified the melody, 166. An “original” version of the melody can be seen in William Thomson’s Orpheus Caledonius, Vol, 1, p. 64.

94 Fifield, 166-67.
Although each movement features the folk-tunes in a straightforward manner, these Scottish melodies do undergo a radical transformation when compared with their original settings and scorings. Originally pieces for solo voice with or without light accompaniment, the tunes are stripped of their words and “sung” by a violin that is accompanied by a full-sized orchestra.

The solo performer in the concert hall is quite different from the player in the pub. His presence in the hall is similar to that of the conductor. With the audience focused on the soloist, he becomes the interpreter of the score. His virtuoso abilities heighten his status among the performers, for his playing is meant to dazzle both visually and aurally, so that the audience is amazed at his abilities and assume some extraordinary, almost supernatural, talent.

What were originally short folk songs are also enlarged in both volume and length. Simple tunes are ornamented and lavished upon in a way that seems highly artificial when compared with their humble origins. The performance space is also radically different: what was originally performed in fields, cottages, and local pubs is performed in the lavish concert hall with its ritualistic activities. The title of *Fantasy* in this setting is really more appropriate, for its performance in the ritual of the concert hall may inspire the audience to experience a fantasy of Scotland.

**Conclusion**

Music in the concert hall is surrounded by layers of ritual laden with meaning. For the initiated musicians of the time, such as Hoffmann, the critics of the *Morning Post* and the *Harmonicon*, Mahler, Schumann, and others, the sacred space of the concert hall provided a setting for the revealing of another world and the possibility of transcendent enlightenment. Eliade said that people have a strong nostalgia for a paradise, the “longing for something altogether different from the present instant; something in fact inaccessible or irretrievably lost; ‘Paradise’ itself.”<sup>95</sup> When viewed in the context of the ritualistic setting of the concert hall,

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Mendelssohn’s *Hebrides* Overture and “Scottish” Symphony and Bruch’s *Scottish Fantasy* take on new layers of meaning. Orchestral evocations of Scotland assume a paradisiacal function.

The presentation of place through organized sounds creates a virtual time and vision of a platonic other world, and Scotland with its geography, history, and scenery form a particularly attractive other world. Set in the ritualistic space of the concert hall, produced by a body of performers who follow the lead of the “high priest” of the “temple,” the immobile listeners are free to conjure up, and perhaps be transported, into the emotionally rich, sonic world of Scotland.
CHAPTER 6

CELTICA IN THE HEADPHONES

This chapter shifts attention away from performances within structured spaces to “performances” in the virtual space of electronic sound devices, relying on albums instead of scores. The focus of this chapter is modern Celtic music, and although it deviates from some of the domains of previous chapters, an exploration of the music provides an intriguing view into a type of music that presents a familiar but varied image of Scotland in modern times.

A study of modern Celtic music is necessary because of the sheer popularity of the music and because of its evocative portrayal of Celtic Scotland. Celtic music has achieved global success in the last two decades. In addition to its robust album sales, its influence can be seen on the stage, with Riverdance and Lord of the Dance, and in the symphonic concert hall, where orchestras such as the Boston Pops and Cincinnati Pops Orchestra have produced albums like The Celtic Album (1998) and A Celtic Spectacular (2002). Instead of portraying place within the drawing room, theater, or concert hall, the music that will be discussed in this chapter often represents Scotland through headphones or speakers in a variety of spaces and locations, so that Scotland becomes essentially displaced.

For this discussion I first attempt to define popular Celtic music and explain Scotland’s participation in the Celtic movement. Once this has been clarified I examine various songs and albums by two Scottish groups, Capercaillie and Dougie MacLean, to show how their music creates a modern image of old Scotland. I present these groups through an exploration of three paradoxes that reveal the appeal of their music to modern audiences and the function the music serves for these audiences.
Defining the Celtic Mist

Authors on the subject of Celtic music have continually faltered in their attempts to define it. This is not due to lack of intelligence or effort, but it is the result of the inherently nebulous nature of the music. To understand Celtic music and its relationship to Scottish music, we first need to examine the similarly troublesome parent term Celtic. Much has been written about Celtic history and culture, with some authors describing a sensationalized Celtic history buttressed by pseudo-science/history, while others approach the topic more critically. Here I will provide a very brief overview of the meaning of Celtic that touches on both views.

The term *Keltoi* first appeared in Greek and Roman writings as a general label for the barbarian “others” the Classical writers encountered. Often the term was used more specifically to describe several barbarian groups in western Europe, including the Gauls. The Greco-Roman descriptions of the Celts are often vague and derogatory and tend to caricaturize the Celts as a people who loved war and strong drink. As far as we know, the Celtic people of these earlier times never referred to themselves by this name, and none of the early writers ever referred to the peoples of Britain or Ireland as Celtic. However, archaeologists believe that in the fifth century C.E. some of these west European groups were pushed to the outer areas of northern Europe (including Ireland and Wales).¹

The term fell out of common use for nearly a thousand years and did not resurface until the early eighteenth century. In 1703 Paul-Yves Pezron revived the word in his *L’Antiquité de la langue et de la nation des Celtes*. In this history book he endowed the French, particularly the Bretons, with an honourable ancestry that linked them to the great Celtic warriors of ancient Europe. The Welshman Edward Lhuyd published an influential work in 1707 titled *Archaeologia Britannica*, in which he observed the close relationship between the languages of Britain, Ireland, and Brittany, calling the original language Celtic. Significantly the book was published in the same year as the Union that united Scotland to England and Wales, and it seems that Lhuyd’s intent was to establish an intellectual argument that distinguished the Scottish,

Welsh, and Irish from the English. Celtic scholar Barry Cunliffe has keenly observed that “Thus it may be said that the re-emergence of the Celts–some would say the reinvention–came about, in the early years of the eighteenth century, when political reaction to the development of nation states found support in erudite academic debate.”

By the middle of the eighteenth century the term had grown in popularity. William Stukeley wrote an influential History of the Ancient Celts (two volumes: 1740, 1743), in which he erroneously assumed that Stonehenge and the other stone circles of Britain had been built by ancient Celtic druids. His work sparked “Druidomania” and has laid the groundwork for the modern association between Celts, druids, and spiritualism. These notions have continued, in fact crescendoed in recent decades, despite contradictory archeological evidence that dates Stonehenge as existing several thousand years before the Celts migrated to Britain.

James Macpherson’s Ossian continued the Celticization of Britain’s peripheral nations by depicting a “noble” Celtic people in the Scottish Highlands. Macpherson and the Edinburgh academic Hugh Blair wrote introductions and “dissertations” that were printed with the various editions of the poems, and these treatises establish a historical context for the bard Ossian and the subjects of his poetry (songs). These intellectual apparatuses assert that the characters in Ossian, the eponymous bard included, were ancient Celts of west Scotland and north Ireland. Blair states, “that the ancient Scots were of Celtic origin, is past all doubt,” and describes Ossian as “our rude Celtic bard.” Later in his An Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland, 1771, Macpherson presented a history that linked Britain to Celtic ancestry, claiming that the Gaelic-speaking Highlanders of Scotland were the purest descendants of the Celtic race.

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2 Cunliffe, 112-16.

3 Ibid., 116.

4 Chapman, Celts Myth, 208.


6 See Kenneth Michael McNeil’s critical discussion of Macpherson’s History in “Inside and Outside the Nation: Highland Identity in Nineteenth Century Britain” (Ph.D. diss., The Ohio State University, 1998), 30-40, 56.
Since the eighteenth century the Celtic movement has continued to grow into something beyond its original usage. Lhuyd had originally used the term to describe a particular European language group, but it has since accumulated multiple layers of cultural and political meaning. Philologists still use the term to describe the languages spoken in parts of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Brittany, and Cornwall (whose language is now extinct). But beyond the linguistic usage many have altered the term to apply to the general populations of these “five Celtic nations,” despite the fact that all of these populations comprise peoples from various ethnic backgrounds, often with long histories connected to these locations. Some have applied the term to describe the Celtic culture of the general populations of these areas. It has even taken on political implications, and several groups have argued for the political separation of the “Celtic nations” from their governing nation-states (Britain and France), and have called for a union of these Celtic regions. One particularly outspoken political group is The Celtic League, which has branches in all of the “Celtic nations.” The nations are referred to by older names (Scotland, for example is referred to as Alba), and they declare the “fundamental aim of the Celtic League is to . . . secure or win [the] political cultural, social, and economic freedom” of the “Celtic nations.”

Such a goal is not shared by all members of the Celtic countries, as many do not acknowledge, or are merely indifferent to, a Celtic heritage. Some scholars have been critical of those who claim some cultural linkage between modern Celts and the ancient Celts described by classical writers. Nevertheless most active participants in the Celtic culture movement believe that the ancient characteristics of a fierce and emotional people have been transmitted to them, as their descendants, over the course of several thousands of years.

Malcolm Chapman has been very critical of the belief in the continuity of Celtic culture, and he has written extensively about the false notion of a modern Celtic culture with ancient roots, arguing that modern Celts have little or no hereditary claim to the ancient Celts, and that even if a hereditary link exists it does not ensure the continuity of culture. He believes the title has been misunderstood and misapplied, with occasionally violent results (he cites for evidence some supporters of the IRA who believe in the Celtic roots of the Irish people). He does

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8 *Celts Myth*, 253.
recognize the fervency of Celtic supporters, however, noting that the term Celtic has historically been used to refer to Others, and that it continues to be used in similar fashion in the present, although in modern times groups have willingly adopted the title. In adopting the name, these people actively seek to distinguish themselves from hegemonic powers such England or France.

By establishing an Other identity, people who participate in the modern Celtic movement are really creating a self-identity of their own. In the ever shifting identity-scape of post-modern times, these participants consciously choose to associate and thus identify with a Celtic culture, despite its academic dubiousness. Ultimately, Celtic is a belief in a commonality among believers: it is an imagined community, so that a modern Celtic individual is one who believes he or she is somehow connected to, and an inheritor of, an ancient culture that transcends modern politics and time. Barry Cunliffe summarizes what it means to be a neo-Celt:

The idea of being a Celt provides a raft of emotional support—a sense of being rooted back in a heroic past and an explanation of behavior. . . . the concept of Celt is a belief, however mistily understood, that underpins sense of self and of inheritance. In emphasizing that Celticness is a belief, I do not wish to demean the believers. Their sense of Celtic identity is sincere and central to their self-perception. Admittedly, there are ranges of participation, ranging from those who are active in The Celtic League to those who are peripherally interested in the outer manifestations of Celtic culture.

Cunliffe crafted a description of the modern Celtic that manages to embrace the problematic nature of the term: “So from New Age body decoration to concerns for the survival of regional identity, from half-baked attempts at political manipulation to an inspiration for new music, the Celtic spectre hovers while the Celtic sceptre is held aloft. *Celticness does indeed seem to be all things to all men.*” Although Cunliffe and other writers about the modern Celtic phenomenon do not dwell on the artistic aspect of this formulated belief, an investigation of

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10 Cunliffe, 139.

11 Italics added, ibid., 2-3.
Celtic music and its audiences provides a fascinating insight into the creative interchange between an audience and the music, when the music evokes a Celtic identity.

With the historical-linguistic-cultural foundation laid I now return to the problematic task of defining Celtic music. I first consider several sources that address Celtic music, and then I approach the task more empirically, by looking at what is published under the rubric of Celtic music.

In a separate article within *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, nestled under the subheading of “Transnational Ethnic Groups,” Lois Kuter writes about “Celtic Music,”

No scholar has established a set of sonic traits that can qualify or disqualify music as Celtic. . . . When used in relation to music, Celtic has a geographical sense, indicating places where recognizably different musical styles exist—music not shared by non-Celtic neighbors and often unique to just one country, or even one small region within it. Celtic is a convenient way to bundle the musical traditions of different Celtic countries. Despite such disparity, Kuter believes that at one time a unified Celtic music may have existed and hopes that future cross-cultural studies may clarify the musical commonalities among Celtic regions. In attempting to justify this stance she defers to the noted Celtic performer Alan Stivell, who claims a unified Celtic style existed because there exists a “certain common ‘feeling’ in . . . [the] different styles from those countries.” This is hardly solid footing for the ethnomusicologist seeking the roots of a traditional music.

Perhaps because of the difficulty (or improbability) of cross-Celtic comparisons, few ethnomusicologists and musicologists have taken up the subject of Celtic music as a whole, although many have addressed regional and national styles. The slack has been taken up, at least partially, by writers such as June Skinner Sawyers, a journalist with little musical training, and radio announcers like Winnie Czulinski and Fiona Ritchie. All confess difficulty with identifying a common definition for Celtic music. Sawyers draws a conclusion that resembles

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the one made by Stivell, saying that the music of the various Celtic nations contains “something a lot more intangible and certainly less quantifiable—a feeling or quality that evokes emotions of sadness or joy, sorrow or delight. . . . All share, for lack of a better word, a Celtic spirit, a unique bond with one another that transcends time, distance, and political units.”

The definition itself seems more mystical than definitive, as it highlights general emotions over distinct styles or musical characteristics.

Even the likes of scholars Philip Bohlman and Martin Stokes do not solve the problem of providing a definition and instead provide definitions of several types of Celtic music, including one type that comprises New Age music, which they describe as “an amalgam of globalized peripheries, medievalist fantasy, and other plays with and on ‘deep’ past.” Considering the seemingly incongruous nature of the musics subsumed under this definition (New Age and deep past, for example), the music obviously presents special challenges. The Celtic-music journalist Kenny Mathieson summarized the difficulty of defining the music, saying that “formally identifying what Celtic music is . . . remains a musicologist’s nightmare.”

In some ways Mathieson is right: most modern Celtic music cannot be studied as folk music (although some groups recreate folk music), and it also does not easily settle into the categories of popular music (although it is mass marketed and popular). Instead, the music freely intertwines the old and the new, which often masquerades as music with a connection to the “deep” past. Yet in other ways Mathieson’s white flag signals a call to musicologists to try and make sense of this unwieldy creature.

Mathieson concludes that “if anything, [Celtic music] is a marketing strategy—and a very successful one.” In some ways this may be the most accurate of any short definition, yet it does not usefully represent the range of Celtic music and the nationalistic sincerity of some who firmly believe, and participate, in the political-cultural Celtic movement. Ultimately, any unified image

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15 Sawyers, 6.


18 Ibid., 4.
of Celtic music belies the cultural divisions of its various regions, as native musicians often renounce attempts to lump together independent styles, revealing a nationalistic disharmony that is often obscured by the misty apparition of Celtic music.

**A Trip to the Border**

Springboarding from Mathieson’s comments about Celtic music as a marketing strategy, I turn to the CD bins in a local Borders, Books, and Music store to complete an ethnography of this music on the fringe. Observing the context of these albums helps establish a more practical construction of the meaning of Celtic music. In doing this I am partially responding to Mathieson’s and others, acknowledgment that Celtic is a marketing technique. But more useful for this dissertation, by looking at the placement and categorization of Celtic music in a music store, one can better ascertain the types of images producers intend to project, and the function these might fulfill for those who purchase them.

Celtic music is often nestled within two separate marketing categories of music: New Age and World Music. It has had a presence in the “New Age” section since Enya became globally popular in the late 1980s. Her popularity and her presentation of Celtic music set a precedent for Celtic music with a distinct modern sound. The traditionally trained Irish singer left her sibling’s band, Clannad, in the early 1980s and produced her first solo album, *Enya*, in 1987. She has since become one of the most popular solo female musicians, having won three Grammys. Although her electronically enhanced, gossamer sound does not in the least resemble that of traditional Irish music, her songs leave no doubt about their connection to the Celtic culture. The album *Enya* includes music originally written for a BBC-TV documentary on the history of the Celts, and several songs, such as “The Celts” and “March of the Celts” reflect the connection. In 1992 she released an album titled *The Celts*. Although the music is not traditional, her enigmatic lyrics, written and sung in English, Latin, or Gaelic, reflect some connection to a mysterious past. This relationship to the deep past is also communicated in the music through its

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19 For this project I visited the Borders Books and Music store in Tallahassee on 3/30/07.
ethereal melancholy and electronic evocation of an ancient ambience through the use of heavy reverb. 20

Enya is still a popular presence in the New Age bins, but her albums have also been joined by a variety of other “Celtic” albums. One of the most recent and successful of these newcomers is the Irish group Celtic Woman, recently ranked number 3 on the list of “Top 25 Bestsellers” at the mega-media outlet Borders Books and Music 21 Although bestsellers like Celtic Woman and Enya occupy the New Age bins, relatively few other “Celtic” albums are placed in this section. Those in the section often appear among a wide variety of albums, including many that relate to spirituality, with titles such as Yoga Salon, Shaman’s Vision Journey, Spiritual Massage, and Mystic Canyons. Fitting in this schema of New Age spiritualism, Celtic music reflects an interest in non-traditional beliefs, and the albums often portray some connection to some mystical, ancient spiritualism.

The other category that houses Celtic music is the “World Music” section, and in this area Celtic music by far dominates the section (an exception would be Latin music, which has its own, separate category). The categorization of Celtic music with the World Music rubric reveals both its marketing schema and its perception as a traditional type of music, and indeed many of the albums in the Celtic sub-category contain the traditional music of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Brittany, and some of the Scottish/Irish diaspora areas of Canada. Although the Irish new-music superstars Enya and Celtic Woman may give the impression of an Irish-dominated market, the various albums reveal fairly equal numbers of Scottish and Irish albums. Some groups clearly refer to a nation of origin, while others lack indicators of national origin. Some of the traditional “Celtic” albums have titles such as Scottish Sing-along Favorites, Scotland the Brave, Scottish Moods (bagpipes playing traditional tunes), and Pipes and Drums from Scotland. Other albums present a modern twist to traditional sounds, with Scottish groups such as the Old Blind Dogs, Capercaillie, and Dougie MacLean.


21 On my visit of 3/30/07 the chart was prominently displayed in the music section of the store.
The more traditional albums, such as bagpipe albums, often refer explicitly to their nation of origin in their titles, while the modern traditionalists refer to their nation of origin more subtly—often in song title and not in group or album name. Within the Celtic category are numerous albums that do not reference a specific nation but instead possess the pan-nationalistic Celtic name. In the latter category the name Celtic shrouds nationalistic or regional individuality under the pretense of a Celtic culture with its foggy origins. Some of these CDs are titled *Celtic Odyssey*, *Celtic Twilight*, and *Celtic Moods*. As indicated by these titles, no specific nation is identified, and furthermore the nouns in the titles often refer to something transient and indistinct. Many of these albums contain a conglomeration of traditional artists from various nations, so that national distinctions are annexed into an imaginary Celtic super-nation. Other albums marketed as Celtic contain no title reference to a specific place, but instead refer to indistinct, often liminal, locations, such as *Between Worlds* and *Twilight Realm*. The Celtic category continues to expand with some modern groups creating punk Celtic, metal Celtic, and world music Celtic. Clearly this type of “Celtic music” obscures borders of time and place, but this lack of clarity may actually reinforce the music’s association with a sense of mysticism.

Several conclusions can be drawn from these observations and from the previous discussion about the meaning of Celtic. To start with, the term Celtic music embraces a wide variety of styles and music from several countries. It is a convenient grouping that includes traditional music, modern music with traditional aspects, and modern music that may have no hint of traditionalism. It is also a title that some of its participants do not willingly assume, and they resent their national or regional styles of music being branded as Celtic music. The music across this spectrum does not share musical style characteristics. In addition to regional differences, a bagpipe tune or a fiddle reel, for example, has little in common with the eclectic

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22 Some albums that include a collection of nationalistic pieces include *The Celts Rise Again*, *Celtic Voices*, and *Celtic Odyssey*.

23 The drummer for Capercallie, David Robertson, is also a member of the band Salsa Celtica, http://www.capercaillie.co.uk/theband/david/ (accessed 4/19/07).

American David Arkinstone and his *The Celtic Book of Days*, with its dramatic, synthesizer-enhanced orchestration.

Although the Celtic umbrella encompasses a variety of styles, the music is often unified by its emotional evocations of the past. References to the past are obvious in the traditional music presented in many albums, and modern Celtic music also often connotes the past by evoking an ambience of antiquity through text and music. In addition, the music can also be characterized by its emotional richness. Sawyers quotes the Irish singer-songwriter Susan McKeown, who says “Celtic Music seems to have become this handy catchphrase used to describe ethereal, high-pitched vocals dripping with synthesizers.”25 There are numerous exceptions to this statement, but here she also seems to refer to music pregnant with affect. This is not to assert that Celtic music is more emotional than other types of music, but it is often saturated with sentiment.

Unified by its emotional reverence for the past, Celtic music is also united by the belief of its audiences. The radio show host Fiona Ritchie and her co-author Eileen Ivers have described Celtic music as “a belief, if you will, in the bond of ‘Celtic’ identity as it is expressed through music.”26 Many of those who purchase albums, downloads songs from the Internet, and attend Celtic festivals firmly believe in the existence of a Celtic culture. Ultimately, the audience of believers defines Celtic music by its choices. And in turn the music helps define them, for in consuming this music they situate their own identity within this culture. This may be done easily, because music provides easy participation in Celtic culture.27

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27 I will discuss this in more detail later in the chapter, but I am referring to an idea formed by Malcolm Chapman in “Thoughts on Celtic Music,” in *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg, 1994), 36.
Audience Attraction to Scottish Celtic Music

To explore the relationship between Scottish Celtic music and its audiences in more detail, I will discuss three paradoxes that arise out of the marketing of this music to an international audience. These paradoxes involve the singing of Gaelic texts to a non-Gaelic audience, songs about specific Scottish places being performed for outsiders who are often not directly familiar with these places, and, finally, the use of modern technology in reminiscing about the past. I will explore these seeming contradictions via the music of two of Scotland’s prominent singer-songwriter groups. For the first paradox I will look at the music of Capercaillie and their modern renditions of traditional Gaelic songs. This will be followed by an investigation of two paradoxes that surface in the music of Dougie MacLean, specifically his singing about the places of Scotland to foreign audiences, and his glorifying Scotland’s past through modern media.

Paradox 1: Gaelic Songs for the non-Gaels

Over the course of more than two decades Capercaillie has become one of Scotland’s most popular Celtic groups. The eight-member band, started in the early 1980s, had its beginnings in the Highland town of Oban, where its founder, Donald Shaw, and its soloist, Karen Matheson, grew up. The group performs a variety of traditional music, but the bulk of their output includes modern renditions of traditional music and newly composed, roots-based pieces. The group has produced fifteen albums and sold more than a million copies, and they have also written soundtracks for several TV movies and the Hollywood movie *Rob Roy* (1995). On their website the group describes itself as a “groundbreaking folk/crossover band” and unabashedly claims to be “Britain’s leading Celtic band.”

Capercaillie’s popularity is greatest in Britain, but they also have an large international fan base. They regularly tour and perform around the globe, and their website states that they

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28 www.capercaillie.co.uk/ (accessed 4/26/07). Current band members include Che Beresford, Manus Lunny, Karen Matheson, Michael McGoldrick, Charlie McKerron, David Robertson, Donald Shaw, and Ewen Vernal. Although the majority of the band come from Scotland, three come from other places in Britain.
have performed in over thirty countries, including Iraq, Macedonia, and the Sudan. Further insight into their broad audience can be gained by looking at the fan forum on their website. As of spring 2007, the forum listed 1064 members. Users have the option of listing their places of residence, and the majority of users do list their residence, revealing participants from more than thirty different countries. Based on a review of these users, it is apparent that the strongest fan base comes from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. The group also has a considerable following in Australia and New Zealand. A significant number of fans also hail from other European nations, ranging from Italy to the Czech Republic to Finland. Forum participants also corresponded from several countries in South America, Africa, and Asia. The list of registered forum users only hints at the number of fans who actually read the forum and purchase Capercaillie’s albums, but it provides a sample of Capercaillie’s global audience. The website credits “Capercaillie with being the major force in bringing Celtic music to the world stage,” although this claim might be contested.

What is surprising and paradoxical about Capercaillie’s global audience is that the group sings almost exclusively in the Gaelic language. Although a significant portion of this audience likely has some Scottish or British connection, either as citizens or with ancestral roots, virtually none of the audience members speak or understand Gaelic (even in Scotland only one percent of the population are Gaelic speakers). Many other Celtic groups also sing in Gaelic, and I

29 Although the website does not provide details about these performances, I suspect that considering these locations the group was not primarily performing for the native populations, but was instead visiting these countries to perform for the British/United Nations peace keeping personnel.

30 http://www.capercaillie.co.uk/fans/forum (accessed 4/1/07)

31 It is difficult to gage the ethnicity of the forum population. Undoubtedly, some are British expatriates. For example, one fan from Taiwan indicated in a message that he had been a member of the Royal Air Force. A complete list of nations represented follows: UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Spain, France, Australia, Germany, Sweden, Brazil, New Zealand, Canada, Italy, Netherlands, Romania, Hungary, Norway, Finland, Argentina, Russian, Chile, Belgium, Portugal, Switzerland, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Luxembourg, Philippines, Czech Republic, China, Poland, Taiwan, and South Africa.

32 Numerous and perhaps superior arguments could also be made against this claim. Other groups, such as the Chieftains and CelticWoman, could be credited with a more significant role in the spread of Celtic music to the world.

33 The 2001 census reported 1.2% of the population spoke Gaelic.
approach this paradox through the window of Capercaillie in order to shed light on the general Celtic phenomenon of marketing Gaelic to non-Gaelic speakers.

Before proposing explanations for this paradox, it will be helpful to examine several albums and songs. An exploration of the music and its stylistic transformation from traditional songs into modern songs will facilitate a discussion of the appeal of the music to a broad audience.

Capercaillie employs a variety of traditional and modern instruments, primarily using traditional instruments such as the fiddle, whistle, accordion, guitar, and bodhran (drum), but also using electronic keyboard and bass guitar. Their albums typically include several traditional instrumental dance pieces that retain the common style, scoring, and form of traditional dance tunes, but songs outnumber dances on most albums.

Capercaillie’s vocal pieces tend to sound more modern, often with pop rhythms and scoring that features electronic instruments. Several of the vocal pieces are based on traditional Gaelic songs or song texts, but very few auditory clues reveal the roots of the music, other than the inclusion of traditional instruments. A nearly equal number of songs are newly composed, with either Gaelic or English texts with similar modern scoring. On the albums the traditional pieces are freely juxtaposed with the newly composed works, so that a listener cannot easily distinguish the traditional from the new. This free blending of old and new shows that the group intends not to slavishly imitate traditional music but to create a modern, living continuation of the tradition.

Songs on the albums feature the soprano Karen Matheson, who is at the center of Capercaillie’s image. Sean Connery, who narrated the Scottish TV movie Highlanders, for which Capercaillie provided the soundtrack, commented that Matheson’s “throat” had “surely been touched by God.” Her voice represents some of the quintessential qualities of the female Celtic singer. It possesses an ethereal quality that is emphasized by her regularly singing in her head voice. The pieces with slower tempos showcase the purity of her timbre, while the faster pieces (a specialty of the group) reveal her exceptional agility in both pitch and diction. With its

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34 Quoted by the film’s producer Ted Brocklebank in his liner notes to Capercaillie: The Blood is Strong (Survival Records: 1995, VLT15124).
high, pure timbre, adorned with only a very slight vibrato, Matheson’s voice somewhat resembles the sound of a pre-pubescent boy. The result is a pure sound that evokes the sense of an innocent past.

Capercaillie’s second album, *Crosswinds* (Green Linnet, 1987), provides an example of the group’s earlier music and humble beginnings. The cover of the CD contains a rather plain painting of several boats in a harbor (see Figure 6.1), while the CD jacket contains no lyrics, pictures, or notes whatsoever. The only information included in the jacket is some minimal credits and a list of songs without any indication of source, arranger, or composer. Eleven tracks are included on the album, of which five are traditional instrumental numbers and the other six are vocal songs, with texts exclusively in Gaelic. Without the aid of liner-note information listeners cannot discern whether these are traditional Gaelic songs or new compositions.

Most of the vocal tracks sound somewhat traditional, with fairly simple instrumental accompaniment, but several present more romanticized versions of the tunes, often with some electronic instrumentation. With slow-moving melodies, dominated by sustained notes, many of the pieces showcase the dreamy resonance of Matheson’s voice, enhanced with substantial reverb. In “An Ribhinn Donn,” for example, Matheson begins singing unaccompanied but is eventually joined by a subdued synthesizer accompaniment that plays a thinly textured harmony with a slow harmonic rhythm. Midway through the piece a solo recorder plays an instrumental interlude. The timbre of the recorder is similar to that of Matheson’s voice, and after its interlude it continues in a duet with Matheson. The slow tempo, the instrumentation, and Matheson’s singing style provide a modern setting that transforms a traditional song into something that sounds more New-Age.

In a later album, *The Blood is Strong*, the tracks sound more progressive than those in *Crosswinds*. The album was released in 1995, with tracks that were originally written as soundtracks for three TV movies produced and broadcast in Scotland: *The Blood is Strong*,

![Fig. 6.1. Album cover of Capercaillie’s Crosswinds (1987).](image)
The difficulty of obtaining the lyrics has been somewhat alleviated recently by their being posted on Capercaillie’s web site, although most casual listeners probably do not take the time to research the lyrics. Prince among Islands, and Highlanders. The cover and liner notes reveal more marketing savvy, with colorful images, including a striking picture of Matheson with digitally enhanced, haunting green eyes. Brief liner notes are included by Ted Brocklebank, the producer of the TV movies, and the liner notes include background information about the pieces on the album, including indications about their sources. Unlike the majority of their albums, The Blood is Strong contains more original compositions than traditional arrangements: six pieces are arrangements of traditional songs, while the remaining nineteen tracks are newly composed. Conspicuously lacking from the liner notes are lyrics, although a minuscule note at the end of the liner notes indicates that lyrics can be obtained by writing a letter to a post office box. The lack of written lyrics and a translation of the Gaelic texts highlights the fact that for the group the lyrics do not need to be understood to be enjoyed.

The pieces display a wide range of styles. Several of the traditional arrangements sound similar to the tracks on Crosswinds, as all have Gaelic lyrics, but some, such as “An Gille Ban,” adopt a more modern sound with the use of pop rhythms. Others, such as “Oh Mo Duhthaich,” have more of a New-Age sound, as heard in the use of very heavy reverb. The newly composed vocal numbers all have Gaelic lyrics and thus maintain a traditional connection, although they are presented with a New-Age sound (a recurring paradox in Celtic music, which I will discuss later in connection with Dougie MacLean’s music). The instrumental tracks include a wider variety of styles, including some that sound very traditional. Others, such as “Callinish, Picts, Celts,” are dominated by synthesized sounds that resemble the electronic style of the group Mannheim Steamroller. The pieces on the album also display a variety of emotions. Most evoke a sense of melancholic longing, but others provide upbeat contrasts. This range of styles and emotions reflects the pragmatic function of the pieces as film music.

Many consumers of this product will not know about these movies, however, and will thus be unaware of the scenes and action that the music was meant to accompany. All of the TV movies were originally broadcast in Scotland, and cannot be purchased or located abroad without

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35 The difficulty of obtaining the lyrics has been somewhat alleviated recently by their being posted on Capercaillie’s web site, although most casual listeners probably do not take the time to research the lyrics.
great difficulty. Yet the album has a global distribution and can be purchased at most local media outlets, \textsuperscript{36} so that the album has taken on a life of its own, independent from the film.

For a final review of Capercaillie albums I now turn to \textit{Dusk till Dawn: The Best of Capercaillie} (1998) (see Figure 6.2). This album resembles their early \textit{Crosswinds} album in its intermingling of traditional instrumental songs with traditional arrangements and newly composed songs. The music on the album is generally even more progressive than the music on the two albums just discussed. All of the vocal songs exhibit a more pop and global style of music,\textsuperscript{37} while the instrumental numbers remain fairly true to the traditional style. What is new on this CD are several songs in English, although the majority of vocal songs are still sung in Gaelic. Like the previous CDs, lyrics are also not included in the liner notes, again showing that the lyrics and the meaning of the songs seems to be of little importance to Capercaillie and their audiences.

The arrangements of traditional songs on the album sound completely untraditional. Many have a heavy pop beat, and some have been re-mixed with numerous special recording studio effects. The metamorphosis from traditional to modern pop shows a marriage of the old and the new, and often a complete transformation of the original purpose of the music.

The song “Tobermory” is an example of the metamorphosis of the old into the new.\textsuperscript{38} The song is based on a traditional Gaelic “waulking song” called “Bheir mi sgriob do Thobar

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Dusk_till_Dawn_cover.png}
\caption{Album cover of Capercaillie’s \textit{Dusk till Dawn} (1998).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{36} For example, I purchased a copy of \textit{The Blood is Strong} at the local Borders store in Tallahassee, FL, on 30 March 2007.


\textsuperscript{38} Coincidentally, Tobermory is a town in the Highlands that Mendelssohn passed through on his way to Fingal’s Cave.
Mhoire.” As a waulking song, the piece was originally a work song for a group of women who sat at a table and beat newly woven wool in order to soften the fabric. These songs were originally sung without accompaniment and involved call and response, where the lead singer would sing a line and then the rest of the workers would sing a vocable refrain.

In the original tune the pentatonic melody rises and falls based on a simple triad, while the refrain (m. 5) emphasizes a descending gesture. Rhythmically the melody is lilting and lively, with numerous dotted rhythms, triplets, and the Scotch snap (see Example 6.1). The tempo of the piece would have been moderately fast, to encourage the workers in their activity and to provide a rhythm for their pounding of the cloth.

In Capercaillie’s arrangement, Matheson’s melody is nearly identical to the traditional tune, with only an occasional rhythmic or pitch variation. Also true to the traditional piece, her voice is joined by other voices in the refrain, although in the recording the voices used are her own dubbed voices in harmony. Matheson sings the traditional Gaelic text about a woman longing to visit her lover on the Isle of Mull:

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Bheir mi sgriob do Thobar Mhoire
Far a bheil mo ghaol an comann
E o hi urabho o hi u
I'll journey to Tobermory
Where my love dwells
E o hi urabho o hi u
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Ex. 6.1. Opening verse and refrain of traditional “Bheir mi sgriob do Thobar Mhoire.” This song is the source for Capercaillie’s “Tobermory.”

A traditional version of the piece can be heard on Flora McNeil: Craobh Nan Ubhal (Temple Records, released 1994). The same piece can also be heard online in the section “Gaelic Song” in Music of Scotland, content by Jo Miller and Sharon Hasson, http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/nq/resources/musicofscotland/GAELIC/agaelic.htm (accessed 5/2/07).

This is my own transcription of the on-line recording listed in the previous footnote.
E o hao ri ri  E o hao ri ri
E o hao ri sna bho hu o  E o hao ri sna bho hu o
E o hi urabho o hi u  E o hao ri sna bho hu o
Far a bheil mo ghaol an comann  Where my love dwells midst
Luchd nan leadan 's nan cul donna  Men with pretty locks of brown hair
Dh'oladh am fion dearag na thonnan  Who would drink the red wine in waves
E o hi urabho o hi u, etc.  E o hi urabho o hi u, etc.

Bheir mi sgríob dhan Lochaidh luachrach  I will journey to Lochy of the rushes
Far a bheil mo ghaol an t-uasal  Where my love the noble one is
E o hi urabho o hi u, etc.  E o hi urabho o hi u, etc.
Gheibhinn cadal leat gun chluasag  I would sleep with you without a pillow
'S cul mo chinn am bac do ghuala  With my head on your shoulder
E o hi urabho o hi u, etc.  E o hi urabho o hi u, etc.

In spite of its authentic features, Capercaillie’s version of the piece does not sound traditional. Instead of being unaccompanied, the piece includes some active accompaniment that provides a very modern effect. The piece begins with a long, sustained note played by a muted trumpet. Once this has faded, a percussive set enters that includes the traditional bodhrán drum. The drums play a complex rhythm, obscuring the duple meter of the piece with irregular patterns of accents in a shifting syncopation. This percussive underlay continues throughout the piece, creating an intricate and complicated interplay with the vocal rhythms.

As a result of the complex rhythms, a regular rhythmic pulse is difficult to detect, so that the waulking song’s own pragmatic meter is dismissed in favor of a more active and entertaining rhythm. Additionally, the tempo of the melody is faster than what the work associated with the traditional waulking song might dictate. With the combination of the instrumental accompaniment, the complex and active rhythms, and the fast tempo, the piece is transformed from a traditional work song to a modern entertainment song. The melody is still the traditional tune, but these layers are sufficient to completely transform its traditional sound.

The contemporary sound is balanced by the use of Gaelic lyrics, which provide an auditory link to traditional music. The sound of the Gaelic language become an easily discernable symbol of Scotland’s culture and history. The symbolism here is the auditory

41 The lyrics and translation are taken from www.capercaillie.co.uk/discography/lyrics/capercaillie (accessed 05/02/07)
impression of the language, not the meanings of the words themselves, since there are no translations in the liner notes. The actual meaning of these texts matters very little, compared to the sound of the language and the knowledge that it is a disappearing language.

Paradox 1 Resolution: The Imaginative Response.

It is the treatment of the Gaelic language as a symbol in its own right that partially explains the attraction of the non-Gaelic listeners to this music. The use of Gaelic to represent something old and fragile provides a significant attraction for audiences who are seeking a connection to the traditions of the past. The absence of written lyrics and the inability of most audience members to understand what is being sung do not create an obstacle, but instead creates a vacuum of meaning that is filled by the imaginations of the listeners. The singing becomes a portal to the past and allows the audience more freedom of interpretation.

Perhaps the best example of this can be found in audience reactions to the album The Blood is Strong. As mentioned earlier, this is a soundtrack album, but it is a soundtrack for movies that many of the audience members have not and probably will never see. Typically, most soundtrack albums are sold as a result of someone having seen a movie and then wanting to purchase the music that accompanied the movie. As a result of seeing a movie first and then purchasing the album, when purchasers listen to the soundtracks they will relate their listening experience to the images and emotions of the film, so that the scenes and actions are inextricably intertwined with their listening to the music in a non-cinematic setting.

For listeners who hear The Blood is Strong without knowing about the movies, the opposite effect takes place. Instead of interpreting the music in relation to the film, these hearers actively or passively apply their own creative responses to the music. Internet chatter about the album shows the imaginative responses of audience members. One individual from Australia wrote that “the music is like a magic carpet that takes you right there [Scotland].” Another reviewer from Spain with a particularly lively imagination wrote that listening to the album was a nearly mystic experience, every time I listen to it I can almost feel the rain and cold wind in my face, I can breath again the Highland air and then I have to completely surrender to the musicians. I firmly believe they–all of them are equally inspired–made a

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42 All of the audience comments included here were found in reviews of the CD on www.amazon.com (Accessed 5/2/07). This particular posting dates from 21 April 2005.
deal with God to sound just like this. It's not just Celtic music, it's a five-sense flight to Scotland, the wild and brave and solitary Northern Scotland. Just sit back and relax . . . because you will enjoy it. For sure.\textsuperscript{43}

The writer speaks of the music actually transporting them in their imagination to the Highlands. Another reviewer writers with even more rapturous specificity:

It evokes views of mountains that rise right out of the sea, of distant fishing boats plying between the isles, and of lonely deserted crofts in remote glens. But it's a complex CD with subtle changes of mood: some tracks are more evocative of cozy taverns with drinking friends gathered round a fireplace. I play this album in my car, to relax after a stressful day at work—and I drive safer and more considerate for it!\textsuperscript{44}

As these reviews demonstrate, the listeners actively interpret the meaning of the music, so that the last reviewer thinks about the Highlands of Scotland and its cozy taverns while driving in his car. His personal listening space becomes an imaginatively transformed place. These reviews provides an intriguing example of the way an audience can provide the dramatic meaning and imagined landscape for music. The other Capercaillie albums incite a similar imaginative response for listeners.

Although Capercaillie’s audiences have the opportunity of personal interpretation, this does not mean that their imagined responses are unconstrained. Instead, their interpretations are prompted and channeled by four factors: 1) the aural symbolism of musical style, 2) knowledge of the Gaelic/Celtic community, 3) exotic connotations of the Gaelic language, and 4) the location of the audiences. These factors, the very factors that attract listeners to the music, likewise influence their imagined responses to it.

The traditional instrumentation of Capercaillie, such as the fiddle, accordion, and pipes, connotes a clear connection to the past and may guide the listener’s thoughts towards a consciousness of history. Other factors, such as the relatively simple pentatonic melodies, as well as the roots-based tonalities and rhythms, also portray a sense of tradition and history that can guide the thoughts of the listener. Aspects such as the distinction between major and minor modalities, the tempo, and the articulation of a piece can convey more emotive aspects, so that each song can elicit its own emotional character, such as melancholy, reminiscence, or joy.

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., posted 13 Aug. 2001. Emphasis added.

\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., posted 5 May 2001.
Audience members who are drawn to a personal or political Celtic identity may also be drawn to the music and the Gaelic language, and this belief in turn conditions their response to the music. Many of Capercaillie’s fans have strong beliefs in a Celtic society and culture, and although only some actually claim residence in a Celtic country, many others have strong Celtic sympathies. In the fans’ forum on the Capercaillie website, one of the categories is Celtic Culture, and a review of the forum reveals that the participants share a sense of Celtic community, drawn together by Capercaillie’s music. These listeners’ interest in the music signifies their citizenship in the imagined Celtic community.

The Celtic Culture forum it is dominated by discussion about the Gaelic language. One of the threads, titled “Gaelic,” has the most hits in this category, with more than 45,000 viewers.45 Many of those who commented in the discussion expressed their interest in learning the language, but none of them professed to know the language more than superficially.

Many of these Gaelic dilettantes have been motivated to learn the language (via books and tapes) as a result of hearing Matheson and other Celtic musicians singing in Gaelic. One contributor wrote, “This was the group and the singer that drew me into Gaelic, Celtic, world folk, and just plain good music when I was just a teenager.”46 At one point in the discussion someone claims that Matheson herself does not speak the language fluently. One of the respondents actually quotes from an interview of Matheson, in which she confesses,

I sang at ceilidhs and mods right through primary and high school and gathered up a wealth of Gaelic materials—but in all this I was never spoken to in Gaelic–my Mum and Gran would only speak it to each other. . . . Obviously I picked up bits and bobs, but this is a constant regret to me as I would love to be fluent—it’s my next project.47

Based on my review of the fan’s forum, the vast majority of Capercaillie’s fan base do not speak Gaelic, nor are many even residents of Gaelic-speaking countries, but they still try to gain entrance to the community by learning the language sung by a singer who sings but does not speak the language herself.

45 www.capercaillie.co.uk/fans/forum (accessed 5/7/07)


47 The original interview was posed on www.rootsreview.co.uk [unknown date], but the website is currently defunct.
In addition to exerting efforts to learn the Gaelic language, which is no small undertaking, several of the participants show significant evidence that their self-concepts are influenced by their Celtic beliefs. Several of the forum participant have even adopted online names that reflect a Celtic persona. Some express their identity with cute names such as Celticprincess12 (from the USA), while others show a more sophisticated, erudite persona through the use of names such as Eilidh (from Lubbock, Texas) or the complex name SeonagBheag NicFhionghuin (from New Zealand). Undoubtedly Capercaillie is not the sole cause of these identity transformations, but the music of groups like Capercaillie certainly feeds these notions and provides access to the Celtic community.

For those listeners who are less committed to a Celtic identity, the Gaelic language has a surface connotation that sounds exotic and thus attractive. The international popularity of Italian opera for the last four hundred years is ample evidence of audiences’ intrigue with foreign songs. The Gaelic language provides a parallel to the romantic connotations of Italian music, conveying a sense of melancholic love, of history, and of tradition that sounds exotic to listeners. As one listener commented, “I too prefer Karen [Matheson] singing in Gaelic - I love the mystery of it all.” Here the listener emphasizes that she would rather not know the meaning of the lyrics, because the sound of the language provides a sense of intrigue. Undoubtedly, many other listeners share in this attraction to the mystery of the lyrics.

The final factor that contributes to the audiences’ reaction to the music is their place of listening. When people listen to Capercaillie, it may prompt them to imagine places of Scotland, but the spaces in which they listen to the music can also inform their response to the music. Most of my discussion has focused on audiences who are distant from Capercaillie and who listen to their music via recorded technology, but many of the fans have heard the group perform at live concerts or at Celtic/Scottish/Highland festivals, and these live performances shape their response and attraction to the music. Listening to music in a live venue requires greater effort and often expense on the part of the audience member than the person listening at home. In traveling and participating in a concert, Capercaillie’s followers become pilgrims who join with

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fellow travelers and unite in their adoration of a symbol. Here the symbol is the music of Capercaillie with all of its layers of meaning. The enclosed nature of the listening space (bounded by a stage, a prescribed seating area, and perhaps walls and ceiling) also unites the audience members, producing a sense of community with fellow audience.

For those who listen to the music in a space distant from Capercaillie and Scotland, the music can be perceived with more flexibility. Listening without the distraction of a visual performance may also enhance the imaginative response of the listener. This is especially the case for those who listen to the music through headphones. Not only do the headphones channel the music directly into the ear, but they also block out external sounds, so that the sounds and events of a particular space may be obscured by what is heard through the headphones. The music partially disconnects listeners from their inhabited space. What is seen and heard influence each other, so that one’s sense of being is influenced by the joint perceptions of recorded sound and sight. Thus they may also become semi-actors engaged in their own activities set against the music of a soundtrack. This may in part explain why some people, when listening to music in isolation, such as the car or the shower, actively sing, dance, and gesture to the music.

Paradox 2: Lamenting Stolen Culture to the Culture Thieves

Other paradoxes also occur when foreign audiences are attracted to Scottish Celtic music. For the next two paradoxes I focus on the Scottish musician Dougie MacLean (see Figure 6.3), first discussing ways his xenophobic nationalistic music has appealed to an international audience, and then exploring the irony of his yearning for the past while using modern technology to spread the message. I will begin by providing some background about Dougie MacLean, and this will lead into a summary of the subjects of his songs, discussion about his audiences, and an investigation of the paradoxes that arise out of this study.

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49 The photograph was taken by Gordon Hotchkiss, and is publicity photo on MacLean’s website (www.dougiemaclean.com, accessed 7/30/08).
Doug MacLean is one of the most recognized musicians in Scotland. MacLean composes and performs “roots-based” songs, and is often grouped in both the Scottish folk music and Celtic music categories. He began his career in the 1970s, performing for a short time with the traditional group Tannahill Weavers and later with the quasi-traditional group Silly Wizard. For the last twenty five-years or so he has performed and recorded as a soloist or with his own band. In the early 1980s he also formed his own recording studio, called Dunkeld Records, and since then he has recorded and produced 18 albums, along with several songbooks and DVDs. In addition to his numerous albums, of which several have gone gold, he maintains a steady schedule of concerts in Scotland and around the world. He has appeared in and written music for several documentaries, television shows, and Gaelic movies, and has been a regular guest on Fiona Ritchie’s Celtic radio show Thistle and Shamrock.

**MacLean and his songs: themes of place.** Perhaps the greatest symbol of his popularity at home is the success of his song “Caledonia,” which is often referred to as Scotland’s “unofficial anthem.” MacLean’s use of Caledonia for the title connotes a nation with deep historical roots, and it invokes political signification of a place more ancient and permanent than its domineering neighbor England. Although the title Caledonia was bestowed by another menacing oppressor (the Romans), and Scotland itself was not a unified country at the time, modern Scottish nationalists regularly use the term to signify the construct of an ancient nation in opposition to a more modern England. The patriotically titled “Caledonia,” however, avoids overt politics and instead describes a native Scot outside of Scotland longing for his homeland. In the text MacLean recalls constantly moving and “traveling hard.” But having been away too

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50 MacLean’s website describes him as “one of Scotland's most successful, respected and popular musicians. Scottish Songwriter, Composer and 'magical' Performer, he is also a fine guitarist and fiddle player. From his home base in Butterstone near Dunkeld in the beautiful Tay Valley in Perthshire Scotland, MacLean tours the world with his unique blend of lyrical, 'roots based' songwriting and instrumental composition.” (www.dougiemaclean.com; accessed 3/13/2007).

51 Mendelssohn also passed through the town of Dunkeld at the beginning of his journey into the Highlands.

52 According to his website, he has produced six gold albums (over 500,000 copies sold).

53 Many newspaper articles and music reviews mention this about MacLean. For one instance see Ann Donald’s review “Rural Image: A SongVision Symphony by Dougie MacLean,” Critics Choice (8 Jan. 2006); full review included on MacLean’s website (accessed 15 April, 2006).
long, he admits, “in these last few days I’ve been afraid That I might drift away.” His remedy for this homesickness is to imagine his homeland:

   So I’ve been telling old stories, singing songs
   That make me think about where I came from.

In the chorus he speaks to Scotland, personified as a loved one:

   Oh but let me tell you that I love you,
   And I think about you all the time
   Caledonia you're calling me, and now I'm going home
   For if I should become a stranger
   You know that it would make me more than sad
   Caledonia's been everything I've ever had.

Considering the personal and heart-felt nature of his address to Scotland, it is easy to see why this song has been adopted by many within Scotland.

   “Caledonia” has also garnered international interest from non-Scots. MacLean regularly tours the United States, Canada, Australia, and Europe and has achieved significant international popularity. The song is frequently discussed in the various web-chatter of Internet blogs and forums, demonstrating that “Caledonia” is also a favorite among foreigners. To address this paradox, it will first be useful to discuss some of the prominent themes in MacLean’s music.

   MacLean’s songs reveal his personal beliefs and experiences. Many refer to specific places within Scotland, some reminiscing about his family relationships. Some songs portray his feelings about Scottish politics, while others advocate environmental conservation. Two general themes arise out of these personal topics: first, his connection to the land, and second his call for the preservation of Scottish culture. The following discussion will provide some examples of these themes, while not forgetting the question of why these songs about a specific place would appeal to those outside of that location.

   The song “Caledonia” has already been mentioned as a song about the nation of Scotland. Other songs refer to specific places within Scotland. For example, several songs refer to the

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54 The lyrics come from MacLean’s website www.dougiemaclean.com. I have generally tried to reproduce the lyrics as they appear on his website, although I have occasionally made minor editorial corrections.
place of MacLean’s grandfather’s birth, in a rural Highland area called Cadderley. Other songs mention the Perthshire area, where his father gardened and farmed, and it is in the same area, outside a picturesque little village called Butterstone, where MacLean continues to reside.

In the song “Solid Ground” he describes a rural haven splashed with sound and vivid visual imagery:

Down the Buckney den the burn crashes
Brown from the Autumn spate.
The spreading hazels rustle as they bend
And sway as they laden wait.
My fathers they have walked this road
And now I know, and yes didn’t they know . . .
We stand on Solid Ground on Solid Ground

The personal song describes a specific place where his fathers have walked the same roads.

A similar setting is described in the song “Garden Valley.” It describes the narrator, MacLean, sitting at a stranger’s table, missing his wife Jenny and their home. The lyrics set up a contrast between an unnamed urban setting and his garden valley. He describes the city as a “black and white” place, filled with bright city lights and countless strangers. In this crowded urbanscape he says he is “afraid and all alone.” But remembering his “garden valley” evokes comforting images of lush farmlands:

But in the darkness struggle cold
I think about a garden valley
Gentle as the leaves unfold
Singing out across the Tay
Distant and so far away
There is no peace for me.

The lyrics parallel those of the song “Caledonia.” Both are songs about homesickness, and both involve remembering his homeland. His reminiscing about the “Garden Valley” does not bring peace, however, as if the immediate comfort of the image is dispelled by its distance, leaving him longing even more for home. MacLean’s “Garden Valley” is not some imaginary pastoral place, he is singing of his home in the Perthshire area.

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55 He sings about this in “Eternity.” On the CD Live he mentions that this is where his grandfather is from. He also mentions Loch Etive, which is in the same area, in the song “Turning Away” from the same album.
In addition to the theme of personal places in his music, many of his songs focus on agricultural uses of land. In the song “Strathmore” he again describes the valley where he lives, this time reminiscing about farming the land when he was younger. The song begins unusually, with the sound of a tractor engine. It then fades as the acoustic guitar begins to play, but the tractor sound returns at the end of the piece. MacLean is a tractor afficionado and collects and repairs old Ferguson tractors. He owns a 1947 Ferguson tractor, nicknamed “Wee Fergie,” that he has even taken on stage with him. He uses the tractor as a way to protest modernization and to criticize modern society’s wasteful consumption.\footnote{At the 2005 Celtic Connections festival he included the tractor as a prop for his \textit{Rural Image} concert. He calls the work a \textit{SongVision} Symphony, that includes a small orchestra, dancers, and projected images. Ann Donald’s review, “\textit{Rural Image: A SongVision Symphony} by Dougie MacLean,” \textit{Critics Choice} (8 Jan. 2006). T. J. McGrath, “Dougie MacLean: Roll on, Wee Fergie,” \textit{Dirty Linen} 126 (Oct./Nov. 2006).}

In his songs about the places of Scotland he often advocates a return to a more traditional way of life: a return to “the good old days” when people were more connected to the land. He often condemns modernization, and praises agricultural work as a remedy for the ailments produced by modern society. In the chorus to his song “Solid Ground” he states,

\begin{quote}
\textit{It’s the land. It is our wisdom.}
\textit{It’s the land. It shines us through.}
\textit{It’s the land. It feeds our children.}
\textit{It’s the land. You cannot own the land.}
\textit{The land owns you.}
\end{quote}

The lyrics seem to address the inhabitants of a specific area in Scotland, not the foreigners who gaze at it or visit it as tourists. For MacLean a connection to rural land produces a healthy identity for its inhabitants, and in this song he claims that when he walks through the Perthshire countryside he is on “solid ground.”

MacLean never states that only those with connections to Scotland can have a meaningful culture. In fact several of his songs describe Australians and Native Americans and their connection to their own lands.\footnote{For examples see “Singing Land,” “Rite of Passage,” and the album \textit{Real Estate}.} In the majority of his songs, though, he speaks about his native home and decries those who would steal his people’s land and culture.
His songs mention particular places within Scotland, but he has more directly verified his references to the land in interviews and commentaries about the songs. In one interview with a journalist he candidly expressed his connection to his native area:

I grew up here in rural Perthshire, and I think my songs reflect that. They are based in rural experience rather than city experience. I'm a great champion of rural things. I feel a great connection with the land, and that's where my music comes from.\(^{58}\)

People within Scotland, and likely many others throughout the United Kingdom, are somewhat familiar with the Perthshire area. But probably few listeners outside of Scotland would recognize the place name and attach any specific meaning to it. For those who do not know about the Perthshire area of Scotland, MacLean’s descriptions provides an introduction to the area. But he does not merely provide an objective description, he creates an image and a place for them.

**Sounding the loss-of-culture alarm.** Because of his personal connection with rural Scotland and his beliefs about the value of being connected to land, Dougie MacLean’s songs often preach environmental conservation. He particularly criticizes outsiders who move into rural Scotland and buy up the land. In the song “Thundering In,” for example, he speaks out against wealthy outsiders who have moved in, “taking plenty” and “plundering” Scotland’s resources, saying “And you’ll drink till our cup is empty, Blindly thundering in.” His criticisms are not simply about urban sprawl, they are more consequential, because he believes that by taking someone’s land the outsiders also “steal their pride” and destroy their identity. This sheds more light on his homesick songs “Caledonia” and “Garden Valley.” In both songs he is away from his homeland and senses a change coming over him, afraid that he might “drift away.” Separated from his homeland of Scotland he is no longer “on solid ground,” but is instead unmoored from his identity-producing land. When on one’s native land one is “on solid ground” physically and psychologically. In contrast, separation from one’s land causes a loss of identity and produces a sense of disorientation.

He claims that outsiders who move to rural Scotland can never truly understand the land. In the song “Homeland” he lambasts wealthy strangers who have “come up here to end your days [retire].” He sings,

\(^{58}\) Kenny Mathieson, Interview with Dougie MacLean “Exploring Rural Vision,” *Arts Journal* (http://www.hi-arts.co.uk/may05_interview_dougie_maclean.html; May 2005; accessed 3/01/07).
And you love our running rivers and you love our
Quaint little Highland ways
You sold your house in the city - you put it on the
Market and you did so good.
Now you've bought a little piece of something
That you don't understand and you've misunderstood
But I'll tell you about the land that you play on
What you've gained is our ultimate loss
I'll tell you about the soil you decay on.

The song concludes,

Yes Sir you may have paid good money for it
but no it’ll never belong to you.

In these and other lyrics the value of place is intrinsically intertwined with its history, its people, and their traditions, so that foreigners, or urbanites, who relocate to rural Scotland can never truly understand their new place of habitation. Later in the song he mocks them for even trying to fit into the culture:

You’ve bought yourself miles of tartan, and you wear it
Round about middle, and you wear it on your head.
You stand there a proud believer in a vision of the truth
That’s long gone dead.

A foreigner always remains a foreigner, and he mocks those that “dress up” like Highlanders and pretend that they participate in the culture.

In addition to songs about the preservation of his native land, MacLean also expresses distress about the decline of Scottish tradition in modern times. He sometimes criticizes the Scottish people for this loss of culture, because they are caught up in modernization. In the song “Turning Away” he complains that the Scottish have essentially sold their birthright in seeking for modern acceptance. He sings,

in searching for acceptance they had
Given it away
Only the children of their children know
The price they have to pay.
In the chorus, as reflected in the title, he sings that the decline in culture is marked by their “turning away from here [i.e., the land].” Place again is a central feature in relation to culture, for the loss of tradition is linked with separation from place.\(^{59}\)

But generally the loss of place and culture is blamed on foreign hegemonic powers. MacLean does not explicitly name these outside powers in his lyrics, but considering Scotland’s history, England is obviously implicit, and some of his texts do direct blame towards England. The song “Eternity” again champions themes of agriculture while lamenting the loss of land and tradition:

I will sow this seed again.
I will work this field and know it’s never-ending.
I’ll lose a son to the German wars—
We’ll lose the land he was fighting for;
Lose our language to greed and gain—
All washed away by a southern rain
Washed until we can’t see
What our destiny meant us to be.\(^{60}\)

Scotland’s southern neighbor was partially responsible for laws enacted during the eighteenth century that forbade the use of the Gaelic language,\(^{61}\) and the wealthy English have, since the days of Queen Victoria, thought it fashionable to own homes in the Highlands.

Although MacLean does not name the English in his songs, he has openly discussed this in an interview with June Skinner Sawyers:

And because of the way the English came up here and took over, they made the Scottish people feel embarrassed by their culture. The reason I speak English and not Gaelic is because my family were made to feel embarrassed about their own language.\(^{62}\)

MacLean’s feelings of animosity towards the English are common among the Scottish, and his songs provide a way to protest perceived past and current abuses.

\(^{59}\) “This Line Has Broken” may also allude to the loss of tradition, although it is less explicit.

\(^{60}\) Emphasis added.

\(^{61}\) Although this part of history is highlighted, it is often not mentioned that Lowlanders in Scotland were also in favor of some of these laws.

Malcolm Chapman has observed that Celts have throughout history always been set up as the Other in opposition to the dominant culture. Modern participants in the Celtic movement in Britain, however, have actively sought ways to distinguish themselves as the peripheral Other. A key differentiation is made between the Celts, whose domain is rural, historical, emotional, and spiritual, and the English, who are regarded as modern urbanites without feeling (see Table 6.1). Chapman has observed that in distancing itself from larger powers the Celtic movement constantly looks to past traditions and continually warns that Celtic culture faces imminent extinction at the hands of some threatening power. MacLean’s portrayal of Scotland, struggling against modernization and encroaching outside forces, fits in Chapman’s schema about Celtic identity.

Table 6.1. Celts compared to dominant powers, based on Chapman’s comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Celtic Other</th>
<th>vs.</th>
<th>Dominant Powers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical</td>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional &amp; Spiritual</td>
<td>Without feeling</td>
<td>Without feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faces imminent extinction</td>
<td>Destroys traditions</td>
<td>Destroys traditions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MacLean’s “Stolen” exemplifies the Celtic movement’s tendency to decry lost culture. In the chorus we hear,

It’s been stolen from me
Taken never to return
Rendered blind I cannot see
Back along the shining way we’ve come

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64 In *The Celts: The Construction of a Myth* Chapman provides several examples of authors, beginning with Tacitus, in 98 C.E., continuing with Donald Munro in the sixteenth century and Hugh Blair in the eighteenth century, who have all lamented the “impending disappearance of ancient practices in the Scottish Highlands and Islands” (98).
What has been stolen leads to figurative blindness. In a later verse he provides more details about the object of the theft:

No more the ancient tales to tell
Words to lead our children on
Left unopened where they fell
All our timeless wisdom now has gone
And so the children bear the loss . . .
Of what’s been gained and what’s been lost.

Scottish culture has been taken. The lyrics of another verse also indicate that land has been stolen and its inhabitants displaced. Loss of place is revealed when he describes destitute poetry robbed of place:

How can the lover’s heart proclaim
Once the poetry has gone.
These naked words are not the same,
Stranded in some empty place we don’t belong.

MacLean refers to Scottish people who have been removed from their lands, and once displaced their words have become “naked” of meaning. Place supplies meaning to culture and identity to its people.

MacLean uses a mixture of traditional and modern instruments in his recordings to reinforce the themes of his lyrics. He often uses synthesizers to create an ethereal, breathy sound that connotes some ancient ambience. Often these synthesized sounds act as a drone, set against the acoustic guitar and voice. “Stolen” provides an interesting example, with its combination of traditional and synthesized sounds. The piece fades in with synthesized drone on a bass pitch that remains constant throughout the piece. Over this drone appears a repetitive rhythm played by the bass guitar. Against this pitch and rhythm drone appears a synthesized knocking sound that fades, reappears, and fades again, creating a percussive echo that acts as sonic symbol of fading tradition. An additional synthesizer layer is intermittently added that suggests some primordial, microtonal vocalization. The percussive echo subsides when the guitar and voice enter, but it recurs in interludes. These synthesized sounds create a sonic representation the stolen “ancient tales” and “timeless wisdom,” about which the song complains. Later in the piece traditional connotations are reinforced when Uillean pipes play at the climax of the piece and then at the
final musical refrain. Its appearance coincides with the return of the percussive echo, so that both
the new and the old sounds help MacLean lament lost culture.

In writing music and lyrics that lament lost tradition, MacLean is sounding the alarm of
lost culture. But in sounding the alarm, the song “Stolen” also highlights some contradictions
that threaten to confound the central message of his music. In his songs MacLean decries the
loss of culture and he decries the incursion of outsiders who have made their claim on his
secluded corner of Scotland. But in addressing his complaint to an international audience, he
simultaneously reveals the appeal of Scotland to a vast horde of foreigners.

The majority of these foreigners will not buy up land in Perthshire, but it is not
uncommon for his fans to express a desire to visit Scotland. As one contributor to his touring
blog from 2006 commented, “Your music makes me long to see Scotland, which I hope to visit
one day.” The extent to which the music attracts tourists or land-buyers is difficult to quantify,
but it does attract the gaze of foreigners. MacLean himself has acknowledged bewilderment
about the foreign interest in his music. In one interview he confessed, “It’s a strange
phenomenon, the American interest in things Scottish.” But in another interview he proposed
an explanation:

I believe strongly in writing about what you know, so I don't really write about urban
experience, because that's not me. You have to write songs about what you know, and
what you understand within yourself. I couldn't write about working in a coal mine or
working in a shipyard, it has to come from my own experience, and if you do it right, it
will have a universal message anyway.

MacLean produces personal, intimate portrayals of his experiences and beliefs, and he rightly
believes that the personal has universal resonance.

Paradox 2 Resolution: Imagining Scotland as Their Own

I want to propose several additional explanations for foreigners’ attraction to these songs
about Scotland. Behind the explicit subjects of Scotland’s places there lie implicit, more general
themes that appeal to an international audience. MacLean’s songs have a flexible quality that

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facilitate their acting as symbols. His songs often depict a particular place or subject that serves as the physical manifestation of the symbol. Underneath the physical surface area the less apparent themes hold special meaning for multi-national audience members. The external symbol in much of MacLean’s music is Scotland and its culture, while inner but more poignant themes include 1) the search for a historical heritage, 2) the description of family relationships, 3) the protest of oppression, and 4) the sense of being grounded. The external subjects of MacLean’s places, family, and events become physical manifestations of something meaningful for a wider audience.

A sense of history. Many of the songs already discussed express a consciousness of being part of a larger scheme of time. MacLean often describes the land as eternal, or at least very old. The song “All Together” describes his participation as a child in a local gathering, known as a caliegh, involving singing and dancing in a social hall in the Perthshire area. The song describes the unity of the community as they dance “all together, all as one.” One of the verses describes a sense of timelessness while engaged in social music making: “We’ll stay forever here within these timeless walls.” Obviously the building is not a timeless structure, but the image evokes the timelessness of tradition. This deep history gives his modern actions a historical pedigree with roots that securely attach him to something larger and more meaningful than his own temporal existence.

MacLean says that he wrote the song “Eternity” considering the perspective of his grandfather, who was a Gaelic-speaking Highlander. The lyrics of the chorus describe the speaker/singer standing on the shore of a Highland loch, looking at the mountains that surround him:

Standing here on Cadderley
Between the burn and the turning sea
I gaze across at these golden hills
I’m looking all the way to eternity.

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68 Some of MacLean’s “timeless” songs include “Feel so Near,” “Eternity,” “All Together,” “It Belongs to Us,” and “Eternally You.”
Here again McLean reveals his reverence of place and history. The Scottish land is represented as ancient, even eternal, so that the land provides a historical heritage. This connection informs his identity, telling him that he is an extension, or progeny, of a timeless land.

Often his view of time is on a more human scale, as he refers to the memorable past. In such instances the bygone years are extolled as times of virtue, while he depicts the present as suffering from an erosion of values. In the song “Strathmore” he extols the virtue of hard work:

| I took a place in a farm in Strathmore |
| To bring the harvest home and watch the nature roar |
| And we'd rise at dawn in the sun's clear light |
| In the sun's clear light |
| And we'd start our day with a sleepy head |
| Sat on the big wood bench in the tractor shed |
| And the grieve would say lads it's time to go |

In his glowing reminiscence he recalls times when the Scottish people were united by tradition and hard, agricultural labor. This message of tradition and timelessness attracts listeners who may be caught up in what seems like a time-obsessed culture. For those living in a fast-paced urban environment, MacLean’s Scotland seems simple, unrushed, and timeless.

**Family relationships.** Some songs recall MacLean’s childhood and focus on his relationship with his father. In the “Scythe Song” he describes his father working in the fields with a scythe and teaching young Dougie how to swing the tool. Several of the verses end with the refrain:

| O this is not a thing to learn inside a day |
| Stand closely by me and I’ll try and show the way. |

MacLean could have chosen to describe any number of farming tools used by his father, but the scythe is an icon of old agricultural practices, and his combining the images of old-fashioned labor and a nurturing father provides two attractive themes to audience members who do not know MacLean’s father nor how to use a scythe, but nonetheless long for such teaching and relationships.

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69 Some songs about the past include “Talking with My Father,” “Scythe Song,” “It belongs to us,” “Homeland,” and “Strathmore.”
Similar themes occur in “Talking with My Father.” MacLean describes walking with his father “across these gentle Perthshire hills,” recalling memories and learning from his father’s wisdom:

> It’s timeless mysteries that we gather  
> To make the memories that we fill. . . .

> In this place where life's learnt thunders  
> In this place where time holds still  
> In this place of harmony and wonder  
> and values not of gold fulfil.

MacLean’s topics of land and time are here intertwined with themes of family. These universal themes also appear in the songs “Garden Valley” and “This Love Will Carry.” In each of these songs family members provide nurturing and stability.

For most audience members, the theme of unified, nurturing families seems attractive. In an age of increasingly fragmented families, high divorce rates, and latchkey kids, MacLean’s portrayal of his family may stoke a yearning for similar relationships. His message is reinforced by the fact that his wife helps operate Dunkeld Records and that his son plays in his father’s band.

**Resisting hegemony.** Although recalling the past brings reassurance, MacLean often protests past abuses of the Scottish people, as already mentioned. The songs decry the incursions of wealthy southerners and foreigners, but for audiences the universal theme of protest against social injustice overrides specifics of place and history. Listeners may overlay their own personal experiences on the subjects about which MacLean complains. MacLean’s somewhat vague texts facilitate this transfer of meaning. In none of his songs does he explicitly say, “those English tyrants have made our traditions silent.” His allusions, such as “a southern rain,” are more subtle, explicit to the Scottish, but not for many foreigners. If his protests were explicit tirades his success in England would likely be diminished, and it would be unlikely that he would have received special recognition at a ceremony in Buckingham palace honoring UK musicians such as Eric Clapton and Phil Collins.⁷⁰

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⁷⁰ This information is listed in the biography of MacLean’s found on his website (www.dougiemaclean.com, accessed 2/10/2007).
MacLean also occasionally protests oppression outside Scotland. In his rendition of Burns’s “Slave’s Lament,” he recalls the slave practice in the American colonies, and in “It Belongs to Us” he speaks out against societies who have desecrated or disregarded the ancient stone monuments that exist in many places in the world. He alludes to the English taking of the Scottish Stone of Destiny, but he also decries similar acts of thievery that have taken place in other lands. His website quotes him as saying, "These sites and symbols are important to those people who treasured them, and to their descendants. They give a sense of our connection to our past and a corner-stone to understanding who we are . . . the theft and destruction of these things and places is a tragedy and leaves us with a sense of loss." MacLean’s protest songs deal primarily with a loss of values, traditions, and, as shown here, historical continuity. While they protest injustice, they also bemoan the loss of past traditions. Such themes of protest have application well beyond the borders of Scotland.

**Grounded: a sense of place.** These universal themes of time, family, and protest are constantly linked to MacLean’s beliefs about the land. The place of Scotland becomes a symbol of being grounded. MacLean’s connection to Scotland is explicit, as has already been examined, but his yearning for a land unencumbered with society’s corruption appeals to a wide audience. His depictions of farming in “Strathmore” and of yearning for his “Caledonia” and his “Garden Valley” reveal his need to be connected not only to the earth but to a specific place. His desires are expressed pointedly in the song “Solid Ground,” when, after describing his attachment to the Perthshire area, he says in the chorus “We stand on Solid Ground on Solid Ground.” This need is also felt by many audience members, and Scotland fills the emotional need to be grounded in a definitive location.

Movement around the globe has left many without a personal sense of connection to their place of residence. MacLean’s songs of longing for place may thus have a particular appeal for many who feel transient because of their participation in the global flow of people. MacLean’s expression of a desire to be grounded also relates to the themes of time, family, and cultural preservation. All of these themes inform one’s identity and reflect the human desire to be

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However, MacLean’s universal message about being grounded is not without consequences. He sings about being grounded, but he also proclaims a message of Scottish nationalism that seeks to secure the borders of its identity. He bemoans Scotland’s loss of land and culture in particular, but because of his international audience he is lamenting stolen culture to the listeners who themselves are the culture thieves. In singing these songs his music attracts international audiences that override these borders. The result is that Scotland as a nation becomes deterritorialized. Not only are its images broadcast across its borders, but those living outside of its borders appropriate its image as their own.

Arjun Appadurai, in *Modernity at Large*, has written about post-modernity’s “plurality of imagined worlds.” He focuses on the global migrations of various peoples and the ways that they maintain a sense of connection to their homeland. He describes the resulting “deterritorialization” of national identities, as ethnic groups become increasingly scattered and as ethnic groups maintain ties across borders. He states, “Deterritorialization, in general, is one of the central focuses of the modern global world. . . . deterritorialization creates new markets for film companies, art impresarios, and travel agencies, which thrive on the need of the deterritorialized population for contact with its homeland.”

MacLean’s audiences may likewise be described as a deterritorialized population, in that they are a scattered global population with a longing to identify with some ethnic roots. But describing MacLean’s fans as a diaspora population is not literally accurate. Undoubtedly, many of his fans have Scottish ancestry, but for most American fans the linkage is generationally distant and diluted by many other non-Scottish roots. These audience members generally do not live in communities of Scottish immigrants, although some might venture to buy a ticket to a

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73 Ibid., 37-38.

74 Based on my observations at a concert and from reviewing web chatter, the majority of MacLeans audiences seem well educated and middle aged (although he has some younger and older age fans).
local Celtic or Highland festival, and most would not celebrate Scottish traditions, as one would expect from a diaspora community.

Appadurai’s description of deterritorialized populations applies well to diaspora communities. In the present context, however, it would be more accurate to modify one of his phrases to broaden the borders of his deterritorialized populations: “deterritorialization creates new markets . . . which thrive on the need of the deterritorialized population for contact with a homeland.” MacLean’s mobile, middle-class audiences may be searching for contact with some type of homeland, and the imaginary place of Scotland appears to fill this need for many.

People listening to MacLean’s music on their ipods or some other electronic device, separated from the geographical space of Scotland, can imagine the place of Scotland and link their personal identities to some solid ground with a rich cultural heritage. Appadurai affirms the power of the imagination, spurred by modernity’s electronic media, saying, “[Electronic] media . . . offer new resources and new disciplines for the construction of imagined selves and imagined worlds.” Participating in MacLean’s music, his audiences can embrace a deep-rooted history and a sense of belonging to something permanent. Scotland may thus metaphorically represent their own imagined family farm: and it may become their own “garden valley.”

Paradox 3: Praising the Past with the New

MacLean champions themes of resisting change, preserving culture, and safeguarding Scottish land, but some of his subjects, his media of communication, and his marketing to an international audience stand in tension against what he so passionately advocates. While he sings of being rooted in the past, he openly embraces modern technology, even at the expense of tradition.

His use of electronic instruments, heard in songs such as “Stolen,” seem incongruent with his reminiscences about pre-modern times. Longing for the “good old days” is clearly one of his central themes, but clearly he does not mind using modern instruments to remind his audience of these old times. The irony is further compounded by his embracing modern recording technology, showing that he really is a man of modern times. This may sometimes seem

75 Ibid., 37-38.

76 Ibid., 3.
hypocritical, as seen in “Thundering In,” when he pointedly accuses newcomers into Scotland of disregarding traditional means of storytelling and music in favor of modern recording devices:

Once the old ones used to meet  
With stories told before the fire  
The whisky tasted sweet.  
You did not want them to be seen  
Now you’re polishing the vinyl  
And your video machine

According to these lyrics he favors the live performance over artificial reproductions on various media devices, and his fairly rigorous touring schedule provides evidence of his preference for live performance. Yet through his years of performing MacLean has used all of the available electronic media to extol the days before such modern conveniences.

As the owner of his own recording studio he has turned out a steady stream of albums of his music and that of other musicians. His songs can also be purchased and downloaded electronically from his on-line web store, as well as from some major distributors such as Amazon.com. He has also built an active Internet presence, including a fairly extensive website that includes his blogging about recent tours, a forum for his ardent fans, and a site on the ubiquitous MySpace.com. MacLean has embraced modern technology to sound the alarm of corrupt modern culture.

His criticism of modern agricultural practices contains similar contradictions. In the “Scythe Song” he depicts a traditional farming implement, but in “Strathmore” he uses the sound of a tractor, and in the multi-media Rural Image he used his 1947 Ferguson as a prop on stage (see Figure 6.4). His use of an old Ferguson is surprising, since the older engines generally consume more gas and produce more pollutants than modern tractors engines. He could have used the image of a horse-pulled plow, but apparently the older tractor is historical enough to represent the “good old days.” The tractor represents

Fig. 6.4. Dougie MacLean and performers with the tractor Wee Fergie in Rural Image, Jan. 2006.
MacLean’s old days and memories, and the small tractor represents the small-time farmer, in contrast with the modern farm corporation with its massive, enclosed, and often air-conditioned tractors.

Paradox 3 Resolution: Global Swirl

In pointing out these contradictions I do not mean to undermine MacLean’s sincerity, nor to overshadow the value of the music for his audience members. In distributing his message he has pragmatically used what is available. Furthermore, the electronic technology can actually accentuate the meaning of the music. For example, reverb is perceived as a natural sound that suggests space, and the use of synthesized sounds employed in “Stolen” can evoke images of the past that could not be achieved with acoustic instruments. The ubiquity and ease of using electronic media also makes the technology nearly transparent for the listener, so that the paradox is minimized.

The apparent disregard of this paradox may actually foreground the value and meaning of the music for MacLean’s audiences, for it shows that the themes of place, family, and tradition are more important than the media of communication. The personal stories and songs outweigh the listeners’ physical disconnect from the land and their use of modern technology to seek out the old.

Perhaps the references to place and the modern distribution even amplify the value of the music, because MacLean’s post-modern audiences are often displaced and un-grounded. His audience members are full participants in globalism–many relocate for jobs, they blog, they visit his website, they buy CDs and download songs on-line, and they travel to Scotland. They are immersed in the global swirl of information and relocation, and so they grasp onto something in the mix that seems firm, something that seems grounded, something that protests the threatening commotion, and something that connects them to a history and a place.

Summary and Conclusion

Music has a special capacity to excite the imagination and to create a sense of community. For the international audience, listening to Celtic music with electronic media can
provide membership in a larger community. In his article on Celtic music Chapman says, “Music . . . offers a pleasant and easy participation for the dilettante. . . . Music provides an entry into the practices and sentiments of ethnic belonging, for those whose commitment is small, and who require entertainment rather than effort.” Participation in a Celtic community can be established by imagining a scattered but unified audience. These ties may be strengthened via participation in the various forums and communication venues on the Internet.

For others, the music may be used passively as a tool to create a certain ambience within a home, office, or car. When used as background music, the music may create a sound atmosphere that connotes a sense of calmness, exoticness, and tradition. Thus the music about the place of Scotland may be used to influence one’s emotional state.

Interpreting the music of Capercaillie, Dougie MacLean, or some other Celtic group in one’s personal space and applying it to one’s own situations may consequently transform one’s sense of personal place and personal identity. Some actively interpret the meaning of the music, imagining their own plots and Scottish landscapes and joining themselves with the Celtic community, while others allow the music to influence their mental state. In both situations the music of Celtic Scotland, separated by physical space from the place of listening, can transform the place inhabited by the listener. As listeners perceive the world and their sense of space under the emotional influence of the music, their inhabited spaces become transformed with a hue of Scottish place.

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77 Chapman, “Thoughts on Celtic Music,” 36.
CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Scotland began to capture the imagination of the Western world beginning in the eighteenth century. Before this time Scotland had seemed merely a remote European country with little to offer politically, militarily, or culturally. For the English, the Scottish were nemeses who harassed their northern border, and for the French, they were pawns to be played in its political games with England. James Boswell’s journal contains a representative account of the Englishman’s disdain for the Scottish people in 1762:

At night I went to Covent Garden and saw . . . a new comic opera, for the first night. . . . Just before the overture began to be played, two Highland officers came in. The mob in the upper gallery roared out, “No Scots! No Scots! Out with them!,” hissed and pelted them with apples. My heart warmed to my countrymen, my Scotch blood boiled with indignation. I jumped up on the benches, roared out, ‘Damn you, you rascals!,” hissed and was in the greatest rage. . . . I hated the English; I wished from my soul that the Union was broke and that we might give them another battle of Bannockburn.1

By the nineteenth century Europe was completely fascinated with Scotland. In the decades following Boswell’s experience the tensions between England and Scotland had gradually cooled, and Scotland’s status rose in Europe. Evidence of this change of heart can be seen in Queen Victoria’s embrace of her ancestral ties to Scotland and her adopting it as her favorite retreat. The change in relationships was in part because of Scotland’s intellectual contributions at the end of the eighteenth century, and also because the aesthetic climate began to favor the landscapes, histories, and people of Scotland. Europe’s embrace of Scotland was, though, largely a result of Scotland’s artistic output. Literature and music about Scotland portrayed and created an image of a place—whether based in reality or fiction—that captured the imaginations of foreigners, and that continues to inform connotations of Scotland today.

The purpose of this dissertation has been to examine the images of Scotland portrayed in music, to discuss the spaces in which the images were performed and the audiences to which the performances were given, and to propose explanations for foreign audiences’ attraction to these images. A summary of these three issues helps to explain the West’s enthusiasm for the place of Scotland.

**Scotland’s Images**

Just as the reception of Scotland has changed over time, the image has also been dynamic. Literature by Scottish natives has been most significant in propagating a romanticized image, but authors have varied in their depiction of their homeland. Macpherson depicted the Highlands as a sublime, almost supernatural place, inhabited by heroic warriors. Burns’s poetry portrayed an intimate, picturesque country that imbued Scotland with a local color through his use of colloquialisms. Scott’s many poems and novels spread throughout the world an image of a semi-exotic nation with a fascinating history. Indeed his historical novels, which were groundbreaking for the time, created a lasting image of Scotland that is a mixture of fact and fiction.

The various Scottish songbooks of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries propagated a folk image for the nation. Collections often included crude humor and innuendo and maintained a sense of simple music, although the folk-quality varied in each songbook. Allan Ramsay’s *Tea-Table Miscellany* (1724) contained texts that were infused with a certain Scottish roughness, while still reflecting the vogue of neo-classical pastoralism. William Thomson’s *Orpheus Caledonius* (1725) dressed up many of Ramsay’s works by including music with a simple accompaniment and published them in lavish books. James Johnson’s and Robert Burns’s *Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803) emphasized the folk quality of the songs in their attempt to preserve Scottish music. George Thomson, in his *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* (1793-1841), had the lofty aspiration of turning the folk songs into art songs, employing some of the greatest composers in Europe to set the tunes. In all of these songbooks Scottish publishers helped shape and spread an attractive image of a simple, but attractive place.

Operatic depictions of Scotland, particularly those presented in Italy, avoided Scottish
folk music and instead portrayed a romanticized place. Rossini’s *La donna del lago* (1819) presented a land of beautiful scenery, gorgeous women, and heroic men, while Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835) rendered a different image, one of darkness and tragedy. The sensuous *bel canto* singing in both operas enhances the drama and spectacle of the Scottish characters, and hence the place.

Orchestral settings portray the most abstract representations of place, but Mendelssohn’s *Hebrides* Overture (1832) and “Scottish” Symphony (1842) manage to produce very moving impressions, as seen in contemporary reviews. The music evokes a stormy, tempestuous location, and a place of martial drama and pastoral beauty. These musical images are framed in narrative structures that present Scotland in novel-like fashion.

More recently, Scottish Celtic music has contributed its own variation on the image of Scotland. Celtic groups like Capercaillie and Dougie MacLean often tend to emphasize the “deep past” of Scotland. In this music they portray a rural, spiritual place, inhabited by Gaelic speakers, all of which are under threat of cultural extinction. These Scottish composers and performers actively seek to represent Scotland as a place of Otherness.

**Performance Spaces and Audiences**

The audiences of these musical works and the performance spaces also influence the portrayed image of Scotland. Song from the eighteenth-century books were performed in the drawing rooms of the wealthy, and by their nature the songs were passive portrayals of Scotland. Songs that were contained in a book from which they could be performed at will, and performed within the inner-room of an often urban residence, tamed and distanced the native Scots, who for the wealthy had only recently been considered rebel savages. Like the landskip and the Claude glass, the songbook was a framed, picturesque image of Scotland.

In the opulent opera theater of San Carlo, Naples, the place of Scotland became a land of spectacle. In an age when operas were produced and dismissed at an astonishing pace, only the most entertaining works were ever performed more than a hand full of times. The fact that *La donna del lago* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* were enormously successful during the nineteenth
century demonstrates their high entertainment value for a very demanding Italian audience. Presented in the theater and through the virtuosity of operatic singing, the natives of Scotland became extraordinary characters and the land a place of spectacle.

When Scotland was performed in the “sacred space” of the concert hall for an elite audience, its image was transformed from a land of simplicity and picturesqueness to a place of grandeur. Focused on the sounds and actions of the orchestra and its shaman-like conductor, without text to guide their imagination, audiences could infuse the sound world of Scotland with their own, personal images.

Electronic reproductions of Celtic music allow for a variety of “performance” spaces. The variety of spaces obviously influence the imaginative response to the Celtic sound constructions of Scotland, but because of the portable nature of these devices, personal “performance” spaces can also be transformed. Listening to Celtic music while driving, walking, or viewing some other landscape can influence one’s perception of one’s own space, so that Scotland, played in the headphones, can be re-emplaced in a completely different setting.

**Audience Attraction**

Understanding the images that have been transmitted through these various works and in these diverse settings helps partially explain the reason for a foreigner’s interest in Scotland, but an awareness of the way the music functions in the lives of audiences members is, perhaps, most illuminating. For songbook purchasers Scottish songs helped satisfy the desire of the wealthy to experience simplicity and innocence in their otherwise artificial world. The songbooks brought the countryside and its inhabitants, at least temporarily, into their own private spaces.

In the more formal spaces of the theater and the concert hall the image of Scotland took on different functions. Images in both the operatic and the orchestral settings appealed to audiences who wanted to escape from the mundane aspects of their lives. In the theater the purpose of the music was primarily entertainment, but the Scottish settings of *La donna* and *Lucia* also allowed for vicarious explorations of the extremes of life: exquisite happiness or ghastly despair. In the more formal concert hall, orchestral settings of Scotland served a
ritualistic function that allowed audiences to transcend their profane world and enter a paradisiacal world, albeit an imagined one.

Modern Celtic music attracts audiences because of its connection to the past and its portrayal of an Other place. On a more personal level, for those who feel culturally disconnected in modern times, Celtic music gives them access and membership to a Celtic community and provides some “solid ground” to shore-up their identity.

For those outside of Scotland, gazing at its image, Scotland is a place of ideals, of beauty, and of intriguing stories. It is an exotic place, located on Europe’s fringe, but conveniently close. It is a land of splendid scenery, magnified by its isolation. It is a place that is wild but tame, and pastoral while sublime. It is a place whose inhabitants are both civilized and primitive. It is a place with an intriguing history that satisfies the romantic longing to reminisce.

Ultimately, Scotland, for many, has had a personal appeal. Projected through musical, textual, and dramatic representations, Scotland becomes an ideal other-world. Attraction to Scotland can primarily be attributed to the fact that the created and propagated images satisfy personal longings for some place and some time other than one’s own. Scotland has become a place of escape, whether through reading a Scott novel, singing a bawdy pastoral love song, listening to a beautiful or mad woman sing in a theater, hearing echoes of Fingal’s Cave in a concert hall, or putting on headphones and imagining another, more attractive world.
### APPENDIX A

**CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SCOTTISH SONGBOOKS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editor/Compiler</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Place and Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Playford, John</td>
<td>The English Dancing Master</td>
<td>1650, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playford, John</td>
<td>Musick’s Delight on the Cithern</td>
<td>1666, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playford, John</td>
<td>Apollo’s Banquet</td>
<td>1669, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D’Urfey, Thomas</td>
<td>Choice New Songs</td>
<td>1684, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Purcell</td>
<td>Musick’s Handmaid (1689)</td>
<td>1689, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D’Urfey, Thomas</td>
<td>Wit and Mirth: Pills to Purge Melancholy, 6 vols.</td>
<td>1698-1720, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playford, Henry</td>
<td>A Collection of Original Scotch Tunes</td>
<td>1700, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watson, ?</td>
<td>Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems (1706, 1709, 1711)</td>
<td>1706-11, [n.p.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsh, ?</td>
<td>The Merry Musician</td>
<td>1716, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsay, Allan</td>
<td>Scots songs</td>
<td>1718, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsay, Allan</td>
<td>The tea-table miscellany: or, a collection of choice songs, Scots and English.</td>
<td>1724, Numerous editions (1733, 9th edition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsay, Allan</td>
<td>Musick for Allan Ramsay’s Collection of Scots Songs</td>
<td>1726, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig, Adam</td>
<td>Collection of the Choicest Scots Tunes</td>
<td>c. 1730, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsh, ?</td>
<td>Caledonian Dances</td>
<td>c. 1730, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author, Title</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Year, Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urquhart, Alexander</td>
<td>Aria di Camera . . . a Choice Collection of Scotch, Irish and Welsh Airs</td>
<td>1730, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munro, Alexander</td>
<td>Collection of the Best Scots Tunes (instrumental collections)</td>
<td>1732, Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooke, ?</td>
<td>Caledonian Dances</td>
<td>1738, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswald, James</td>
<td>Curious Collection of Scots Tunes</td>
<td>1740, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswald, James</td>
<td>Collection of the Best Old Scotch and English Songs Set for the Voice, with Accompaniments, and thorough Bass for the Harpsichord</td>
<td>1742, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGibbon, ?</td>
<td>Collection of Scots Tunes</td>
<td>1742, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswald, James</td>
<td>A Collection of Curious Scots Tunes</td>
<td>1742, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswald, James</td>
<td>Caledonian Pocket Companion</td>
<td>1745 -59, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnson, John</td>
<td>Caledonian Dances</td>
<td>c. 1748, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macdonald, Alexander</td>
<td>Ais-eiridh na sean chanan Albannaich</td>
<td>1751, [n.p.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnan, T. And B. Collins?</td>
<td>The muses banquet; or, a present from Parnassus. Being a collection of such English and Scots songs, ...</td>
<td>1752, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadler, John (printer)</td>
<td>Apollo’s cabinet: or the muses delight. An accurate collection of English and Italian songs. . . Also complete Musical Dictionary, and several Hundred English, Irish, and Scots Songs, without the Music.</td>
<td>1757, Liverpool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bremner, Robert</td>
<td>Thirty Scots Songs</td>
<td>1757, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bremner, Robert</td>
<td>A Curious Collection of Scots Tunes</td>
<td>1759, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross, J.</td>
<td>The polite songster: a collection of above three hundred of the most celebrated English and Scots songs.</td>
<td>1760, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacock, Francis</td>
<td>Fifty Favourite Scotch Airs</td>
<td>1762, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Gordon, W.</td>
<td>The lark: being a select collection of the most celebrated and newest songs, Scots and English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millar, A.</td>
<td>A collection of one hundred and fifty Scots songs. To which is added, an explanation of the Scots words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, ? and ? Wotherspoon</td>
<td>The Ancient and Modern Scots Songs, Heroic Ballads, etc. Now first Collected into one Body, from the various Miscellanies wherein they formerly lay dispersed. Containing likewise, A great Number of Original Songs, from Manuscripts, never before published.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coke, William</td>
<td>The blackbird, containing one hundred and twenty-four songs, Scots and English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyack, George</td>
<td>A collection of original Scots songs, poems &amp;c. By various hands. To which are added, several favourite English songs, some of which never before printed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bain, John</td>
<td>Vocal Musician . . . Select Scots and English Songs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, A.</td>
<td>The goldfinch, or new modern songster. Being a select collection of the most admired and favourite Scots and English songs, cantatas, &amp;c.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray, James</td>
<td>The Scots nightingale: or, Edinburgh vocal miscellany. A new and select collection of the best Scots and English songs; ... and a great number of valuable originals, by Drs. Beattie, Goldsmith, ... Collected by James Murray; with the friendly assistance of the first-rate musicians in Edinburgh.</td>
<td>1778, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Charles</td>
<td>St. Cecilia; or, the lady's and gentleman's harmonious companion: being a select collection of Scots and English songs; ... Together with a set of favourite catches and glee:s also ... toasts and sentiments.</td>
<td>1779, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillies, John</td>
<td>The cheerful companion, a collection of favorite Scots and English songs, catches, &amp;c.</td>
<td>1780, Perth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinkerton, John</td>
<td>Scottish Tragic Ballads</td>
<td>1781, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phorson, W.</td>
<td>The union song-book: or, Berwick vocal miscellany. Being a choice collection of the most celebrated Scots and English songs, never before published. Likewise a variety of favourite airs and catches. To which is added, toasts, sentiments, and hob-nobs, &amp;c. &amp;c. &amp;c.</td>
<td>1781, Berwick, London, Edinburgh (1797)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham, James</td>
<td>The modern syren; or, enchanting songstress. Being a new and select collection of the most admired and favourite English, Scots, and Irish songs, catches, glee:s, ... most of which are sung at the theatres and public gardens: ...</td>
<td>1781, Sunderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson, P.</td>
<td>St Cecilia; or, the British songster. A new and select collection of the best Scots and English songs. Many of which never before in print.</td>
<td>1782, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Date, Location</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Reinagle, Alexander</td>
<td>Collection of the most Favourite Scots Tunes</td>
<td>1782, Glasgow</td>
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<td>McGlashan, ?</td>
<td>Scots Measures, Hornpipes, Jigs, Allemands, Cotillons</td>
<td>1782, [n.p.]</td>
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<td>Herd, David</td>
<td>Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads, etc., 2 vols.</td>
<td>1783, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robertson, J.&amp; M.?</td>
<td>The linnet; or, cheerful companion. Being a select collection of the most favourite and admired Scots and English songs.</td>
<td>1783, Glasgow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balwin, R., J.Haws, T.Amon, and J. Sayer?</td>
<td>The new entertaining frisky songster; or, muses holiday. Being a collection of favourite English, Scots, and Irish songs, catches, &amp;c. Containing the best of those ... from the year 1700 down to the present time, ...</td>
<td>c. 1785, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Alexander</td>
<td>The musical miscellany; a select collection of the most approved Scots, English, &amp; Irish songs, set to music.</td>
<td>1786, Perth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, J.</td>
<td>Musical Miscellany</td>
<td>1786, Perth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galloway, Robert</td>
<td>Poems, epistles and songs, chiefly in the Scottish dialect. To which are added, A brief account of the revolution in 1688, and a narrative of the rebellion in 1745-46, continued to the death of Prince Charles in 1788.</td>
<td>1788, Glasgow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corri, Domenico</td>
<td>A New &amp; Complete Collection of the Most Favourite Scots Songs ... with proper Graces and Ornaments peculiar to their Character, likewise the New Method of Accompaniment of Thorough Bass</td>
<td>1788, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author/Editors</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Date/Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thompson, ?</td>
<td>Caledonian Muse</td>
<td>c. 1789, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Napier, William</td>
<td>A Selection of the most favourite Scots Songs.</td>
<td>1790-94, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawrie and Symington?</td>
<td>Antient and modern Scotish songs heroic ballads &amp;c in two volumes ...</td>
<td>1791, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbani, Peter</td>
<td>A Selection of Scots Songs: Harmonized and Improved with Simple, and Adapted Graces, 6 vols.</td>
<td>1792-1804, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, William</td>
<td>Twelve Original Scotch Songs</td>
<td>c. 1792, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Macpherson, James and Thomas Brabazon Gray</td>
<td>McPherson’s Collection of Ancient Music in the Poems and Songs of Ossian, Son of Fingal, Sung by bards of old in the age when the poems and songs were composed and as retained in the Highlands of Scotland to this present day. Adapted by Thomas Brabazon Gray.</td>
<td>1793, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macdonald, Patrick</td>
<td>Highland Vocal Airs</td>
<td>1794, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritson, Joseph</td>
<td>Scotish Song in two volumes</td>
<td>1794, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walten, John</td>
<td>Complete Collection of Scots Songs</td>
<td>1796, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale, Joseph</td>
<td>Dale’s Collection of Sixty Favourite Scotch Songs</td>
<td>1796, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aitken, John</td>
<td>The Scots Musical Museum (this is not a copy of Johnson’s)</td>
<td>1797, Philadelphia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brash &amp; Reid</td>
<td>Seven favourite songs, Scots and English. By Robert Burns, Peter Pindar, and others.</td>
<td>c. 1797, Glasgow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Author/Composer</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Publication Year, Location</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Niven, D.</td>
<td>The Glasgow miscellany A select collection of Scots &amp; English songs By Ramsay, Burns, Ferguson, &amp; others.</td>
<td>c. 1800, Glasgow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott, Walter</td>
<td>Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border</td>
<td>1802, Kelso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webbe, Samuel Jr.</td>
<td>Twenty-Four Original Scots Songs</td>
<td>1802, Liverpool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton, John and John Ross</td>
<td>A Select Collection of Ancient and Modern Scottish Airs.</td>
<td>1803, [London]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton, John and John Ross</td>
<td>Three Sonatas for the Piano Forte, the adagios and rondos of select Scottish Airs</td>
<td>1804, [London]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haydn, Joseph</td>
<td>Six Admired Scotch Songs arranged as Rondos</td>
<td>1805, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whyte, William</td>
<td>Collection of Scotch Airs</td>
<td>1806-07, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elouis, Joseph</td>
<td>Selection of Favourite Scots Songs, 2 vols.</td>
<td>1807, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oliver, ? and ? Boyd</td>
<td>Cabinet of the Scottish Muses</td>
<td>1808, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bishop, Henry</td>
<td>Selection of Scottish Melodies</td>
<td>1812, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraser, Simon</td>
<td>Airs and Melodies peculiar to the Highlands</td>
<td>1815, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campbell, Alexander</td>
<td>Albyn’s Anthology</td>
<td>1816-18, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bishop, Henry</td>
<td>Original Scottish Airs</td>
<td>1818, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hogg, James</td>
<td>The Jacobite Relcs of Scotland (sic.)</td>
<td>1819-21, Edinburgh</td>
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<td>Smith, Robert</td>
<td>Scottish Minstrel</td>
<td>1821-24, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kinloch, George R.</td>
<td>Ancient Scottish Ballads Recovered from Tradition</td>
<td>1827, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunn, Finlay and John Thomson</td>
<td>Vocal Melodies of Scotland</td>
<td>1836, Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnbull, John and Patrick Buchan</td>
<td>Garland of Scotia</td>
<td>1841, Glasgow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson, John</td>
<td>Songs of Scotland</td>
<td>1842, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Author/Editor</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Date/Place</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Graham, George F.</td>
<td>Songs of Scotland</td>
<td>1848-49, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunn, Finlay</td>
<td>Orain na’h Albain</td>
<td>1848, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamilton, William</td>
<td>Select Songs of Scotland</td>
<td>1848, Glasgow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomson, Andrew</td>
<td>Selections from the Melodies of Scotland</td>
<td>1851, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surenne, John T.</td>
<td>Songs of Scotland</td>
<td>1852, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack, David</td>
<td>Lyric Gems of Scotland</td>
<td>1854-58, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christie, William</td>
<td>Traditional Ballad Airs</td>
<td>1876-81, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewart, Charles</td>
<td>Killin Collection of Gaelic Songs</td>
<td>1884, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balfour, David</td>
<td>Ancient Orkney Melodies</td>
<td>1885, London</td>
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<td>Greig, John</td>
<td>Scots Minstrelsie</td>
<td>1892-95, Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Gems of Scottish Songs</td>
<td>1894, Boston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moffat, Alfred</td>
<td>Minstrelsy of Scotland</td>
<td>1895, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ford, Robert</td>
<td>Vagabond Songs and Ballads of Scotland</td>
<td>1899-1901, Paisley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>The Scottish Orpheus: A Collection of the Most Admired Songs of Scotland</td>
<td>1900, New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>The Ceilidh Song-book: 60 of the Best Songs in Gaelic</td>
<td>1969, Glasgow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leodhas, Sorche Nic</td>
<td>A Scottish Songbook</td>
<td>1969, New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>A Song of Scotland</td>
<td>1972, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>The Old Scots Songs, with Music</td>
<td>1983, Newtongrange, Scotland</td>
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<tr>
<td>McPhee, George</td>
<td>The New Scottish Songbook: Forty-five traditional Scottish Songs</td>
<td>1987, Oxford</td>
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</table>

**Sources**
The list excludes subsequent editions and authorized and unauthorized reprints. The following works and databases were my primary sources for the songbook list.


Florida State University Libraries.


_World Cat_ Database.
## APPENDIX B

**KNOWN EDITIONS OF ALLAN RAMSAY’S *TEA-TABLE MISCELLANY***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of publication</th>
<th>Date of Publication</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>1724</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edinburgh (Musick for Allan Ramsays Collection of Scots Songs)</td>
<td>1725</td>
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<tr>
<td>[n.p.], 2nd edition*</td>
<td>172?</td>
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<tr>
<td>[n.p.], 3rd Edition *</td>
<td>172?</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>[n.p.], 4th Edition</td>
<td>172?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>1729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London, 5th Edition</td>
<td>1730</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edinburgh, 6th Edition</td>
<td>1732</td>
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<tr>
<td>[n.p.], 7th Edition</td>
<td>173?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[n.p.], 8th Edition</td>
<td>173?</td>
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<tr>
<td>London, 9th Edition</td>
<td>1733</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>1734</td>
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<tr>
<td>London, 10th Edition</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1760</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>1761</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edinburgh, 13th Edition</td>
<td>1762</td>
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<tr>
<td>London, 12th Edition</td>
<td>1763</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
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<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>1765</td>
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<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>1768</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dublin, 14th Edition</td>
<td>1769</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aberdeen, 15th Edition</td>
<td>1775</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>1775</td>
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<tr>
<td>[n.p.], 16th Edition</td>
<td>17??</td>
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<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>1783</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kilmarnock, 17th Edition</td>
<td>1788</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edinburgh, 18th Edition</td>
<td>1793</td>
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<td>Berwick</td>
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<td>Dublin</td>
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<td>Glasgow</td>
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<td>1875</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>1876</td>
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</tbody>
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*There is only one extant copy of the first edition, and there are no extant copies of the second and third editions. See Henry George Farmer’s comments in his foreword to the reprint of James Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum* (Hatboro, Pennsylvania: Folklore Associates, 1962), xi.

**Sources:**

World Cat Database
APPENDIX C

SAMPLE LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS TO ORPHEUS CALEDONIUS, 2ND EDITION.

Complete List of British Peerage
Duke of Argyle
Duke of Athol
The Duchess of Athol
Earl of Albermarle
Duke of Bedford
Duchess of Bedford
Duke of Buccleugh
Earl of Buchan
Lord Blantyre (lots of lords and ladies)
Earl of Chesterfield
Earl of Cardigan, 2 sets
Earl of Cholmondeley
Earl Cowper, 2 sets
Earl of Cromertie
Duke of Devonshire
Earl of Denbigh
Earl of Exeter
Countess of Exeter
Countess of Eglintoun
Duchess of Hamilton, 6 sets
Duke of Hamilton, 5 sets
Earl of Hartford
Countess of Hartford
Earl of Hume
Earl of Inchiquin
Duke of Kent
Duke of Kingston
Earl of Kintore
Duke Leeds
Duchess of Leeds
Earl of Loundon
Countess of Londonderry
Duchess of Malborough

Duke of Montrose
Earl of Morton
Earl of Marchmont
Countess of Murray
Earl of Montrath
Lord Viscount Muskerr
Duke of Newcastle
Duchess of Norfolk
Earl of Oxford
Countess of Oxford
Earl of Orrery
Earl of Plymouth
Countess of Plymouth
Earl of Pormore
Countess of Pembroke
Duke of Queensberry
Duchess of Queensberry
Duchess of Richmond
Duke of Rutland
Earl of Rothes
Marquess of Seafort, 6 sets
Earl of Sunderland
Countess of Sunderland, 2 sets
Earl of Strathmore, 6 sets
Earl of Stair
Earl of Shaftesbury
Baron Sparre
Countess of Tankerville
Earl of Wemyss
Countess of Wemyss
Sample List of Non-landed Gentry
Lady Aftley
Lord Blantyre
Lady Byron
Lady Bruce
Lady Cardigan
Lady Delves
Lord Duplin
Lord Erskine
Lady Francis Erskine
Lord How
Lord Hobart
Lady Hillsborough
Lady Murray
Lady Rich
Lord Tullamoore
Lady Robert Walpole

Sample List of Non-nobility
Mr. John Arbuthnot, Banker in Paris
Capt. John Aytoune
Lewis Barlow, Esq; (many esquires)
Robert Adair, Esq;
Austin Ashby, Esq;
Nicholas Baily, Esq; 2 sets.
Charles Brent, Gent. 2 sets
Mr. James Baird
Mr. F. Bailie
John Butler, M.D.
Mr. John Dickson, Surgeon
Mr. George Drumond, Advocate
“Mr. John McGill, Surgeon in Edinburgh”
Mr. William Maitland
Musick-Society at Edinburgh
James Ross, Esq; of Portdeveaux
Mr. Allan Ramsay
George Venables Vernon, Esq; 6 sets
General Wade


*Fun for the Parlour: or All Merry Above Stairs*. London: S. Bladon, 1771.


Jahrmärker, Manuela. *Ossian: Eine Figure und eine Idee des Europäischen Musiktheaters um 1800.* Cologne: Medienservice und Verlag Dr. Lurich Tank, 1993.


Paul F. Moulton was born and raised in Heber City, Utah, where he worked at the family-owned farm machinery store and excelled at the piano, x-country running, and academic pursuits. After graduating from high school he attended BYU–Idaho (Ricks College at the time), where he pursued a major in music. His two years at the college were interrupted by a two year mission that he served for the LDS church in Scotland. He later transferred to BYU-Provo, where he earned his bachelor of arts degree, with a double major in music and humanities. While in school he married his wife Alison. After graduating he taught at Ganado High School, which is located on the Navajo Nation in Arizona. A few years later he and his wife moved to Tallahassee Florida and worked for two years at Girls and Boys Town of North Florida as family teachers, while Paul began working on his masters degree in musicology at Florida State University. He completed his masters degree in 2005 and his Ph.D. in 2008.

Paul’s life experiences have helped shape his academic interests. While primarily interested in historical musicology, he also has an interest in ethnomusicology, particularly Native American music and the music of the Navajo. His historical interests have focused on Europe at the end of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century. His master’s thesis explored the influence of the Poems of Ossian on music, which provided a natural stepping stone for his dissertation topic. His research interests continue to revolve around Scotland and Britain. Lately, due to his work experience and his own family experiences, being the father of five children, he has pursued some studies on music and identity and music’s involvement with parenting and social issues. He has presented papers at several regional, national, and international conferences, and currently has a publication in preparation for the College Music Symposium. He is currently employed as a visiting assistant professor at The College of Idaho.