‘Cultural Jacobitism’ and the Writing of Anne Grant (1755-1838)

by

Robert Sutton

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Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Abstract

This thesis has two principal aims. The first is to continue and develop recent work recuperating the writing of Anne MacVicar Grant (1755-1838). (Perkins 2022; McNeil 2020). My second, and related aim is to frame both Grant's writing and personal identity as an expression of a philosophy that I have termed 'Cultural Jacobitism'. Cultural Jacobitism is defined by the thesis as distinguishable from both the political and dynastic struggle leading up to 1746, which had been largely confined to history in Grant's lifetime because of the failed insurrection. It also differs from the sentimental and nostalgic strain of Jacobitism that emerged after 1746, in the work of Walter Scott and others in that where such a conventional history often represented the inevitability of Jacobitism's demise, Grant offers an alternative interpretation of history that both recuperates and retains certain ideological and cultural elements. While such elements were deemed retrograde and discarded in the wake of the Enlightenment, Grant presents them as a remedy for many of the issues impacting her contemporary modern world.

The thesis necessarily investigates Grant's contemporary popularity and success as an author, as a peer of Scott and other writers of her milieu. It also addresses the subsequent decline of her reputation and neglect in literary history, and builds on recent scholarly articles, chapters, and editions that have begun to redress this neglect (Shields 2012; Hagglund 2017) .The absence of a modern critical monograph on Grant's oeuvre as a whole belies both the extent of her influence and the importance of her interventions in Enlightenment discourse during the early nineteenth century. This thesis aims to address this absence, not only by exploring Grant's published works but also by making use of various unpublished manuscripts. Conveying her experiences through different literary genres, Grant's writing not only straddles generic forms but invites inter- and cross-disciplinary approaches between literary studies, history, and social sciences. I also suggest that even within modern efforts of the recuperation of women writers of the long nineteenth century, Grant's relative marginalisation highlights how she operated outside of conventional classifications of identity. An important part of Grant's authorial identity is the combination of lived experience of both the Gaelic-speaking Scottish Highlands and her childhood in proximity to various marginalised, indigenous and colonial antebellum communities in America. The thesis demonstrates the importance of Grant's anthropological approach to the merits and

vulnerabilities of the societies she observed, and how it was focused through the strengths and insecurities of her own identity.

In summary, through an exploration of Grant's complex orientation towards issues such as nationality and nationalism, politics, gender, and religion, and the consolidation of these issues under the concept of Cultural Jacobitism, I offer an overall reconsideration of how her literary identity and oeuvre can be understood.

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Chronology

1688-89: Catholic James II removed from power and replaced by Protestant William of Orange and Mary II.

1707: Act of Union between England and Scotland.

1715: First Jacobite Rising (the ’15) attempts to restore James Stuart to the throne.

1745-46: Second Jacobite Rising (the ’45) led by Charles Edward Stuart ends in military defeat at Culloden.

1746: Act of Proscription prohibiting Highland dress and cultural practices (repealed 1782).

1755: Jean-Jacques Rousseau publishes his *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men.*

1755: (February 21): Anne Macvicar is born.

1755: (March): Anne is taken to the Highlands to live with her maternal Grandparents.

1757-1758: Anne returns to Glasgow in 1757 to be with her mother following her father's departure to North America. In 1758 Anne and her mother leave to join her father in Albany, New York.

1760: James Macpherson publishes *Fragments of ancient poetry, collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse language*.

1760: Grant receives a copy of Blind Harry's *The Wallace*. She cites this text as the primary motivation behind her emerging Scottish nationalism.

1761 – 1765: Macpherson publishes a series of individual poems, the most famous of which is *Fingal*. The collection is collated and culminates with *The Works of Ossian*.

1768: Anne returns to Glasgow with her father and mother. During her time there, she makes friends and acquaintances that will comprise the bulk of her correspondents in *Letters from the Mountains*.

1773: Anne returns to the Highlands after her father secures the position of Barrack-Master at Fort Augustus near Inverness-shire.

1773: Samuel Johnson and James Boswell complete their tour of the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland with subsequent accounts being published; Johnson's *Journey* in 1775 and Boswell's *Journal* in 1785.

1775-1783: American War of Independence.

1779: (March 29): Anne marries James Grant, chaplain at Fort Augustus.

1785: The first large-scale Highland Clearances are carried out at Glengarry.

1786: Robert Burns's *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* is published.

1789-1799: French Revolution.

1792: Mary Wollstonecraft publishes *A Vindication of the Rights of Women.*

1798: Coleridge and Wordsworth publish *Lyrical Ballads* anonymously

1801: James Grant dies, leaving Grant the sole provider to her surviving children.

1803: *Poems on Various Subject* is published, accruing an impressive number of subscribers (2,300). Grant leaves Laggan to reside at Woodend near Stirling.

1805: Walter Scott's first poem, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, is published.

1806: *Letters from the Mountains* is published.

1808: *Memoirs of an American Lady* is published.

1810: Grant relocates again, this time to Edinburgh.

1811: *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland* is published. This was to be Grant's final major work. Both contemporary-nineteenth-century critics and modern scholars interpret a departure in writing style and authorial agency.

1814: Walter Scott publishes *Waverley* anonymously. This text was keenly digested by Grant, and one to which her authorship had initially been attributed before it was eventually claimed by Scott.

1821, (February): Grant is awarded a medal for her services to Highland culture by the Highland Society of London.

1822: King George IV’s visit to Edinburgh, choreographed by Walter Scott.

1838: Grant dies at Edinburgh and is buried at St. Cuthbert's cemetery.

1896: Grant’s final posthumous text, *Letters Written by Mrs. Grant of Laggan Concerning Highland Affairs and Persons Connected to the Stuart Cause in the Eighteenth Century,* is published.

Introduction

The strongholds of what was called Jacobite prejudice, are now so destroyed by time, forlorn, and untenanted, that, like other ruins, they only serve to vary a prospect, or adorn a description. Considering by what pillars of fortitude they were supported, and by what capitals of honour and gallantry those columns were embellish'd, one might think a view of such ruins well worth preserving.[1]

Anne Grant, a note on 'The Highlanders'

The lens of Cultural Jacobitism

This thesis examines the significant contributions to literature and popular culture in the early nineteenth century made by Anne Macvicar Grant (1755-1838). Emphasis is placed on how Grant's writing represents the marginalised voices of the Scots-Gaelic communities contemporary to her who were disenfranchised and suppressed in early-nineteenth century Britain. Recent scholarly writing around Grant has begun to re-establish that she was an important figure in the context of both the Scottish Enlightenment and Romanticism.[2] As such, her interpretation of the Scottish landscape, Scottish culture and Scottish literature warrants a more in-depth analysis. By linking key themes raised in Grant's oeuvre, I posit that Grant's writing reveals a form of Jacobitism that, while connected to the politics and conflicts associated with the Stuart succession, ultimately became independent of them, developing into a philosophy free from the constraints and limitations of historical events.[3]

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[1] Anne Grant, a note on her poem, 'The Highlanders', in *Poems on Various Subjects* (London: Longman and Rees, 1803), 126. (Hereafter, *Poems*)

[2] Kenneth McNeil, '"Not Absolutely a Native nor Entirely a Stranger:" Anne Grant, Queen Victoria and the Highland Travelogue', in *Scotland, Britain, Empire: Writing the Highlands, 1760–1860* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 147; Soren Hammerschmidt, 'Social Authorship and the Mediation of Memory in Anne Grant's Poetry'. *European Romantic Review* 30, no. 2 (2019): 210; Leith Davis, 'Women, Oral Culture, and Book History in the Romantic-Era British Archipelago: Charlotte Brooke, Anne Grant, and Felicia Hemans', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (Spring 2021): 187.

[3] Michael Connolly, *Jacobitism in Britain and the United States, 1880–1910* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2023); Murray Pittock, *Bonnie Prince Charlie: Charles Edward Stuart and the Jacobite Movement, 1720–2020* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2020); Daniel Szechi, *The Jacobites: Britain and Europe, 1688–1788* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994).

Grant's Jacobitism, while literary and rhetorical, is also clearly distinguishable from the sentimental Jacobitism that ascended following the demise of political and dynastical Jacobitism and which is abundant in many other texts regarded as central to Scottish Romanticism. Both Grant's work and biography undoubtedly contain liminalities and ambiguities indicative of a figure whose work spans several genres. During the course of this thesis, I engage with scholarship that reveals Grant's literary persona to be conscious of its own construction and alert to its contemporary self-representation. Yet also subject to analysis are certain aspects of Grant's writing which, while they may appear disparate or disjointed, can actually be regarded as demonstrative of a synthesis in her work that converges under the term 'Cultural Jacobitism': an alternative philosophical framework to both sentimentalism and Whig historicism.

Prior to defining the term Cultural Jacobitism as presented in this thesis, it is first necessary to offer a brief context of the contemporary prevailing paradigm in early nineteenth century Scotland. The quotation taken from Grant's notes on her poem 'The Highlanders' with which this chapter opens should be read as double-edged. By seemingly capitulating to the romantic notion of the unsuitability of Jacobitism in the modern British state, Grant's statement pre-emptively disarms potential accusations that she is attempting to position such a culture as a viable or appropriate alternative to the status quo. Yet by insisting upon 'a view' of the virtues that underpinned Jacobitism, she necessarily invites readers to explore its concepts and contrast them with the various modes of economic, agricultural, industrial and, above all, cultural forms of 'Improvement' that were increasingly and damagingly ascendant in the period. T. C. Smout offers a concise description of the term:

> The term 'Improvement' like the term 'industry,' had both a moral and an economic meaning and was linked with a historiographic theory of social progress from barbarism to civility. A population might be morally improved by making it sober and industrious: the land might be economically improved by enclosing and liming the fields, exploring for minerals or tapping the power of its streams for an industrial mill.[4]

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[4] T. C. Smout, 'Scotland as North Britain: the Historical Background, 1707-1918', *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 4.

The notion of Improvement, while posited as being synonymous with a better way of life for the majority of society, was in many ways antagonistic to communities (particularly non-English-speaking communities) that did not wish to discard their existing culture. Even before the coining of the term 'Improvement', however, other terms such as 'reform' and 'civility' had been invoked as early as the sixteenth century, for example by James VI in relation to what he perceived as the 'barbarous' Gaelic regions of the British Isles. James's plan for both Ireland and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland was for them to be colonised with Anglophone

> inland subjects, that within short time may reform and civilize the best inclined among them: rooting out or transporting the barbarous and stubborn sort, and planting civility in their rooms.[5]

Clearly then the blueprint for the large scale coerced and forced emigrations of Scots-Gaels, or what would become known as the Highland Clearances, can be traced back to James's reign (as can the history of Union between the crowns). As James was a Stuart monarch it cannot be suggested that the discourse of Improvement he articulated was altogether the precursor of Whig designs. Nevertheless, the Hanoverian-Whig alliance attempted to monopolise the notions of 'modernity' and 'progress' first proposed by James, portraying their Stuart-Jacobite enemies as necessarily retrograde and backward looking. Yet the sentiments offered by Grant in 'The Highlanders' allow us to distinguish Cultural Jacobitism from both the dynastical Jacobitism that depended upon an affiliation with the house of Stuart, and also from sentimental Jacobitism that romanticised it as an ideology confined to the past. Grant's reader is presented with the prospect of a Jacobitism both tangible and viable as an ongoing and competing alternative paradigm.

Exceeding the Confines of Chronology

There are facets of Jacobitism clearly independent both of a reliance on the restoration of the Stuarts and of the interpretation that the ideology is a spent force. Recent studies have

[5] James VI *Basilikon Doron* (London: Wertheimer, Lea and co. 1887 (1599), 43.

explored the way in which interpretations of Jacobitism existing in historical writing are often too narrow, confining it as the ideology of a specific goal at a specific time. Michael Connolly observes how

> the Jacobite movement's aim to restore the Stuarts was only a small part of its program. Instead, the Order of the White Rose, Society of King Charles the Martyr, and others acted as an umbrella for a host of issues concerning to Jacobites. They advocated the restoration of idealism and aristocratic chivalric virtues in the grasping Gilded Age. They opposed the rising new democracy based on Reformation individualism and quantitative mass over qualitative judgment. They attacked the new industrial economy as destructive of the countryside and small towns and degrading to workers, communities, and the natural environment.[6]

Throughout the course of this thesis, many correlations can be seen between the concerns of Jacobitism, as outlined by Connolly, and the sentiments and writing of Anne Grant. Perhaps the most pressing observation of Connolly's, however, and one that perhaps extends beyond the political, is how the Jacobites

> remained consistent to their ideals, even after the movement collapsed, maintaining their earlier principles, expressing them under different circumstances, or searching for an allied cause.[7]

In her writing Grant expresses an enduring and persevering form of Jacobite loyalism: a Jacobitism tied to Scots Highland culture that would remain as long as that culture remained. While such a direct correlation between Jacobitism and the Highlands may be at odds with modern scholarship that presents this automatic connection as the result of mythologising (see Murray Pittock's, *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*) from Grant's perspective, such a correlation is substantive.

As indicated, explorations of Jacobite sympathies in literature tend to fall into two categories: those that emphasise the politics of fully-fledged supporters of the Stuart restoration, and

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[6] Michael Connolly, 'Jacobitism in the Age of Victoria', *Jacobitism in Britain and the United States, 1880–1910*, 139.
[7] Connolly, 'Jacobitism in the Age of Victoria', 139.

those addressing a sentimental Jacobitism which either intentionally or unintentionally served the purpose of rendering Jacobitism an extinct or redundant historical phenomenon. The political and dynastical forms of sympathy are straightforward in that they genuinely lament the unfolding of British history from 1688 onwards and object to the accension of William of Orange at the expense of James II. Sentimental Jacobitism, while concerned with acknowledging the historical presence of Jacobitism and even some of its merits, ultimately positions it as an obsolete movement, founded upon an equally obsolete ideology or set of principles. Murray Pittock observes:

> The sentimentalists endorsed the image of doomed marginality which more dismissive historians had attached to Jacobitism, using it to intensify their celebration of the heroic Celt who always fought but always fell.[8]

This is not to say that the function of romance itself, particularly in the context of Scotland, cannot be concerned with resistance to Improvement. Gerard McKeever describes how in some ways romanticism did function as a pushback against hegemony, channelled through writers such as Walter Scott and James Hogg:

> Positioned both within and without the improving hegemony, Scottish writers seem granted a special clarity of vision on the key historical narratives of modernisation. We can begin, then, to suggest a form of Scottish Romanticism as a modal series of systematic disruptions to improving Britishness. Certainly the application of the nation as romance could provide a powerful means to challenge improving trends […][9]

However, my thesis posits that Grant's Cultural Jacobitism offers something more than romanticism's proposed 'obstruction' or its particularly abstract resistance to Anglophone imperialism. While Grant's writing can be said to incorporate a sense of nostalgia, along with some abstract notions of futurity, present too in her work is a call for a more tangible

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[8] Murray G. H. Pittock, *Jacobitism* (Hong Kong: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1998), 4.
[9] Gerard Lee McKeever. *Enlightened Fictions and the Romantic Nation: Aesthetics of Improvement in Long-Eighteenth-Century Scottish Writing*. PhD diss., University of Glasgow, 2014. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (10958403), 33.

reinstatement of the traditional values, habits and mores of which she had first-hand, empirical experience.

This interpretation of Grant is set against an almost cohesive scholarly estimation of the writer's perceived cultural and political sympathies. In direct commentary on Grant's politics, Pam Perkins has readily identified the writer with Toryism, distancing her from political Jacobitism (and by extension Cultural Jacobitism) in the process, stressing 'Grant was no Jacobite, although she had all the nineteenth-century sentimental interest in the subject'.[10] Such an interpretation of Grant's politics is not without foundation and, indeed there is evidence in her work that corresponds with such a conclusion. However, being the first scholarship to provide an analysis of Grant's oeuvre in its entirety, this thesis allows for the identification of certain patterns in her work that challenge some of these straightforward presentations of her politics.

Murray Pittock has observed that, in the writing of Walter Scott (another perceived Tory), his Jacobite characters must either acculturise or die out.[11] In contrast, Anne Grant's Cultural Jacobitism, with its recollections and invocations of key Jacobite figures and concepts, presents the ideology as a viable (and even preferable) alternative to the contemporary status quo in Britain. There has already been some discernment made between the Jacobite tropes incorporated in Grant's writing and those in the fiction of Scott. Leith Davis observes the contrasting treatment of Jacobitism in the works of Scott and Grant:

> Scott's cultivation of sympathy for the Jacobites in *Waverley* was influenced by some of the same concerns that motivated Campbell [John, 1777-1844] and Grant. But where Campbell and Grant indicate an imaginative role for the Jacobite cause in the contemporary moment, either as revolutionary spirits or as models of loyalty and morality, Scott relegates the cultural memory of the Jacobites to the past.[12]

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[10] Pam Perkins, Pam Perkins, "'Incongruous Things:" Primitivism and Professionalism in the Work of Anne Grant', in *Women Writers and the Edinburgh Enlightenment*, ed. Pamela Perkins and Shannon Branigan (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), 192.

[11] Murray Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 232.

[12] Davis, *Jacobitism and Cultural Memory,* 72.

Davis agrees with Pam Perkins and Juliet Shields that Grant's writing evidences a sentimentality distinguishable from the sentimental aspects of Scott's writing, which are underpinned by pro-Union, pro-Hanoverian tendencies. Rather, Grant drew upon a 'sentimentalism that had been a Jacobite literary trope since the late seventeenth century'.[13] Sympathetic concerns aside, what is imperative here is the end result: Scott's Jacobites are safely confined to history where the Jacobites in Grant's writing threaten to return and disrupt the established order and the future of Britain. The tangibility of Jacobite figures and tropes in Grant's writing establishes certain foundations for this thesis.

Grant's life in the Highlands led her to draw conclusions at odds with many of the theories that underpinned the Enlightenment, particularly the Scottish Enlightenment and its elaboration and extension of the notion of stadial progression, in figures such as David Hume and Adam Smith. This aspect of Grant's writing has already been addressed to some degree by Peter Womack.[14] However, I suggest that Grant's Cultural Jacobitism, aside from its constitutional, political and religious connotations, addressed ordinary readers, and offered itself as a bulwark against the proposed plans for Improvement in Britain. While the ramifications of Improvement were felt throughout the whole of the British Isles, nowhere were they felt more than in the Highlands. While similar reforms of the landscape were enacted in the Lowlands, culturally speaking, that region was arguably closer to the English-speaking metropole than were Gaelic communities in the Highlands. In Grant's writing not only are there arguments against alterations to the Highland landscape and the Improvement of Highland people but, crucially, throughout her work, Grant highlights historical transgressions enacted against the Gaelic-Highland people by an Anglophone hegemony. Rather than being the more sophisticated, preordained inheritors of the three traditional Kingdoms, destined to disseminate high culture across Britain, Grant frames the English as demi-tyrants, highlighting both their foreignness and their mistaken claims to cultural superiority. In observing the culprits responsible for the historical and ongoing transgressions against the Highlands and, more generally, against Scotland, Grant uses both her familiarity of Enlightenment rationales and her subtle but eloquent style of writing to express a Cultural Jacobitism which was persistent and importunate rather than elegiac or sentimental, and powerfully counter-hegemonic.

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[13] Davis, *Jacobitism and Cultural Memory,* 71.

[14] Peter Womack, *Improvement and Romance: The Scottish Highlands in British Writing after the Forty-Five* (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1984), 221-223, ERA—Edinburgh Research Archive, accessed August 20, 2025, https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/3412.

Cultural Jacobitism defined

Although much has been written around the topic of Jacobite culture,[15] an interpretation of Cultural Jacobitism as a viable alternative to the cultural discourse of socio-economic Improvement that emerged in the Scottish Enlightenment has not been sufficiently explored. While Grant acknowledged the unalterable dynastical result of 1745-6 and did not see the restoration of the Stuarts as likely or desirable, she did believe that a restoration of the distinct cultural values associated with Scottish and especially Highland Jacobitism was possible. Grant's writing reveals her view of the prospect that, in nineteenth century Britain, the attitudes of the British establishment, and those held in the British popular imagination towards Scotland and to the culturally Gaelic Highlands more specifically, might be altered. Assessing the thread of Cultural Jacobitism that ties Grant's writing together inevitably leads to an exploration of her literary reputation and how her alignment with Cultural Jacobitism may have impacted her legacy.

While the concept of 'Cultural Jacobitism' might not be prevalent in scholarship in the way it is presented in this thesis, the term itself does already have some currency; though these usages are not coalescent and often refer to distinct aspects of Jacobite culture rather than presenting it as an enduring philosophical framework. For example, in his book *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685–1789,* Murray Pittock includes the term to signal a political ideological component, highlighting 'the essential conservatism of high cultural Jacobitism'.[16] Conversely Christopher Whatley's use of the term presents it as almost interchangeable with a somewhat sinister mode of sentimental Jacobitism, expressing how 'other forces were at work too, weaning Jacobites away from active involvement and towards cultural Jacobitism'.[17] Perhaps the interpretation of 'cultural Jacobitism' closest to its invocation in this thesis however is Peter Mackay's observation that

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[15] See: Davis, *Jacobitism and Cultural Memory*; Murray Pittock*, Material Culture and Sedition, 1688-1760: Treacherous Objects, Secret Places*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013; Matthew Dziennik, 'Whig Tartan: Material Culture and Its Use in the Scottish Highlands, 1746–1815'. *Past & Present*, no. 217 (November 2012): 117–47.

[16] Murray Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685–1789* (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), 110.

[17] Christopher A. Whatley, *The Scots and the Union: Then and Now* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 343.

the 'end of Gaelic cultural Jacobitism' can be dated to around 1770.[18] Though this sense of definitive culmination is at odds with its presentation in this thesis as a positively enduring set of principles, the reference to cultural Jacobitism's 'Gaelic' epicentre is nonetheless conducive with Grant's presentation. Furthermore, while Mackay may identify a culminative date, this does not signify a complete demise as, in his view, the 'imagery and motifs of Jacobitism continue in mutated ways'.[19]

For the purposes of this thesis, then, Cultural Jacobitism is not simply a reflection of either political or dynastical Jacobitism. While the term 'Jacobitism' has undergone rigorous nuance in academia, in the popular imagination, at least, it still arguably elicits connotations and imagery such as Charles Stuart's retreat to France by boat, or the defeat of the Jacobite army at the Battle of Culloden. These notions of political 'defeat' and dynastical 'retreat' are not in alignment with the strands that tie together the Jacobitism of Anne Grant's writing. The term 'Jacobitism' alone, owing to these inevitable connotations, is insufficient and inappropriate for exploring Grant's writing.

Neither can Cultural Jacobitism be regarded merely as synonym for 'sentimental Jacobitism'. In modern parlance this term undoubtedly denotes a sense of irrationality, linking Jacobitism with a romanticised or nostalgic interpretation of history. Again, in academic circles, the terms 'romance' and 'nostalgia' have undergone a fair degree of scrutiny, especially in relation to their perceived subjugation by time. The twentieth century literary critic Georg Lukács interpreted Walter Scott's implementation of 'romance' or 'sentimentalism' as a mode of containment, necessarily isolating important elements of Jacobite culture such as clanship, to a bygone age.[20] While Lukács reads Scott's work as successfully capturing and portraying an interesting past, ultimately he interprets the writer's work as a concession to the inevitability of progress, implying the necessary decline of certain aspects of history. Writers such as Gerard McKeever have nuanced Lukács's interpretation observing the ways in which romance can also function as a redemptive force capable of interrupting and challenging

[18] Peter Mackay, "Lost Manuscripts and Reactionary Rustling: Was There a 'Radical' Gaelic Poetry 1770–1820?," in *United Islands? The Languages of Resistance*, ed. John Kirk, Andrew Noble, and Michael Brown (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2015), 125.
[19] Mackay, "Lost Manuscripts and Reactionary Rustling," 125.
[20] 'Scott was the first actually to bring this period to life, by introducing us to the everyday life of the clans, by portraying upon this real basis both the exceptional and unequalled greatness of this primitive order as well as the inner necessity of its tragic downfall'. Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (London: Merlin Press, 1962), 56.

inevitable futurities.[21] Similarly, while the term 'nostalgia' in modern parlance tends to imply that which is both irredeemable and irrational, Kirsten Daly's exploration of the term's etymology and its application to place as well as time prompts serious reconsideration of its modern connotations.[22] Still, as it stands, the irrationality with which the term 'sentimental' is associated renders it inappropriate when considering some of the philosophical considerations espoused by Grant.

Cultural Jacobitism, then, is a more appropriate lens with which to interpret Grant's writing. While Grant's philosophies cannot be regarded as consistent throughout the course of her life or across the range of her writing, there is at least a sense that what she offers is an (albeit occasionally fragmented) countervailing voice to contemporary philosophies that positioned Jacobitism as defunct and contained to the period between the reign of James VII and II, and the military defeat at Culloden in 1746. Rather, Grant's writing often emphasises the enduring qualities of Jacobitism; a form of Jacobitism free from the chronological parameters imposed by historians and novel writers alike. Linked to Gaelic culture, Cultural Jacobitism predates its namesake—not in an anachronistic or ahistorical way, but by acknowledging that the culture that rallied around James had already existed for centuries. It is also a term more related to philosophy than politics. In much the same way that conservatism is connected to, but distinct from, the Conservative party, and liberalism is connected to, but distinct from, the Liberal party, so too is Cultural Jacobitism distinguishable from Jacobite politics.

The core tenets of Cultural Jacobitism pertain primarily to its favouring of the 'moral' over the 'material'. One way of understanding Grant's proximity to Cultural Jacobitism then is through Peter Womack's interpretation of the writer as 'conducting her unconscious dialogue with [Adam] Smith'. Womack reads the philosophy underpinning Grant's 'The Highlanders', for example, as a 'straight inversion' of Smith's configuration of Improvement.[23] Where Smith can be said in broad terms to favour commerce over community and the necessary ascendance of bonds of friendship over those of kinship, Grant frequently objects to such

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[21] 'Time, crucially, is the implicit fourth dimension of the portrait of Menie Grey, which is waiting to be brought alive again – to be made present – on each viewing. That same condition is true of short fiction for Scott, as part of an interaction in his writing between the linear quality of text and the hetero dox temporality of an image. Gerard McKeever. *Dialectics of Improvement*, *Scottish Romanticism, 1786-1831* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 105.

[22] 'By conceptualising nostalgia as a malady, Grant and Grahame participate in a wider cultural enterprise, rooted in medicine and popularised by Rousseau, which registers as traumatic different kinds of dislocation as symptoms of a rupture in the national body'. Kirsten Daly, '"Return No More!": Highland Emigration and Romantic Nostalgia', *Literature and History*, 9.1 (2000), p. 25.

[23] Peter Womack, *Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands*. (Hampshire and London: Macmillan Press, 1989), 128.

proposals, and it is here where the traditionalism of Cultural Jacobitism can be definitively distinguished from the competing ideologies of both liberalism and conservatism.

Opposing contemporary narrow-minded Tory attitudes towards the working classes, British Catholics, and marginalised communities throughout the world, Grant's philosophical worldview clearly conflicts with ideological conservatism. Grant's regard for the position of women is also at odds with contemporary conservative attitudes. While critical of the gendered approach of Mary Wollstonecraft, Grant nevertheless exhibits in her work a disdain for chauvinism balanced with a penchant for chivalry. For example, in a 1797 letter to her friend Mrs. Fraser, Grant responds to contemporary gendered generalisations about women with one of her own about men:

> I think Swift and Co. or some of those old friends of ours, remark that they have seldom met with superior powers of understanding joined to amiable qualities in a woman, but there was a balance of bad health to be set to the opposite side of the account—Amiable men are very scarce indeed; I do not know a dozen in my whole acquaintance, and alas! I fear the same rule will apply to them.[24]

However, Cultural Jacobitism also contrasts with certain contemporary liberal ideologies and with early-nineteenth century Whig aspirations for colonisation through civilisation. Liberal emphases upon commerce, cosmopolitanism, individualism and the promotion of Laissez-faire are also distinctly at odds with Grant's sentiments. Extending less regard for the uniqueness of local cultures and largely ignorant of the disruption that prioritising economic growth would cause to the environment, ideological liberalism operates in opposition to Grant's (occasionally fluctuating) responses to people and landscape. Again, without underestimating or detracting from the nuanced assessment of Grant as a writer consciously involved in the performative construction of her own literary persona; exploring some of the principles that stand out because of their apparent consistency and recurrence offers a sense of balance to an oeuvre already rich in variation.

Life and Legacy

[24] Anne Grant, *Letters from the Mountains* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1806), 2:240. (Hereafter, *Letters*).

Anne Macvicar Grant was born in Glasgow in 1755, but after only a few weeks there she was taken to the Highlands, where she would remain with her grandparents until she was two years old. Anne was then returned to her mother in Glasgow before eventually setting off to join her absent father, Duncan Macvicar, who had undertaken a position with the British military in Albany, New York. Grant tells a story about how at the age of just two and a half, after hearing people in Glasgow discuss the 'New World' while pointing westward, she had decided to set off by herself in this direction in an attempt to find her father. After steadily progressing for a mile, she was prevented from going any further by a lady concerned to see a toddler so 'neatly dressed' and 'alone in the middle of the street'.[25] Not long after this failed mission to reunite with her father, both Grant and her mother left Glasgow for Albany. It was in America where Grant would live out her childhood, not returning to Glasgow until she was fourteen.

Although she did not particularly wish to leave Albany, Grant soon made many friends in Glasgow and was a happy teenager. When she reached seventeen, however, her father accepted another military post, this time at Fort Augustus in the Highlands. Grant was again forced to relocate, leaving behind the friends that she had made. Although she was not aware of this at the time, the letters that Grant sent to the friends she left behind in Glasgow would become the foundation of her writing career three decades later. Her first major prose publication, *Letters from the Mountains* (1806), opens by detailing the seventeen-year-old Grant's initial struggle but also her determined continuation in the attempt to integrate into Gaelic-speaking communities in the Scottish Highlands, first at Fort Augustus and then while living in the parish of Laggan, after her marriage to the Reverend James Grant in 1779.

The exploration of Cultural Jacobitism through Grant's writing hinges upon her lived experience of the world, not only in terms of her education, literary career and domestic life, but also of the places to which she travelled, the communities she experienced, and the historical events that influenced her writing. Raised in America between a settlement of colonial Dutch immigrants, a British military regiment, and an adjacent Mohawk tribe (in their own language, the tribe commonly referred to in English as 'Mohawk' call themselves

[25] Anne Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence of Mrs. Anne Grant of Laggan*, ed. J.P. Grant, 3 vols. (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1844), 1: 3-4. (Hereafter, *Memoir and Correspondence*)

the Kanien'kehà:ka) with whom she was in contact, Grant spent her formative years seeking the building blocks from which she could construct for herself an identity and a sense of belonging. This was an endeavour that entailed various tribulations and setbacks. Eventually, however, Grant managed to successfully integrate into the Scots-Gaelic community of Laggan. Perhaps then, of all her literary accomplishments and the accolades that Grant received, the most significant to her was the medal she was awarded late in her life by the Highland Society of London for her services to the preservation of Highland culture.[26]

Following the publication of both her *Poems on Various Subjects* (1803) and her *Letters from the Mountains* (1806), Grant experienced a decade or so of international renown, and this translated into a public awareness that while perhaps diminished, was still present by the middle of the nineteenth century.[27] For a period in her life Grant was regarded by her peers not only as a key figure of Scottish Romanticism but also as the principal advocate and defender of Scots-Gaelic culture.[28] During roughly the years 1803-1813, her writing was sometimes given parity with James Macpherson.[29] Yet around the time of 1814, the year of the publication of Walter Scott's first novel *Waverley* (a text that some had attributed to Grant before, to the annoyance of Scott, she had revealed him to be the author), Grant experienced a decline in British interest in her writing. [30] Unpublished material housed at Edinburgh City Archives reveals Grant's later response to this turning point. On 4th March 1831, Grant sent a letter to the publisher John Murray, discussing a previous agreement, apparently overlooked, to reprint all of her volumes

> You were so good as to mention that after five months which you were obliged to devote to pressing engagements you would take into consideration a reprint of my volumes all of which are grown scarce and some entirely out of print. I had intended

[26] George Chalmers to Anne Grant, February 7, 1821, Edinburgh University Library, Heritage Collection, La II, 585, ff. 1–2, MS.
[27] Pamela Perkins and Shannon Branigan, eds., *Women Writers and the Edinburgh Enlightenment*, "Incongruous Things: Primitivism and Professionalism in the Work of Anne Grant," 142, 151–70 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010).
[28] Edward Gallagher, 'Anne MacVicar Grant', in *American Women Prose Writers to 1820*, eds. Carla Mulford, Angela Vietto, and Amy E. Winans (Detroit: Gale, 1999), 155.
[29] Roderick Barron, 'A Highland Lady of Letters: Mrs. Grant of Laggan', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 12 (1965), reprinted in *Mrs. Grant of Laggan. Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism*, ed. Lawrence J. Trudeau, vol. 302 (Gale, 2015), Gale Literature Resource Center, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/H1420119059/LitRC?u=anon~6350cb5a&sid=googleScholar&xid=d07e4f11 (accessed June 5, 2023).68-90, 69.
[30] Harry Graham, *A Group of Scottish Women* (London: Methuen and Co., 1908), 288.

> to have devoted the task of recalling this conversation to Mr. Robert Miller thinking that you might have such a chivalrous regard to female feelings that if you found you could not comply with my request you would rather intimate your refusal to him than to me.[31]

This was not the first occasion that Grant had contacted Murray regarding this issue. Other letters sent to a Revd. Anderson and also to her friend George Thomson confirm Grant's anxieties around her fall from literary favour. However, Grant's third publication, *Memoirs of an American Lady* (1808) had secured for her an American readership that continued to support her both in terms of book sales and privately in more practical ways during the decline of her literary popularity in Britain.[32]

Macpherson and Scott are central considerations for any project with a focus upon Grant, both as influences and as competing figures, not only because these two writers were widely regarded as the two most successful exports of Scottish Romanticism, but also because Grant was socially acquainted with both men and was a keen critic and advocate of their work.[33] In her correspondence and in her essays, she repeatedly suggests that she possessed superior Highland-bardic credentials to either man, and could show a greater loyalty to, and more authentic representation of, Scots-Gaelic culture. In terms of sustained international popularity and subsequent literary-historical impact, Grant was evidently outstripped by both Scott and Macpherson. Yet Grant's writing arguably supports her claims of loyalty and authenticity and allows us to read her affiliation to Highland Jacobitism as less compromised than either Scott or Macpherson. Unlike Scott and Macpherson, who demonstrably participated in the promotion of sentimental Jacobitism and the suppression of political Jacobitism through their nostalgic orientation and Romantic and fictional modes (in part to secure their own literary legacies), Grant attempted to exist as part of Enlightenment culture and a non-fictional and documentary mode of writing while simultaneously advocating for the viability of a way of life that enlightened thinkers had long determined to be redundant.

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[31] Accn 41, L214B, Edinburgh City Archives, NRA (S) 2952/22, Mrs. Grant to Mrs. Wood, letter dated 4 March 1831.

[32] In unpublished MS, George Thomson informs Grant that several American women had been in touch with him enquiring as to how they could offer some financial support to Grant.

[33] Paul Barnaby and Tom Hubbard, 'Literary Impact of Scottish Literature, 1707–1918', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature*, vol. 2: *Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1918)*, ed. Susan Manning (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 38.

Grant was herself connected to political or dynastical Jacobitism, her mother being related to the Stuarts of Invernahyle. Jacobitism, whether for the negative purpose of depicting it as a retrograde cause or the romantic purpose of positing it as the sole surviving remnants of a lost world of pre-modernity, has been traditionally and indelibly linked to Scotland: of the historical issues pertinent to Scotland and Scottish identity and, even more specifically, to the Highland region or *Gàidhealtachd* (the Gaelic-speaking regions of Scotland). As Murray Pittock, most influentially, has shown in his book *Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, caution should be applied to avoid the mistaken conflation between language and geography: not all Highlanders spoke Gaelic and not all Gaelic-speakers resided in the Highlands.[34] But for Grant, there is nonetheless a substantial correlation between geography and culture. Permeating her work is a reverence for both Gaelic culture and also the Highland landscape. Yet what distinguishes Grant's writing from many other writers in a similarly reverent and often romanticising vein, is that interspersed alongside such rhetoric are the empirical observations of a writer with extensive knowledge of the Gaelic-Highland culture about which she writes. Existing as part of a Highland community in the parish of Laggan for thirty years and a practised if not native Gaelic speaker and translator, Grant's writing, in spite of its partialities, includes more direct observation and information based on lived experience than comparable writers who participated in Highland mythologising.

Grant's Cultural Jacobitism is also an international phenomenon that offers an alternative vision to classical liberalism's emphasis on individualism and the accumulation of wealth. Arguably, Grant's time in the Americas influenced her philosophical outlook almost as much as her time in the Highlands did. In *Jacobitism in Britain and the United States, 1880-1910*, Michael Connolly examines how Jacobitism, exported to the Americas from Britain, prevailed into the twentieth century as a viable form of opposition to the 'whiggish tale' constructed around the notion of Improvement. Connolly states that mid-nineteenth century Jacobite revivalists consisted of 'a coterie of British elite: aristocracy, Anglican and Catholic clerics, devoted Scottish, Irish and Cornish nationalists, and cultural leaders including writers, poets, painters and sculptors', all of whom in different ways 'wrote alternative narratives of British history'.[35] This thesis presents Grant under a similar aegis, as a Scottish

[34] Murray Pittock, *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 38.
[35] Connolly, *Jacobitism,* x- xi.

nationalist writer who proposed an alternative narrative for the trajectory of Britain, aligning her with other British Jacobites who

> spread to the United States and Canada as well [...] North American Jacobites condemned the environmental and human cost of the factory system, the corruption of democratic politics and the cultural shallowness and artificiality of the Victorian age.[36]

In the analysis of Grant offered in this thesis, her outlook is configured in similar terms, around a condemnation of artifice, an ambivalence about progressive politics, and a sense of the impact of Improvement upon both the culture of the marginalised people that she observed, and also a powerful account of the destruction of their environment.

At the time in which Grant wrote, the notion that the Highlands and Islands of Scotland were uneducated and barbarous regions was prominent not only in the popular mind but also in the academic and official discourse of Anglophone Britain.[37] Grant was opposed to such uninformed and discriminatory views, and her writing largely reflects the efforts she made to counteract them. Prior to Grant, the Highlands and Islands had produced several scholars such as Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair (1698–c. 1770), Duncan Bàn MacIntyre (Donnchadh Bàn, 1724–1812) and Maighstir Seathan MacLean (*Rev. John MacLean*, c. 1660s–1750s) who objected to the Anglocentric dismissal of Gaelic culture.[38] However, their views, presented in Scots-Gaelic, largely went unheard in English-speaking Britain. Complicated exceptions to the trend of disparagement were James Macpherson (mentioned already as a literary figure) and to a lesser extent Adam Ferguson (1723-1816), both bilingual speakers. In their historical, scientific and political writing these men challenged to some degree the notion that the Highlands was a site of degradation and barbarism. Macpherson, however, ended up renegotiating his relationship with Highland culture, and a compromise of his initial, ardent pro-Gaelic stance is evident in his later writing and his biography.[39]

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[36] Connolly, *Jacobitism,* x.
[37] Gallagher, 'Anne MacVicar Grant', 154–62.
[38] Michael Newton, *Warriors of the Word: The World of the Scottish Highlanders* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2019), 70, 82 and 67.
[39] 'It was in the London phase of his career, both before and after the Florida episode, that he constantly found himself moving between the role of defender of the Ossianic poems and patron of fellow Highlanders and that of apologist for a British Government which had essentially made cause against his own people 30 years earlier and was now moving to suppress the North American colonies'. James Porter, "'Bring Me the Head of James

Ferguson, while born in the Highlands and a Gaelic-speaker, never fully rebuked the views held by his Enlightenment peers, opting instead to gently identify and critique their flaws.[40]

Although Grant's writing is focused primarily upon matters concerning Britain and America, the impact of her writing was not limited to these places. Not only did Grant's writing range across various genres, but it also reached across different eras and other continents. In the wake of the influence of Macpherson and Ossian on German Romanticism (in figures such as Goethe and Herder), Grant's poem, 'The Blue Bells of Scotland', was set to music by the composer Joseph Haydn in 1802.[41] This demonstrates Grant's influence on the early-nineteenth century continental appreciation of Celtic culture, a European aspect which has been overlooked in previous scholarship on her writing, and an important avenue for the late Enlightenment revaluation of Highland culture outside the confines of the Anglosphere (though the Haydn setting was for a George Thomson publication whose audience was British). Grant's reception and fall from favour can also be accounted for in terms of her alignment with a specific Cultural Jacobitism, distinguished from Jacobite sentiment and romance. Like many writers of the Romantic period, Grant contemplated the longevity and posterity of her work in the light of possible contemporary neglect. Writing about 'The Highlanders', Grant addresses the prospect of the poem's longevity in strikingly gendered terms, distinguishing contemporary feminine readers from a masculine future of sons and grandsons, while also alluding to it primarily as a documentary record rather than an aesthetic achievement or work of sentiment or romance:

> Misses will not put my book in their work bag; but as longevity is the portion of truth, it may work its way into light, and lie on the tables of their grandsons; and this not as a fine poem, but a correct drawing.[42]

Grant's acidic use of the term 'misses' is suggestive of the emerging progressive female voices of her own era. Grant anticipates that those who will appreciate 'The Highlanders' will

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Macpherson:' The Execution of Ossian and the Wellsprings of Folkloric Discourse," *Journal of American Folklore* 114, no. 454 (2001): 403.

[40] Dafydd Moore, 'James Macpherson and Adam Ferguson: An Enlightenment Encounter', *Scottish Literary Journal* 24, no. 2 (1997): 11.

[41] Gauti Kristmannsson, '"Ossian", The European National Epic 1760-1810)', *European History Online*, accessed, November 1, 2015, https://brewminate.com/ossian-the-european-national-epic-1760-1810/

[42] Anne Grant, *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland* (London: Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1811), 2: 271. (Hereafter *Essays*).

be, somewhat paradoxically, men of the future, interested the preservation of tradition. She regards her poem as a historical record and a point of survival that could be used as a reference point for the restoration of the values and virtues associated with the patriarchal clan culture of the Highlands. This was not, perhaps, to be the case. *Poems on Various Subjects*, although popular in its day, did not retain the attention of generations of readers after her death. The text that did live on in popularity in the decades that followed Grant's death was *Memoirs of an American Lady*, published in several editions and in various locations throughout the United States. The text became increasingly important in America, not only as a work of literature, but also as an historical record of a sparsely documented time and place. While some of Grant's Scottish-themed writing received more than one edition, there is an irony that in a thesis positing the enduring quality of Cultural Jacobitism, it is to be observed that Grant's American text ultimately outstripped her other works in terms of sales and longevity.

Indigeneity and the 'Living Generation'

One frequently quoted line from Grant's oeuvre is her observation in the *Essays* that she is 'not absolutely a native nor entirely a stranger'.[43] Used by scholars predominantly motivated to demonstrate Grant's double or liminal quality as a cultural mediator, the line also highlights the personal insecurity that Grant admitted regarding her own identity. Grant's personal search for a homeland and a sense of belonging mirrors the wider diaspora of both the Highland people and also of Cultural Jacobitism, following the escalation in demographic purges and cultural sanctions after Culloden. Place, indigeneity, and the interaction between people and their environment, are crucial themes in all of Grant's published works. These were also some of the parameters upon which Jacobitism more generally was founded. Connections between the native Scots and their land was a key argument used by the Stuarts and their supporters in attempting to discredit the Hanoverian succession and ascendancy. Murray Pittock has observed how indigeneity and genealogy formed a crucial point of contention dynastically:

[43] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 10.

> The commission to De Wet to paint a series of portraits of the Scottish royal line dating back to the mythological Fergus caried out at Holyrood in 1684-86 linked the Stuarts to a native monarchy, and aligned them with heroic and patriotic predecessors such as Robert the Bruce. This was a nationalistic iconography which symbolized a 'special relationship' between Scotland and the Stuarts […] moreover, the Irish elements in the Scottish foundation-story meant that the Stuarts were recognized as rightful rulers in Ireland.[44]

In Jacobite ideology, genealogy, ethnicity, and indigeneity were prominent and often overlapping considerations. Grant too was preoccupied with these concepts in her writing. It is perhaps unsurprising that one of the foremost themes evident in her work revolves around the forced and coerced removal of Scots-Gaels from their homeland, and their subsequent consignment to literary nostalgia.[45] However, while literary figures such as Scott and Macpherson adopted a sentimental strain of Jacobitism, working to smooth over as inevitable historical loss the practice of ethnic cleansing that was carried out in the Highlands throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (downplaying the impact of the early smaller-scale Highland Clearances by implying that it was an integral aspect of the wider process of Improvement)[46], Grant was dialectically opposed to such views. Her own writing presented a counterbalance to the romanticising of the Highland people as merely a residual presence, with a strong emphasis on survival, continuity, and futurity.[47] Contemporary reviewers noted this quality in her work:

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[44] Pittock, *Jacobitism,* 13.

[45] Juliet Shields, 'Highland Emigration and the Transformation of Nostalgia in Romantic Poetry', *European Romantic Review* 23, no. 6 (2012): 777.

[46] 'There were precedents within the Highlands for eviction and a sharper attitude to land usage, as we have seen. At Glen Lui, on the estate of the Earl of Mar in 1726, Lord Grange conducted an eviction to increase his deer stock which caused a reduction of population, and there was a less successful clearance attempted at Baddoch in 1733', Eric Richards, *A History of the Highland Clearances: Agrarian Transformation and the Evictions 1746–1886* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1982), 52.

[47] 'In our review of Lord Selkirk's work on Emigration, we gave a very full detail of the circumstances which have led to this partial depopulation, and of the plans that have been suggested to soften the necessary sufferings by which it is attended. Mrs. Grant speaks very feelingly, and very sensibly on the subject'. Francis Jeffrey, 'Review of the Essays', *The Edinburgh Review* 18, no. 36 (August 1811): 503.

> Mrs. G is *a describer of the living generation*, while from the writings of her contemporaries, we have undoubtedly acquired more information of the past than of the present.[48]

Along with her descriptions of people, Grant's travel writing produced some of the most vivid depictions of landscape published in the early-nineteenth century. A typical contemporary review of her portrait of the Highland landscape stresses that 'In the description of scenery, she excels'; and her depictions of American landscape were commended by Robert Southey.[49] This thesis argues that Grant extended the same 'living' sympathy to the places she wished to protect as she did to the people and cultures that she wished to see preserved.

As any introduction to her biography shows, Grant's early life was geographically unsettled, and this has undoubtedly influenced modern critical assessments of her liminal and mediating narrative position.[50] Grant was also liminal in a literary sense, in terms of the way her writing frequently crosses or obscures the boundary lines of the genres which it inhabited. Her oeuvre incorporates genres such as poetry, travel writing, anthropology or ethnography, philosophy, and biography. The centrality of this overlapping quality is perhaps best demonstrated in the development of her writing on display in *Letters from the Mountains*, where multiple adjustments in her responses to people, place and literature can be traced alongside each other. Also traceable over the course of the three volumes of this work, is Grant's transition from an objective and external observer, unaccustomed with Highland culture, into a more integrated, committed, and more partial recorder of people and place. The generic assemblage of her work should not obscure the presence of a singularity of purpose in certain philosophical expressions, and there is perhaps a greater coherence on these matters than has hitherto been recognised.

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[48] 'Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland', *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature* 1, no. 5 (1812): 497, London: R. Baldwin. (emphasis added).

[49]Arthur Aikin, ed., 'Art. IX. *The Annual Review of History and Literature'*, *The Annual Review of History and Literature* 5 (January 1806): 345–50, at 347.; Edward Gallagher, 'Anne MacVicar Grant', in *American Women Prose Writers to 1820*, ed. Carla Mulford, Angela Vietto, and Amy E. Winans (Columbia: Bruccoli Clark Layman, 1998), 162.

[50] Pam Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre, and Cultural Analysis', in *The New Science and Women's Literary Discourse: Prefiguring Frankenstein*, ed. Judy A. Hayden (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 229.Ina Ferris, 'Translation from the Borders: Encounter and Recalcitrance in *Waverley* and *Clan-Albin'*, *Eighteenth Century Fiction* 9, no. 2 (1997): 206; and elsewhere.

At this juncture it is useful to offer biographical context pertinent to Grant's understanding of her place within Highland culture. Most modern scholarship on Grant has emphasised her Lowland birth and has tended either to downplay or else omit entirely some of her early ties to the landscape, people, and culture of the Highlands. Indeed, the feeling of a lack of cultural connection to the Highland region would become a source of anxiety for Grant during early adulthood and beyond: this aspect of Grant's writing will be discussed throughout this thesis. However, in spite of Grant's own insecurities about her early years, and what has been written about her in the twenty-first century, it is possible to demonstrate that even in the first two years of her life she already possessed a tangible claim to a Highland identity.[51] Although Grant was born in Glasgow, a few days after her birth she was taken to live in the Highlands with her paternal grandparents, and would remain there until she was one and a half years old. (It is in the Highlands and not Glasgow where all of Grant's extended familial connections were to be found). Yet this crucial if unremembered period in Grant's infant development has often been overlooked. In a representative introduction to Grant's biography, Kenneth McNeil writes: 'Though born in Glasgow, Grant spent her formative years in New York before commencing her 30-year residence in the Highlands'.[52] The effect of the omission of her Highland infancy is to implicitly read against the grain of Grant's felt and understood connections with the Highlands, and her larger claim of return and reintegration into a close-knit native community. A similar implicit denial of identity is Betty Hagglund's comment that, 'Although Lowland born, she [Grant] presented herself as a true Highlander'.[53] The terms 'presented herself' and 'true Highlander' here reflect a subtle deprecation of Grant's sense of self; the implication follows that this was a performance, and at least partly untrue. Doubtless this reflects a postmodern sense that all selves are provisional and performed, but it nevertheless applies a 'No True Scotsman' fallacy to Grant's identity. The wish to fix Grant as 'Lowland born' and deny her stated claim to her own identity is complicated by the fact that Grant managed to integrate into Highland society (in part at least, owing to familial connections), had sustained empirical experience of Highland life, and was able to access, document and relay aspects of Highland culture off-limits to monoglot

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[51] Grant was not the only Romantic writer whose place of birth lead to a complicated sense of Scottish identity. In *Don Juan*, Grant's contemporary, Lord Byron asserted how his Scottishness comprised the sum of his identity. Despite being born in London he stresses 'But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred / A whole one'. The wholeness of his identity is, for Byron based upon the Scottish lineage of his mother, Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1901), Canto X, stanza XVII.

[52] Kenneth McNeil, 'The location of empire: Anne Grant's Memoirs of an American Lady', *European Romantic Review* 21*,* no. 2 (2010) 206.

[53] Hagglund, Betty, 'A Journey to the Highlands', *Travellers and Tourists: Women's Non-Fictional Writing About Scotland 1770-1830,* (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2017), 50.

English-speakers. The stress on Grant's Lowland birth, the downplaying of her Highland lineage, and the omission of her Highland infancy has led to an over-emphasis on her authorial identity as shifting or unstable. In turn, this has led to the various terms being used when discussing her nationality including, 'Scottish', 'British', and even 'English'.

Pam Perkins usefully acknowledges the great importance that Grant placed on the sense that her literal place of birth did not detract from the fact that her family roots were in the Highlands.[54] Grant's epistolary writing (both published and unpublished letters), her non-fiction writing, and her poetry all exude a fixation on these Highland roots. Grant's place of birth, her initial inability to speak Gaelic, and her father's military allegiance to the British Crown all acted as catalysts that exacerbated the complications she encountered around identity, but they did not weaken this fixation in the slightest. (In chapters two and three I examine Grant's relationship with the Gaelic language and her negative perceptions of cultural heterogeneity, as well as her anxieties around her own place of birth and her father's establishment allegiance.) Among her contemporaries, the writer and publisher Christian Johnstone (1781-1857) defended Grant's lineage in genealogical and bodily terms which admitted place of birth as mere contingency: 'No drop of *Sassenach* blood flowed in the veins of Anne Macvicar, though she chanced to be born in Glasgow'.[55] Grant's contemporaries seemed prepared to admit this aspect of her identity more-fully than modern scholars. Finally, another contemporary review of Grant (only published in 1965) not only firmly positions the writer as a product of the Highlands, but again admits parity with Macpherson:

> In the second half of the Eighteenth Century two persons of Badenoch excited much interest and made a considerable stir in the literary world and in London and Edinburgh […] One was James Macpherson, the translator of "Ossian," the other was Mrs. Anne Grant.

The reviewer goes on to observe that, 'while controversy even yet exists' about Macpherson, 'few nowadays know anything of his neighbour and staunch supporter, and very few have

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[54] Perkins. 'Incongruous Things', 135.
[55] Christian Isobel Johnstone, 'Review of *Memoir and Correspondence of Mrs. Grant of Laggan'*, *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, March 1844, 11:123, accessed via ProQuest, 175.

read her works'.[56] But despite the difference in fame, both writers are defined by place as 'persons of Badenoch,' and their interaction primarily in the spatial relation of neighbours; Grant of course styled herself 'Anne Grant of Laggan', a person of determinate place.

Imperialism and Improvement

Both *Memoirs of an American Lady* and *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland,* are heavily critical of the cultural and physical attacks that took place upon Native American and Scots-Highland people respectively. In some regards, Grant's emphasis on marginalised peoples in these two texts rendered her own voice doubly silenced. In her own time, the foregrounding of the ways in which Western European nations colonised lands and destroyed indigenous cultures would not have been comfortable or palatable, and this likely accounts for at least some of Grant's neglect by her contemporaries. But while these texts generate arguments that on the surface appear modern or in keeping with anti-colonial attitudes of today, they are also founded upon the principle that cultural worth is derived from distinct and essential biological and ethnic differences. The sentiment that these differences are something to be preserved above all else is one that perhaps does not sit well with current critical frameworks. Ironically then, while Grant's Cultural Jacobitism and benevolent appeals for the protection of marginalised people put her at odds with nineteenth-century states and empires, it is likely that it is precisely such an appeal to cultural difference that has obstructed a serious recuperation of her work in modern times.

Crucial to comprehending Grant's treatment of the marginalised groups that feature in her writing is an acknowledgment of the fact that she did not adhere to the conventional (or at least, the most popular) teleological four-stage theory of the Enlightenment. This theory proposed that all societies around the world climbed a metaphorical four-rung ladder in order to progress. The rungs to this ladder are hunting, pastoralism, and agriculture, culminating in the final rung of commercial society. The version of the theory most influential in the Scottish Enlightenment particularly was first advanced by the philosopher Lord Kames in his *Historical Law Tract*s (1758) and substantially expanded by Scottish writers such as Adam Smith, in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), John Millar

[56] Barron, 'A Highland Lady of Letters', 68.

in *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1779), and to a lesser degree and with significant caveats, Adam Ferguson, in his *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1768). It is notable here that Kames, the originator of the four-stage theory, was an ardent anti-Jacobite. In response to the arrival of Charles Edward Stuart on Scottish soil, Kames observed that a 'disease' had taken hold of his country.[57] The cultural and political overlap in literature of the age is clear. Grant's rejection of the four-stage model—an important element of her Cultural Jacobitism, informed by her knowledge and experience within Highland culture—put her at odds with the Whig Improvement position of Kames, 'who claimed that Scottish feudal customs were merely copies of English practices', a rhetoric that evidently sought to 'undercut Jacobite arguments of an authentic and distinct national heritage'.[58]

In her first publication, *Poems on Various Subjects* (1803), Grant clearly outlines how her own stadial model posited three, rather than four, stages of culture: a formative stage, an intermediate stage and a final stage:

> Such is the age which may be call'd *the golden one of heroism;* of which every nation delights to preserve the traditions and obscure or exaggerated history; and which intervenes betwixt that of the selfish, solitary savage, whose short life is spent in sudden transitions from violent exertion to gloomy indolence; and that of the civilized inhabitant, who becomes as selfish from the multitude of his wants, as the other from the precariousness of his possessions adjusting his morality to coercive laws, and regulating his desires by ever changing fashion.[59]

Where for four-stage theorists the final stage represented the pinnacle of human endeavour, notable in this quotation is that Grant's final stage, rather than being the ultimate aspiration, was evidence of societal decline. For Grant, her contemporary era reflected an increased dependency upon laws and the division of labour;[60] ultimately culminating in an era of superfluity and degeneracy. It is worth emphasising here that Grant considered the Native Americans and Gaelic Highlanders as two examples of the most desirable state of humanity,

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[57] Henry Home to Andrew Fletcher, Lord Milton, 30 October 1745, National Library of Scotland, Saltoun Papers, MS 16609, fols. 62–63.
[58] C. B. Bow, 'The "Final Causes" of Scottish Nationalism: Lord Kames on the Political Economy of Enlightened Husbandry, 1745–82', *Historical Research* 91, no. 252 (2018): 9.
[59] Grant, *Poems*, 358.
[60] Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, ed. R. L. Meek, D. D. Raphael and P. G. Stein (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982), 14.

rather than mere stages on the way to somewhere else. In the *Memoirs*, Grant extends parity to the colonial Dutch in her favourable stadial estimations. It is in this text that Grant first incorporates the term 'reign of the affections' to describe what she had termed in previous writing as the 'Heroic Age'.[61] Kenneth McNeil makes the important observation that the stereotypical terminology employed by Grant here (meant to be complimentary, but regarded by some as condescending) is not only directed at people of colour but also at white Europeans, who have either retained or rediscovered a near proximity to nature:

> Moreover, Grant affixes the term "reign of the affections" not only to the Mohawk society in the *Memoirs* (and in earlier writing, to Scottish Gaels) but to the small colonial Dutch community in which she temporarily resided.[62]

McNeil suggests how, in linking the colonial Dutch, Native Americans and Highland Gaels in this manner, Grant, 'provides an alternative to the rigid racial and ethnic dividing that would become a distinct feature of primitivist discourse later in the century'.[63] Though it must be stated that in the *Memoirs*, a racist hierarchy is presented. In the text, Grant attempts to defend the colonial Dutch practice of owning slaves and also possibly employs ventriloquism when reporting how the Mohawk people regarded African slaves 'with a contempt and dislike, as an inferior race'.[64]

My interpretation of Grant's rejection of the four-stage model and her alignment with Cultural Jacobitism differs from McNeil. McNeil argues that 'Grant's ethnography reveals the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment "science of man" established in the writings of Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith and William Robertson'.[65] Similarly, Pam Perkins views Grant as 'steeped in the four-stage theory of historical development that became so influential in late eighteenth-century thought'.[66] But this estimation conflates important theoretical

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[61] '[…] the Heroic Age; by which I understand that intervening betwixt rude barbarity, and the regular establishment of law, property, and agriculture'. Grant, *Poems*, 351.
[62] McNeil 'The Location of Empire', 208.
[63] McNeil, Kenneth. 'Memory on the Margins: Anne Grant's Atlantic World' *Scottish Romanticism and Collective Memory in the British Atlantic* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 114.
[64] Anne Grant, *Memoirs of an American Lady: With Sketches of Manners and Scenery in America as They Existed Previous to the Revolution* (New York: D. Appleton, 1846), for discussion, see 38 and 66. (Hereafter, *Memoirs*)
[65] McNeil 'The Location of Empire', 207.
[66] Pam Perkins, 'Paradises Lost. Anne Grant and Late Eighteenth-Century Idealizations of America' *Early American Literature* 40, no. 2, (2005): 325.

differences: the theories of the two Adams (Ferguson and Smith), while taken by McNeil to be in tandem, were actually not aligned on the issue of stadial progression. Perhaps the fact that Ferguson was 'the only major Enlightenment figure to come from the Gàidhealtachd' had a bearing upon his departure from Smith's rigid adherence to four incremental stages.[67] In any case, Grant's philosophical worldview, being critical of her contemporary status quo, was much closer to Ferguson's than it was to Smith's. For Grant, the process of actual improvement was not linear and universal, but rather cyclical, and varied from ethnic group to ethnic group.

'Savage' Author, 'Polite' Reader

While Grant's writing at times overtly challenges the society of commercial mainstream Britain, she also adopts a gentler approach of conciliation to persuade her English-speaking readers about Highland culture. Grant uses her intimate knowledge of people, place, and language to mediate both Scots-Gaelic culture and the Highland landscape, via positive sentiment. She does this by using a complex and flexible 'they' and 'we' mode of narration, at times identifying with the Anglophone reader and at others with the Scots-Gaelic people. In the *Essays*, Grant states of the Highland people, 'We wonder how they think so soundly, and speak so well'.[68] Clearly, by using the term 'we', she takes pains to align herself with her Anglophone (English or Lowland) readers. This device is a conscious decision on the part of the writer where she implores her reader to consider that even a polite and enlightened writer, such as herself, can assuage anxieties around what was at that time regarded to be a hostile and savage society. Grant uses the term 'they' in such instances to affiliate and align herself with the polite English-speaking reader, positioning her own vantage point as that of observer rather than subject. Yet there are times in her work when, conversely, she attempts to distance herself from her English-speaking reader, alienating them by referencing the cultural peculiarities that separate them from herself and her Highland compatriots.

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[67]Murray G. H. Pittock, 'Historiography', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Alexander Broadie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 258–280, at 273.; Aaron Garrett. 'Anthropology: the "original" of human nature', *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment,* ed Alexander Broadie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 81.
[68] Grant, *Essays,* 1: 5.

It is important then to acknowledge that there were complex issues at play in Grant's willingness to identify with either of the two contrasting societies in question, and that her liminal narrative position was more than just a rhetorical device or uncertainty of identity. Grant's aspirations to forge a Highland identity for herself after relocating to Laggan necessitated the forfeiture of certain aspects of the education and culture that comprised her existing identity; this arguably took a toll on her psychological well-being. These aspirations and contentions are laid bare in an important letter to her friend, the poet, Lady Catherine Fanshawe of London, dated 13th February 1809, published in her posthumous *Memoir and Correspondence.* In this letter Grant explains the process that she undertook to become an integrated member of the Highland community:

> When I first went to the Highlands, I thought it pretty and poetical to admire the general face of the country and spurred myself on with something like approbation; but it was—without a pun—uphill work.[69]

She goes on to state that after she had 'grown acquainted with the language and the poetry' of the Highlands, 'in time I began to grow a little savage myself'. The application of the term 'savage' here is not self-deprecation, but rather a boast of the superiority of Highland culture over that of the rest of Britain. The lowland recipient is informed that:

> When after a long residence in this land of enthusiasm [Gàidhealtachd], I left the abode of ghosts and warrior hunters and heroines, to come down to common life in a flat country [*Galltachd*], you cannot imagine how bleak and unsheltered, how tame and uninteresting it appeared;[70]

While it may seem dubious to assert that the Highland region is absolutely synonymous with the Gaelic language, Grant in this letter clearly seeks to demonstrate a connection between the local language and the topography of Scotland.[71] She asserted repeatedly that it was her ability to comprehend the Gaelic language that ultimately endeared and attached her to the landscape. In crafting a Highland identity, then, Grant first had to learn the language and

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[69] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence,* 1:185-186.
[70] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence,* 1: 186.
[71] Murray Pittock, *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, 38.

customs of the indigenous people; this endeavour meant adopting many of the sentiments associated with Cultural Jacobitism.

Pam Perkins, the most significant of Grant's present-day critics, in her most recent work on the author, draws on the direct correlation between language, landscape and identity in Grant's writing, particularly with the focus upon how learning Gaelic enabled Grant to integrate into a Highland community.[72] Yet some of Grant's writing can be said to complicate the argument that linguistic and cultural approximation is enough to achieve full integration into another community. For example, in *Memoirs of an American Lady*, Grant acquires different languages to facilitate her acceptance by non-English-speaking communities, yet knowledge of language and culture proves to be an insufficient credential to obtain this acceptance. Though she desired social inclusion within the Dutch community in whose vicinity she had resided, she recalls how she remained 'always as a stranger, notwithstanding that I spoke their current language fluently'.[73] In the *Letters from the Mountains,* Grant's empirical experience also acknowledges that although she eventually felt herself an integrated member of the parish of Laggan, something more than just linguistic and cultural knowledge was required to achieve this.[74] This suggests that although Grant considered language an invaluable tool in penetrating cultures to a certain degree, complete assimilation was unlikely without the appropriate familial and genealogical connections.

Gender and Cultural Jacobitism

Another aspect integral to this thesis is the consideration of how Grant negotiated Cultural Jacobitism as a female writer, something particularly at issue because political Jacobitism was (and is perhaps still) regarded as conservative in its attitude to gender. Undoubtedly, Grant's Cultural Jacobitism reflects and reinforces many of the traditions of the Gàidhealtachd, a society that was founded upon the principle of patriarchal clanship. This again could easily be explained by the accepted and conventional positioning of Grant as conservative and a Tory. Yet such an explanation lacks nuance, not only regarding the

[72] Pam Perkins, 'Landscape in Translation: Anne Grant in the Highlands', *Studies in Romanticism* 63, no. 2 (2024) 213-230.
[73] Grant, *Memoirs*, 39.
[74] Anne Grant, *Letters,* 1: 76.

complexities of Grant's attitude to gender, but also in terms of the position of women in both Highland culture and the Jacobite cause.

Murray Pittock has shown how Jacobitism, viewed as a subversive ideology, appealed to the marginalised in general, but also specifically to women. One reason for this appeal was Jacobitism's association with seclusion and ruralism.[75] In practical terms, its appeal lay in the fact that it accepted 'all volunteers regardless of sex' and presented new opportunities to women in terms of 'the running and defence of estates which might be forfeit […] to the recruitment and even leadership of troops, if not actual fighting itself'.[76] Also important was the romantic imagery associated with Charles Edward Stuart himself, and his associations with fertility and regeneration. Pittock highlights how 'Charles Edward's own depiction as a woman in Hanoverian propaganda', resulting from his use of women's clothing to escape Hanoverian soldiers, led to an alternative imagery from the masculine and fearsome Highlander to the 'feminized' or emasculated Celt.[77] In the first chapter of this thesis, I analyse Grant's poetical account of Charles's escape and build upon this account by comparing it with the similar exploits of the eponymous *Wallace* (a text which exerted considerable influence over Grant's imagination) establishing tangible links between Cultural Jacobitism, Scottish Nationalism, and the position of women in Grant's work.

Grant's position on gender at other moments in her work generates apparent contradictions, which this thesis addresses. At times Grant appears conservative, and at others liberal or progressive. It is important to reiterate here that, aside from her considerable experience within Highland culture, Grant operated both as an opponent of Enlightenment philosophies and simultaneously as a beneficiary of them. Thus, her astutely informed sentiments were likely influenced as much by contemporary writers such as Edmund Burke as they were by her experience in the Highlands.[78] Burke, while by no means a Jacobite, argued for the practical good of feudalism and sympathised with British Catholics.[79] Conor Cruise O'Brien's circumscribed account of Burke's politics positions him in a way that also speaks to Grant: it is on the 'middle ground that Burke is at his most assured; this is the mode that

[75] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 79.
[76] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 78.
[77] Pittock, *Jacobitism,* 81.
[78] In *Memoir and Correspondence* Grant states: 'Burke has always been the idol of my imagination and' 'One cannot know enough about Burke: What a guardian angel he proved to the nation', 3: 70 and 3: 237.
[79] J. C. D. Clark, 'Religious Affiliation and Dynastic Allegiance in Eighteenth-Century England: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine and Samuel Johnson', *ELH* 64, no. 4 (1997): 1029–1067, at 1030.

harmonises the Whig and Jacobite within him'.[80] No doubt aspects of Grant's otherwise loyalist politics and her rejection of some of Mary Wollstonecraft's philosophies, in particular, suggest that she likely shared some common ground with the author of the *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, including his largely conservative gender politics, expressed through his idealisation of Marie Antoinette and comments on the death of the age of chivalry.

In recognition of Grant's complex biography and liminal position, however, it makes sense to assess her writing recursively. Thus, I return to acknowledge Grant's empiricism in highlighting how another important influence upon her advocation for Cultural Jacobitism lies outside of both Highland culture and British politics: Grant's observations around gender can also be said to have been influenced substantially by the traditional values and mores of both the Colonial Dutch and the Mohawk People whom she observed as a child. In filtering her retrospective childhood thoughts through the lens of a Highland woman, Grant's comparisons between these other cultures led her to the conclusion that although far from perfect, the experience of women in Jacobite culture and throughout the history of the Highlands was more liberating than the experience of women obliged to live outside it.

Critical Approaches

One particularly interesting aspect of Grant's writing is the degree of discord it has generated among modern scholars. Most concur that Grant is a distinctive voice of the period reflecting the unique combination of experiences in her life.[81] The combination, however, has also been the cause of a divide in the critical response between her observations of the Scottish Highlands, and her importance for Scottish literature; and her observations of colonial America. Kenneth McNeil observes what he perceives to be flawed division:

[80] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. Conor Cruise O'Brien (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986), 46.
[81] Kenneth McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 118 and Pam Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre and Cultural Analysis', in *The New Science and Women's Literary Discourse: Prefiguring Frankenstein*, ed. Judy A. Hayden (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 230.

> like her work on the Highlands, the *Memoirs* has been situated within a critical field, and a discrete national literary history, that reinforces the distinctiveness of a particular national geography.[82]

McNeil goes on to state that he aims to 'avoid situating the memoirs in any one critical field' and takes pains to 'emphasize the transatlantic quality of her work'. Yet this necessarily requires Grant's abstraction from 'a clear notion of national territory'.[83] This reasoning is therefore partly set against other interpretations such as that of Evan Gottlieb, which stresses conversely how Grant's writing 'operates to confirm a sense of national belonging in her readers, both Scottish and English'.[84] Where McNeil observes a national plurality in Grant's writing, downplaying an emphasis upon regional identity, Gottlieb observes a clearly defined duality, whereby two distinct nations are celebrated for certain shared or common aspirations. Some of these conflicting arguments are addressed, with a return to Grant's own claims, in chapter three.

McNeil's sense of Grant as heavily influenced by Scottish Enlightenment notions of teleology, aligns with Betty Hagglund's slightly earlier assessment of Grant as a writer who seeks to put distance between herself and the marginalised non-English societies she represents. Drawing on the terms of postcolonial scholarship established by Elleke Boehmer, Mary Louise Pratt, and others (also important to McNeil), Hagglund herself stresses how 'Grant frequently depicted Native Americans in glowing, idealized terms' before leaning on Shirley Foster's explanation that such convention 'often works as a distancing strategy, preventing the traveller from actually "seeing" the Native American as a real human being'.[85] Hagglund and other critics have stressed Grant's position here as an idealistic reworking of Ossianic myths of the primitive. However, my interpretation suggests that while Grant may well have romanticised certain societies, her anthropology was in fact independent from and often contradicted Macpherson's. In chapter two, I critically examine the commonly held view that Grant was reliant upon Macpherson for her orientation towards and knowledge of

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[82] McNeil, 'The Location of Empire', 205-206.
[83] McNeil, 'The Location of Empire, 206-207.
[84] Evan Gottlieb, 'Blameless Empires and Long-Forgotten Melodies: Anne Grant's "The Highlanders," Walter Scott's *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and the Poetry of Sympathetic Britishness', *Journal of Narrative Theory* 40, no. 3 (Fall 2010): 253–274, at 269.
[85] Betty Hagglund, "'Not Absolutely a Native, Nor Entirely a Stranger': The Journeys of Anne Grant," in *Perspectives on Travel Writing*, ed. Glen Hooper and Tim Youngs (London: Routledge, 2004), 47. See also: Shirley Foster, *Across New Worlds: Nineteenth-Century Women Travellers and Their Writings* (London: Harvester, 1990).

Gaelic culture. Leith Davis has also highlighted how Grant's implementation of Ossianic lore, rather than reinforcing Macpherson, inverts and challenges his emphasis upon male heroes. Again, this potentially feeds back into Grant's distinctive Cultural Jacobitism and the flexible attitude it might offer towards the contribution of women.

Another key insistence of Grant's worldview and literary achievement that this thesis seeks to mediate is the meaning and significance of her poem 'The Highlanders', which has also generated critical disagreement. Kirsten Daly argues that Grant's attitude to the depopulation of the Highlands is ambivalent at best, and that her poem operates as a reconciliatory dialectic that nevertheless supports the removal of the Highland people from Scotland to facilitate the Whiggish aspirations of Improvement both in the Highlands and in the Americas.[86] Conversely, Juliet Shields argues that Grant's poem evidences a distinct abhorrence for the forced emigrations, positioning Grant's view as antithetical to Whiggish aims.[87] Daly, in contrast, emphasises Grant's demands for the protection of Gaelic-Highland culture, the cost of which is emigration. For her, Grant's Highlanders must distance themselves geographically from the reach of English hegemony in order for their culture to remain intact.[88] These positions appear to offer a choice between framing Grant as either a Tory or a Whig. In my reading of the poem, I demonstrate an alternative Jacobite vision whereby the Highland people can remain at home yet retain their distinctive culture and moral principles.

Contextual Sources

In addition to scholarly work that responds directly to Grant's writing, this project engages with wider theoretical and contextual writing about relevant literary concepts and significant figures in the period, especially in terms of connecting Grant to writing on Macpherson and the Ossian controversy, ideas of authenticity, knowledge of Highland culture and pro- and

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[86] '[…] this elegiac narrative is underpinned by a carefully constructed logic which insists that the emigration of the Highlanders is both inevitable and necessary, resulting from and contributing to, the modernisation of Great Britain', Kirsten Daly, "'Return No More!': Highland Emigration and Romantic Nostalgia," *Literature and History* 9, no. 1 (2000): 29.

[87] 'Grant self-consciously adopted the role of cultural mediator or translator, undertaking to explain Highland culture to Lowland and English readers. Her idealized descriptions of Highlanders' courage, sensibility, loyalty, and domestic virtues aimed to discourage forced emigration by demonstrating Highlanders' importance to the military security and moral well-being of Great Britain', Juliet Shields, 'Highland Emigration and the Transformation of Nostalgia in Romantic Poetry', *European Romantic Review* 23, no. 6 (2012): 773.

[88] Further critical work on the poem has been done by Evan Gottlieb, 'Blameless Empires', 256.

Anti-Celtic propaganda;[89] or on Macpherson's status vis-a-vis Jacobitism and his associations with the British government and the Hanoverian regime.[90] My interpretation of Grant's 'The Highlanders' as a response to Macpherson's *The Highlander* draws on specific critical commentary on the latter poem.[91] The significance and influence of Sir Walter Scott is also an area of scholarship this thesis draws on, particularly in comparison with Grant.[92] Scott's place in the broader literary canon of Romanticism and the Gothic has a bearing upon his treatment of Jacobitism, and modern scholarship helps to distinguish his sentimental approach from the Cultural Jacobitism prevalent in Grant's work.[93]

Crucial to Grant's Cultural Jacobitism is an understanding of the philosophical debates of the Scottish Enlightenment. But this was not a monolithic philosophical school: this introduction has already discussed significant differences between various stadial models of progress and teleology in circulation, including Grant's three stage model of teleology as an alternative to the dominant four-stage theory.[94] The nature of political Jacobitism, as well as the history of the Stuart claim, are inevitable foundations for a thesis with Cultural Jacobitism as its focus.[95] It is also necessary to understand how, outside of contemporary anti-Jacobite propaganda and, later sentimental literature, the Jacobites represented themselves, before, during and after 1746.[96]

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[89] Corrina Laughlin, 'The Lawless Language of Macpherson's "Ossian,"' *Studies in English Literature* 40, no. 3 (2000): 511–537 and James Porter, '"Bring Me the Head of James Macpherson:" The Execution of Ossian and the Wellsprings of Folkloric Discourse', *Journal of American Folklore* 114, no. 454 (2001).
[90]Dafydd Moore, 'James Macpherson and "Celtic Whiggism,"' *Eighteenth Century Life* 30, no. 1 (2006): 1-24 and Gerard Carruthers, 'Jacobite Unionism', in *Literature and Union: Scottish Texts, British Contexts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
[91] Especially Fiona Stafford's *Sublime Savage: A Study of James Macpherson and the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988) and Kristen Lindfield-Ott's PhD Thesis '"See SCOT and SAXON coalesc'd in one:" James Macpherson's *The Highlander* in its Intellectual and Cultural Contexts, with an Annotated Text of the Poem' (PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2011), https://hdl.handle.net/10023/2096.
[92] Especially Ian Duncan's *Scott's Shadow* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007) and Ian Duncan and Douglas S. Mack, 'Hogg, Galt, Scott and Their Milieu', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1918)* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), chap. 23.
[93] Sharon Ruston, *Romanticism* (London: Continuum, 2007); Ian Duncan, *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: The Gothic, Scott, Dickens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).; Dale Townshend, 'Shakespeare, Ossian and the Problem of "Scottish Gothic"', in *Gothic Renaissance: A Reassessment*, ed. E. Bronfen and B. Neumeier (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014); Murray Pittock, 'Introduction: What Is Scottish Romanticism?', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Romanticism*, ed. Murray Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011).
[94] Murray Pittock's, 'Historiography'; Dafydd Moore, 'James Macpherson and Adam Ferguson: An Enlightenment Encounter'.
[95] Pittock, *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*; Murray Pittock, *Bonnie Prince Charlie: Charles Edward Stuart and the Jacobite Movement, 1720–2020* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2020).
[96] Leith Davis, *Jacobitism and Cultural Memory, 1688–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2025); Daniel Szechi, *The Jacobites: Britain and Europe, 1688–1788* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994); Connolly, *Jacobitism.*

Thinking about Scottish culture and national identity in Grant's work is complicated by the fact that while Grant viewed Scotland as a separate constitutional nation from England, she viewed the Highlands as demonstrative of an even sharper cultural contrast between the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic or Lowland and Highland worlds. Grant's thinking about the complexities of translation between Gaelic and English meant that it was necessary to research both oral tradition and literature with a focus upon the Scottish Highlands and the distinctiveness of Scots-Gaelic culture.[97]

While it may be tempting to regard Grant's philosophical understanding to be influenced most directly by the Scottish Enlightenment and her lived experience in the Scottish Highlands, her *Memoirs of an American Lady* and *Letters from the Mountains* demonstrate how her writing was informed, at least to some extent, through her experience of international and colonial travel. In constructing this thesis, it was imperative to consider how Grant's experience of travel informed her adherence to Cultural Jacobitism as a marginalised way of life, certain aspects of which are familiar to communities outside of the Gàidhealtachd.[98] Literature dealing with Native American culture was therefore also an important avenue of research for this project.[99] It was equally important to take into account Grant's domestic travel in the Highlands, specifically the period when she first arrived in the region as a young woman, perhaps prone to literary influence and a growing trend for Highland tourism which initially informed *Letters from the Mountains*.[100]

Outline of Chapters

[97] Newton, *Warriors*.
[98] Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel-Writing, 1770–1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).; McMillan, Dorothy, *The Scotswoman at Home and Abroad: Non-Fictional Writing, 1700–1900*, ASLS Annual Volume 29 (Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1999); Shirley Foster, *Across New Worlds: Nineteenth-Century Women Travellers and Their Writings* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990).
[99]Robbie Richardson, *The Savage and Modern Self: North American Indians in Eighteenth-Century British Literature and Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018); Tim Fulford, *Romantic Indians: Native Americans, British Literature, and Transatlantic Culture, 1756–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
[100] Nigel Leask, 'Fingalian Topographies: Ossian and the Highland Tour, 1760–1805', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39, no. 2 (June 2016): 183–96.

This thesis offers an integrated account of Grant's work, but it is structured by themes which correlate organically with the sequence of Grant's main publications and the development of her thought.

Chapter One, 'Poetry, Perspective, Politics and Polemics', deals largely with Grant's delineation of the history of the subjugation of Scotland by England, but also with the paradoxically parallel history of the subjugation of the Highland people by a majority Anglophone British populace, as represented in 'The Highlanders' in particular. It has been suggested that in this poem Grant's national and cultural allegiances seem compromised by the fact that her Scottishness seems to impede her Britishness, and vice versa. Kenneth McNeil observes how

> Grant's Scottishness is a bit 'off kilter'. She herself admits that images of the Scottish landscape can form no part of her actual childhood memory […] For the most part the only national label Grant assigns to herself is 'British'.[101]

This chapter provides a critical intervention in the debate, exploring some of the perceived incongruencies about Grant's national identity in the light of her poetry, highlighting how Grant's defence of Gaelic culture and the Scottish nation do not necessarily negate her claim to a British identity.

Chapter Two, 'Letters and Landscape', presents an analysis of Grant's *Letters from the Mountains,* outlining the writer's perceptions of her connection to the Highland landscape. Throughout *Letters from the Mountains,* Grant establishes connections between the Gaelic people and their indigenous habitat. This chapter considers how Grant's insistence upon the interconnectedness between landscape, language and biology are balanced against some of her personal anxieties around both landscape and social isolation. Coerced changes visited upon the Highlands, enabled largely by the demise of the counterbalance of political Jacobitism, are observed by Grant through the lens of Cultural Jacobitism.

In Chapter Three, '*Memoirs*, Travel, Memory and Mediation', I unpack some of Grant's perceptions of stadial progress with a view to notions of culture and identity that run

[101] McNeil, 'Location of Empire', 214-215.

throughout the thesis. Particular attention is paid to Grant's peripheral presence as a traveller and observer: thus, the chapter is framed with theoretical discussions around travel-writing at its core. In contrast to both the *Letters from the Mountains* and *Essays* (where the Scots-Highland people are contrasted with their lowland neighbours) the anthropological scope of the *Memoirs* is much broader, encompassing observations around various Native American tribes, the colonial Dutch community, the British military contingent, African slaves, French, German and Irish communities. While the *Memoirs* is presented by Grant as the biography of Aunt Schuyler, roughly halfway through the text merges into Grant's autobiography. I examine the overlap between the two women and consider Grant's use of Aunt Schuyler as a foil to present some of her own more controversial views. Linking this chapter to the overarching theme of Cultural Jacobitism is Grant's interpretation of the negative influence of Anglo-British imperialism upon both the Mohawk and Colonial Dutch communities, and allusion to the impact that same hegemony had in the Scottish Highlands.

Chapter Four '*Superstitions,* the Supernatural and Grant's Gaelic-Highland Identity', interprets Grant's *Essays on the Highlanders of Scotland,* not necessarily with a focus upon the writer's overt attempt at an informed and impartial description of Gaelic-Highland culture (which has already been extensively covered), but rather, her treatment of the supernatural in the Highlands. The chapter suggests that her avowedly impartial take on the supernatural is in fact a coded promotion of the survival and possible permanence of Cultural Jacobitism. Permeating Grant's analysis of the supernatural is the sense that she is part of (or at least, is attempting to align herself as part of) a peculiarly Highland strain of a cultural phenomenon. While the generic requirements of the *Essays* might encourage the assumption that it sits in Grant's oeuvre as her most determined attempt at an unbiased, scientific, anthropological work, in many regards it is the text that best displays her impassioned, rhetorical campaign for the preservation and perhaps the renaissance of Highland culture. Paradoxically, Grant's most concerted literary effort to distance herself from the people she documents for the sake of objectivity seemed only to draw her even closer to them.

The thesis concludes by way of a coda examining Grant's *Letters Concerning Persons Connected with the Stuart Cause*, a posthumously published collection of correspondence that was to remain from public view until sixty years after her death. In the published works that Grant oversaw, suggestions, insinuations, and allusions to Jacobite support are present; however, Grant had disavowed any direct ties to political Jacobitism and sought to dampen

any suggestions that she was disgruntled with the course of monarchical history. The material contained within the *Stuart Cause* serves to illuminate and consolidate Grant's actual connection to important Jacobite personages. In analysing this correspondence the extent of Grant's proximity to political Jacobitism becomes clearer, and an emphasis on lineage, genealogy and belonging connects this later work to a broader Cultural Jacobitism which preserved material 'prized as a rich trove of memories that opened a window to a vanished way of life in the nation's not-too-distant past'.[102] This prompts a broader consideration for the prospect of other cultural Jacobite survivals in Scottish literature of the nineteenth century.

In 1807, when Grant wrote in a letter of her inclination to 'love a Tory', she instantly qualified this: 'I mean not in any way a Jacobite, but one who loves the establishment under which we live'.[103] Yet, as this thesis will demonstrate, satisfaction with the establishment is a sentiment difficult to reconcile with Grant's persistent criticism of it, and the possible combination and separation of these two political identities represent complicated political allegiances and affective possibilities.[104] Grant's political sentiments varied according not only to the audience she was addressing but also to the time in her life that she wrote. References to her own political sympathies can be read alongside numerous coded and subliminal references to, as well as suggestive omissions around, Grant's Cultural Jacobitism.

In stressing Grant's Cultural Jacobitism I do not seek to position the writer merely as a proponent of a particular ideology, but rather delineate her cultural values and, perhaps most importantly, her patriotism for Scotland and the Highlands. Pittock has shown that, in Scotland at least, loyalty to the Jacobite cause could not be separated from a belief in Scottish nationalism and sovereignty.[105]

While some writers have previously linked Grant with Jacobitism, it is usually a sentimental kind; a kind that acknowledges not only the defeat of the Jacobite forces at Culloden but also posits that their defeat was preordained as was the inevitable defeat of the morals and

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[102] McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 97.
[103] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 121.
[104] Eveline Cruickshanks, *Political Untouchables: The Tories and the '45* (London: Duckworth, 1979), 113.
[105] Pittock, *Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, 57; Murray Pittock, *Bonnie Prince Charlie: Charles Edward Stuart and the Jacobite Movement, 1720–2020* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2020), 63.

principles upheld by the Jacobites, in order to make way for the forces of Improvement.[106] However, the significance of Grant's sense of connection to the Stuart dynasty should not be downplayed. In exploring Grant's observations of the people and places that she encounters, her philosophical speculations around the developments of humanity, her treatment of religion and spirituality as well as her interpretation of history and predictions for the future, the following chapters highlight how the various issues and concerns raised by Grant in her writing organically converged under the umbrella of a Cultural Jacobitism determinedly and persistently upheld in the face of significant adversity and pressure, against all odds.

For the purpose of this thesis, references to *Letters from the Mountains* pertain to the first edition (1806) unless otherwise stated in footnote. References to *Memoir and Correspondence* pertain to the second edition (1845) unless otherwise stated in footnote. All references to *Memoirs of an American Lady* are to the 1846 edition.

[106] Perkins '"Incongruous Things",' 192.

Chapter One: Poetry, Perspective, Politics and Polemics: 'The Highlanders'

The defeat of the Jacobite army at Culloden became burned into the collective memory of Gaelic speakers everywhere, irrespective of religion or political persuasion […] Important as the battle was at the time in terms of human loss, it became even more important as a symbol—the symbol of something like the end of independent Gaelic action. [107]

William Gillies

'The Highlanders': a Background to the Text

'The Highlanders' is the first of two long poems published by Grant, the other being *Eighteen Hundred and Thirteen: A Poem in Two Parts* (1814). 'The Highlanders' was originally published as part of Grant's coterie collection *Poems on Various Subjects* (1803) and is the largest poem in that collection. However, the poem would take a more prominent role a few years later with the publication of her second poetry anthology entitled '*The Highlanders' and other Poems* (1807). While the bulk of the second anthology comprises material that featured in the first it is, perhaps, contrary to Pam Perkins's suggestion, more than just a 'slightly revised' second edition of the *Poems*.[108] In the later volume, some poems are omitted from the first and three new sonnets are included. The new volume also shows editorial changes that suggest an historicising eye. For example, the title of one poem 'To a Young Lady deeply interested in the Subject of the Poem' becomes 'To a Lady deeply interested in the Subject of the Poem'. The omission of the word 'young' in the later anthology reflects Grant's acknowledgment that the person to whom the poem is addressed has (like the author of the poem) matured in the intervening period between publications. The suggestion here is that Grant views her poems as subject to the same constraints of time as the human beings they address or represent. In the shift to a title highlighting the poem 'The Highlanders', Grant takes pains to emphasise the importance of this poem and the topics it

[107] William Gillies, Gaelic Songs of the Forty-Five', *Scottish Studies*, 30 (1991), 40.
[108] Perkins, 'Anne MacVicar Grant (1755–1838)', 247.

raises, namely the rural idyll, the destruction of Gaelic-Highland culture, the symbiosis between Jacobitism and Scottish nationalism and the Highland Clearances. However, she also uses the poem to draw attention to her own complex identity and how her liminal perspective endows her with both the bardic credentials and enlightenment understanding required to give voice to a culture in jeopardy.[109]

In her posthumously published *Memoir and Correspondence,* Grant explained the origins and subject matter of 'The Highlanders':

> Being very much attached to my humble neighbours, I had one time written, as part of a letter, a page or two of poetical regret at the hard necessity that forced so many to emigrate. The friend who had preserved the effusion sent it home, and advised me to enlarge and complete the sketch. I did so; and thus, was finished "The Highlanders," the principal poem in the published collection;[110]

While there is no reason to doubt Grant's claim that 'The Highlanders' came to fruition only after a friend had encouraged her to produce the work, it is perhaps worth noting that it was common for women writers in Grant's era to disavow what was regarded as the masculine domain of literary agency in such modesty claims. Nevertheless, 'The Highlanders' was pivotal to the success that the writer would go on to achieve with her subsequent publications. According to Grant, *Poems on Various Subjects* attracted the largest list of subscribers of any Scottish text up to that date, more even than Burns' *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*.[111]

The faculty for composing verse would become especially relevant to Grant as a woman living in the Highlands. Part of what she regarded as the credentials of a genuine Highlander was the ability to compose verse extempore. The introduction to the first volume of *Memoir and Correspondence* is comprised partly of material found in Grant's personal papers after her death in 1838. Contained within these papers was a brief sketch of her early life. In this unfinished autobiographical account Grant coyly describes her poetic merits as mediocre, stating: 'I very early discovered a faculty for rhyming scarcely dignified to be worthy of the

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[109] Shields, 'Highland Emigration', 773.
[110] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 17.
[111] 'Three thousand names appear on the list of the subscribers to the Poems,-- a number, I am told, unequalled'. Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 17.

name poetry'.[112] She goes on to indicate that these poems were intended solely for the amusement of her friends and that she never kept any copies after forwarding them. Grant insists that the publication of the *Poems* was made possible because her coterie of friends got together to collate the poems and arrange them into a collection:

> Before I had ever heard of the project for my advantage, – indeed before the materials were collected, – Proposals were dispersed all over Scotland for publishing a volume of my Poems.[113]

In an unpublished letter sent to the Scottish minister and author Mackintosh Mackay (1793-1873) dated March 5th, 1830, Grant goes further by insinuating how the poems were 'forced from me by the kindly violence of friends'.[114]

Identity and Empathy

While different interpretations of certain aspects of 'The Highlanders' are in currency, the poem is largely viewed as a lament for the demise of the feudal Highland Clan System and the impact that this had on Gaelic-Highland culture.[115] Written during the Highland Clearances, 'The Highlanders' reads as a plea to authority to refrain from purging the Highlands of its native population, instead securing them a home in the British Isles. Yet whether Grant held the British government accountable for the depopulation of the Highlands is a point of contention. For example, certain complexities arise around the positioning of Grant as a 'patriotic Briton' when the writer's overt condemnation of English incursions into Scotland in 'The Highlanders' are taken into account.[116] At the very least, Grant's representation of the English in the poem suggest that her British patriotism is complicated by her interpretation that the relationship between England and her own Scotland has been historically detrimental to the latter. Anomalies such as this surrounding Grant's cultural, political and national loyalties are something that this chapter seeks to clarify. For if it is possible to garner a more accurate understanding of Grant's sense of identity and belonging

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[112] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 15.
[113] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 16.
[114] Anne Grant, 'Letter 8, Letters from Anne Grant Mainly to Mackintosh Mackay', manuscript msPR4728.G16M3, Special Collections, University of St. Andrews Library.
[115] Daly, 'Return no more'! 31; Gottlieb, 'Blameless Empires', 259.
[116] Perkins, '"Paradises Lost,"' 316.

in the world including her conception of Britain, what it meant for her to be Scottish, and her thoughts on Gaelic culture, then this offers a basis for explaining some of the ambiguities of her written work. My interpretation of 'The Highlanders' also aims to demonstrate Grant's incremental construction of her Highland identity, parts of which were susceptible to various reassessments by the writer in the wake of her further lived experience.

It is prudent to bear in mind that while one function of the poem's construction in English (rather than Gaelic) is to present (or translate) aspects of the Highlands that are ordinarily concealed from an Anglophone audience, it can also be read as Grant's way of petitioning sympathy for the region. Juliet Shields's observation that the English composition of Grant's poem constitutes an entreaty to the British establishment, necessarily admits Grant's conscious choice of language and acknowledges the writer's potential capacity to compose poetry in Scots-Gaelic.[117] Grant understood that, though the English language could not offer a perfect presentation of Highland culture, it was the language that would reach the people who would have the most influence over the future of the region. This sentiment is reinforced by the fact that, while the poem applauds some of the liberal policies and actions emerging among the English-led union of Great Britain and the efforts of the Government to put an end to the African Slave Trade, ultimately, it questions whether these same principles will be extended to the Gaelic Highlanders:

> To scenes of heartfelt sorrow turn your eye,
> Unlock the sacred source of sympathy;
> Nor let to Afric's wilds Compassion roam,
> While modest Anguish weeps unseen at home.[118]

This alliterative petition to English-speaking Britain to tap into its 'sacred source of sympathy' positions the English as at once powerful and tyrannical, yet also capable of mercy and compassion. Evan Gottlieb specifically identifies Grant's attempt to appeal to an English-speaking Lowland Scottish and English audience. He reads this passage as Grant's suggestion that some of the sympathy directed towards African slaves should be extended to the Gaelic Highland people.[119]

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[117] Shields, 'Highland Emigration', 773.
[118] Grant, *Poems*, 29.
[119] Gottlieb, 'Blameless Empires', 256.

One contemporary reviewer responded to Grant's appeal with a greater degree of irony than sympathy, observing, 'The migration of a Highland tribe to a country different from our own must certainly be regarded as an evil, but not of such magnitude as to absorb all the sources of our pity'.[120] While modern readers will likely agree with the contemporary reviewer that the horrors of the Highland Clearances are not comparable to the horrors of the African Slave Trade, the reviewer's attempt to downplay the malevolence of the Highland Clearances and diminish the extent of xenophobia directed towards the Highland people is palpable. It is worth considering the bias, ignorance and broadly anti-Celtic sentiment that motivated and underpinned articles such as this.[121] The overarching force of the poem, however, remains in the idea that the poet holds the Anglocentric British Government just as responsible for the inhumane treatment of the Gaelic inhabitants of Great Britain as they are for the treatment of African slaves.

Gaelic Culture, Clearance and Proscription

The poem unfolds at the turn of Spring: the remnants of the harsh Highland winter are acutely observed, and this leads to the contrasting aspirations of optimism and pessimism that underpin the introductory stanzas.

> The primrose, Iris and the daisy pied,
> With bashful sweets bedeck'd the mountainside;
> And even from bogs with chilly moisture drown'd,
> Our hardy myrtle scatter'd fragrance round.[122]

Immediately, the narrator presents the reader with a description of the Scottish Myrtle, a hardy flower that brings life to the Highlands even in winter. (This flower plays a significant rhetorical role later in the poem.) Yet, the poem's initial balance, reflecting the cyclical harmony of the Highland seasons, is disrupted with the narrator's observation that, this

[120] *The Monthly Review, or Literary Journal*, 1752-1825; London, vol. 44 (July 1804) 272-280, 274.
[121] *The Monthly Review*, 274
[122] Grant, *Poems*, 22.

spring, something is not quite right. The narrator begins by acknowledging the recent depopulation of the natural scene:

> While, health and light and spring return once more:
> But who, alas, can spring's delights restore?
> Since social joys and cheerful toils are dead,
> And all the train of mountain virtues fled.[123]

It is prudent to bear in mind that even the utility of nature as an expression of sentimentalism (thus supposedly removed from any concerted polemical tract) can mask the writer's desire to challenge what they perceive to be political and cultural threats.[124] The narrator observes here that the return of spring is most welcome, but, owing to the Highland Clearances, there may be no native Gaels present in the Highlands to welcome its return. It is worth highlighting Grant's use of the phrase 'once more' when describing the return of spring as a point of contrast with her subsequent repetition of the term 'no more' throughout the remainder of the poem. This sombre observation can be read as an allusion to both the defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden and the ramifications of the Highland Clearances. Leith Davis has discussed the various ways in which Jacobitism was recollected and re-presented in the early nineteenth century. In reference to Grant's 'The Highlanders' she observes:

> Whereas the trial and execution pamphlets and popular histories that circulated immediately after the 1715 and 1745 risings were concerned to dissuade readers from feeling compassion for the Jacobites, in 'The Highlanders', Grant attempts to develop readerly identification with the people involved in the rising'.[125]

The prominence of the narrator's physical presence develops further with the trope of a mediatory ascent affording the reader a glimpse of a social scene otherwise obscured by a mountain range:

> Pensive and slow, I climb the mountain brow,
> To view each social hamlet's mutual plough;

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[123] Grant, *Poems*, 22-23.
[124] Gerard Lee McKeever, *Enlightened Fictions and the Romantic Nation,* 12.
[125] Davis, *Jacobitism and Cultural Memory,* 70-71.

To see the cluster'd cottages around,
Where tranquil peace and rural joy were found.[126]

Climbing to a suitable vantage point, the narrator is now able to describe the view. The very act of 'climbing' these mountains, however, is important. Grant's oeuvre is permeated with reflections upon the competency of the natives in negotiating their terrain with ease.[127] It is also, according to Grant, the native population alone who can truly appreciate their environment. Thus, the narrator's ascent being 'pensive and slow' should not perhaps be automatically regarded merely as the generic ruminative surveillance of prospect poetry as an eighteenth-century genre; instead the slow pace of the viewer is based on a different model of absorption, the contemplative manner of an indigenous Highlander in tune with their environment.

The scene opens optimistically enough, with descriptions of social hamlets and mutual ploughs. However, the operative word in the last line of the stanza, it seems, is 'were'. This foreboding incorporation of past tense suggests that something has happened to purge the 'joy' from the scene. The narrator goes on to induce a sense of nostalgia as they reminisce about a lost time and a lost space. The sense that these hamlets once epitomised a congenial society but are now devoid of humanity is conveyed with the narrator's rhyming couplet:

In vain my eyes the length'ning vale explore,
From hillocks green the blues smokes rise no more.[128]

The phrase 'no more' is used by Grant here for the first time in the poem. This references the traditional Gaelic refrain 'we shall return no more' (*cha till sinn tuilleadh*), a phrase with a specifically Jacobite resonance in the form of the song MacCrimmon's lament, also echoed by Walter Scott in *Waverley*.[129] Kirsten Daly notes how the phrase 'return no more' functions

[126] Grant, *Poems*, 22-23.
[127] For examples, see: *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1, 286, *Essays*, 1, 32 and *Letters*, 3, 111-113.
[128] Grant, *Poems*, 24.
[129] In her novel *Clan-Albin,* Christian Isobel Johnstone explains the term 'no more': 'This is a wild desponding strain, sung or played by the Highlanders on leaving their country'. Christian Isobel Johnstone, *Clan-Albin,* ed. Andrew Monnickendam (Glasgow: The Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2003), 62.

'as a repressed echo' in Grant's poem, beginning to suggest a different dynamic of languages and cultures to a simple sentimental appeal to an Anglophone readership.[130]

Representative of the contrast between community and landscape (or humanity and nature) is the visual contrast between the blue smoke of human activity among the green hillocks. The absence of the former diminishes the latter both aesthetically and emotionally. While the landscape may remain, the romantic essence of the Highland scene, the juxtaposition between people and nature, has vanished. Where the absence of the colour blue indicates the absence of human activity visually, equally telling is the absence of certain sounds:

> No more the pibroch wakes the martial strain,
> No more the clan's proud standard waves amain.[131]

The lack of music in the hamlet runs parallel to the lack of visual contrast in the landscape. The Highland region is incomplete without the Highland people. But again, the repetition of the Gaelic lament 'No more…' re-inscribes a particular melancholy 'air' into the scene. The absence of the 'martial strain' from the landscape is more than mere nostalgic sentiment and can be interpreted as a stark warning to the people of Britain regarding their future. In noting the absence of the martial force from the scene, Grant is implying that the depletion of a society known for their prowess in battle may leave Scotland, thus mainland Britain, vulnerable to a French invasion via the Highlands. There is also another component to Grant's warning, which is that the removal from Britain of a society that adheres to traditional values such as valour, honour, strength and bravery might leave the nation devoid of a strong masculine contingent, at a time when the men from the ruling classes of Europe were coming under scrutiny in terms of assumed norms of masculinity and effeminacy.[132]

Also remarkable in this stanza is Grant's incorporation of the Gaelic term 'pibroch'. It is significant that in a poem catering to the Anglophone reader Grant uses this term rather than the English equivalent, 'piper'. Pam Perkins has recently established the importance of Grant's incorporation of the Gaelic rather than English terms, in *Letters from the Mountains.*

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[130] Kirsten Daly, '"Return No More!": Highland Emigration and Romantic Nostalgia', *Literature and History* 9, no. 1 (2000), 25.
[131] Grant, *Poems*, 24.
[132] McKeever, *Dialectics of Improvement*, 7.

Grant does this, Perkins argues, not in an attempt to differentiate or alienate her reader, but rather to highlight how certain Gaelic terms impart connotations that have no counterpart in the English language. Thus, the inclusion and highlighting of individually selected terms encourages the Anglophone reader to research Gaelic culture and 'move beyond their monolingual ways of thinking about landscape'.[30] While such an interpretation is completely viable in the context of Grant's letter-writing, there remains a prosodic sense in which Grant's use of the term 'pibroch' instead of 'pipe' is meant as a correction to Anglophone conceit and an attempt to unsettle or alienate her reader. By 1803, when Grant's *Poems* was published, the image of the Highland piper in mainstream Britain had undergone various transformations: from that of a martial figure, to the mid-eighteenth-century symbol of the 'barbaric alien' Jacobite, emasculated by the defeat at Culloden, and subsequently by 1803, when Grant's *Poems* was published they were viewed as the 'morally untainted and exemplary defender of Britain'.[133] Bearing in mind the broadly pastoral genre of 'The Highlanders', it is conceivable that Grant chose the harsher sounding term 'pibroch' over the more melodic term 'piper' to reinforce the sentiment that the Highland piper was still an imposing figure and that masculine virtues such as valour, and bravery were integral but intangible aspects of Highland culture that could not be destroyed either by war or by literary convention.

In keeping with sentiments later expressed by Grant in her *Essays*, and in contrast to the retrospective finality of writers like Macpherson and Scott, the speaker of the poem suggests that while the present situation in the Highlands appears bleak, the spirit of the Highlands has not yet been extinguished, and the culture is still redeemable. In an attempt to demonstrate her own bardic credentials, Grant has her narrator reintroduce song to the scene as if to offset and perhaps reverse some of the negative impacts of modernity and Improvement:

> Tell in what secret cave, or whispering shade,
> Thy harp of sadly-pleasing sound is laid,
> (whose plaintive tones, so sweet to OSSIAN's ear,
> The child of sorrow still delights to hear,)
> That my bold hand may wake its strings again,

[133] Andrew Mackillop, *'More Fruitful than Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715–1815* (East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 2000), 205.

> And teach the mountain echoes to complain:[134]

This reference to Ossian is an invitation to the reader to compare and contrast this poem with the writing of James Macpherson (1736-1796) and also to consider the insinuations and purposes of such a comparison. Macpherson had once been regarded in Scotland, Britain and Europe as a guardian of Scots-Gaelic culture, history, language and folklore. In the stanza above, there is the suggestion that Grant saw herself as Macpherson's successor in the role of Highland bard.

I have already demonstrated how, in part one of the poem, the speaker offers their eyes and ears to the reader to witness the desolation of the contemporary landscape. In part two they reveal their power to bring the Highlands to life through the faculty of memory. For Grant, the remedy for the dilapidated Highland culture in Scotland was to be found in the invocation of memories, via the bard. At the opening of part two, the narrator reveals their own bardic credentials, indicating that through this cultural memory the reader can envisage what the Highlands were like prior to the Battle of Culloden:

> Come then, explore with me each winding glen,
> Far from the noisy haunts of busy men […][135]

The (presumably) 'native' narrator sets about explaining to the (presumably) 'non-native' reader the attractions of the sublime Highland landscape compared with those considered either more beautiful or more economically viable elsewhere:

> Come, trace with curious search what secret cause
> Each native's heart with strong attraction draws,
> Though wealth in happier lands her stores unlock,
> To cling with fervour to his native rock
> Why lonely mountains, dark with russet heath,
> And rushing streams, and narrow vales beneath;
> With more delight his wand'ring eye detain,

[134] Grant, *Poems,* 23.
[135] Grant, *Poems*, 31.

Than FORTH's rich banks, or LOTHIAN's fertile plain.[136]

The link between indigeneity and appreciation of the Highland landscape is perceptible. Crucially, Grant contrasts the Highland landscape not with areas in England but with places in the Lowlands of Scotland. In distinguishing between the landscapes of the Lowlands and the Highlands in this way, Grant emphasises an alterity within the Scottish nation, bringing into question the very concept of a unified 'Scottish' identity and advocating for the protection of both Gaelic language and culture in the nineteenth-century British state.

After having determined a distinction between the Highland landscape and the landscape of the Lowlands, the narrator then goes on to suggest an even sharper distinction between Highland peasantry, happy in their freedom and harmony with nature, and the peasantry in Anglophone Britain:

Where grovelling interest draws each sordid plan,
And all things feel improvement's aid but man.
To plod in dull mechanic sort their lot,
And vegetate upon the self-same spot [137]

The life of the Highland peasantry is contrasted favourably with the supposedly dull and monotonous existence of peasants outside of the Highlands whose destiny, according to the narrator is 'To plod in dull mechanic sort' and 'vegetate' upon the same confined plot of land.[138] It is worth noting here that though Grant edited and published this poem at the age of forty-eight, she invoked precisely the same imagery when penning a letter to Mrs. Reid in 1773.[139] Grant's use of the term 'plodding' both in the letter as a teenager and later in this poem suggests that it is specifically the Lowland society that she is contrasting with the Highland people. Evidently, Grant's attitude towards the Lowland people had retained a sense of disdain and pity thirty years on.

[136] Grant, *Poems*, 32.
[137] Grant, *Poems*, 33.
[138] Grant, *Poems*, 33.
[139] In *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant writes 'These creatures [goats]have more sense, and spirit than heavy-headed sheep; they differ just as Highlanders do from plodding lowlanders', 1: 53.

Besides these socioeconomic comparisons, contemporary abstract notions around landscape are also touched on by Grant in the poem to differentiate the geography of the Highlands from that of the Lowlands. While at the time in which Grant wrote the Highland landscape was regarded as awe-inspiring and set against picturesque and beautiful areas elsewhere in Britain,[140] the narrator suggests that through a familiarity with their environment and the production and transmission of oral songs and folklore passed down through the generations, the native Highland population interpreted it a different way to outside visitors of the region:

> Far to the North, where Scotia's Alps arise,
> And shroud their white heads in misty skies;
> In peopled straths, where winding streams prolong,
> Their course familiar in the CELTIC song.[141]

In chapter two I provide a substantive overview of the significance of language in the process of Grant's acclimatisation to the Highland topography. Here though I briefly observe Grant's juxtaposition of how the English reader, presented with the 'shrouded' sublimity of 'Scotia's Alps', is alienated from the scenery, yet this same scenery is 'familiar' to the native inhabitant, documented in local 'song'. Notably, Grant inverts the usual understanding of the concept of rural idyll here. Pastoral scenes are presented as boring and monotonous, and the Highlands is presented as a more energetic, uplifting and natural abode. In incorporating the term 'Scotia's Alps', Grant implies that Scotland has a majestic topography capable of rivalling that of continental Europe. There is also the suggestion that the mountains of the Highlands are the seat of Scotland and that it is the rural Highlands and not the urban Lowlands (Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen etc.) that should be regarded as Scotland proper. Indicative of this is the fact that the landscape of Scotia is suitably conveyed not in the English language but in the Gaelic of the 'Celtic song'.

In the following chapter I explore how Grant's condemnation of the destruction of the Highland landscape pre-empted environmental concerns that would become highly significant two hundred years later. In 'The Highlanders', however, Grant raises another issue relevant to our own time; that of animal welfare. While the modern and Improved farming

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[140] Stafford, *Sublime Savage*, 174.
[141] Grant, *Poems*, 33-34.

methods introduced to the Highlands were presented as economically superior, in much the same way as she questions the impact of Improvement upon the human population of the Highlands, Grant perhaps in a partially literal and partially allegorical sense, highlights the impact of Improvement upon the Highland animals as well as the humans and natural landscape. Prior to the 'Highland Clearances' and the introduction of large-scale, industrial sheep-farming, raising livestock and pastoral farming had been an integral aspect of Highland life. Grant's narrator looks favourably upon the conditions of livestock in the Highlands and invites a comparison with the conditions imposed upon livestock by the incumbent Lowland and English landowners and livestock traders that flocked to the region after Culloden:

> Here all is open as the ambient sky,
> Nor fence, nor wall, obstructs the wandering eye:
> Each hamlet's flocks and herds, a mutual charge,
> That wander up the mountain's side at large.[142]

Traditional Highland culture facilitated the animals being able to 'wander…at large', and the narrator frames this as being in harmony with nature. While the narrator literally addresses the condition of animals here, the allegorical implication is that the sheep, like the people, possessed more freedom under the old feudal system than they do now under the 'improved', liberal democratic system. Lowland culture, conversely, is built on unnatural constraint and enclosure. The remedy to this imbalance offered by Grant is a return to tradition, arrived at by a resurgence in Cultural Jacobitism.

The narrator then returns to the topic of emigration. In what is perhaps the most commented upon stanza in the poem, the narrator stresses that the forced and coerced mass emigrations recently visited upon the Highlands were morally unjustifiable:

> Say, banish'd masters of the tuneful art,
> Who sway with latent pow'r the willing heart,
> Where are you now? Across Atlantic's roar
> Do your sad eyes your native hills explore?[143]

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[142] Grant, *Poems*, 34.
[143] Grant, *Poems,* 25.

Here is a clear reference to the Clearances, with both the destination (across the Atlantic) and the starting point (native hills) being highlighted. A general theme noted by historians linking the defeat of the Jacobite forces at the Battle of Culloden (1746) to the coerced or forced emigrations is the motivation behind the desire to 'banish' the Highland people from Britain owing to their Celticity.[144] The pivotal word in this stanza then is 'banish'd'. The narrator is explicit in describing how the Highland emigrants undertook the journey to the Americas against their will. Towards the end of the poem, Grant again incorporates this term rhetorically asking, 'Is it a time to banish from our coast / The few who uncorrupted manners boast?'[145]

In the final part of the poem the narrator broaches the topic of the Act of Proscription (1746)[146], highlighting how the Clearances and Proscriptions can be regarded as symbiotic in that the latter was fundamentally a method to facilitate the former. Grant's poem conveys the notion that the Proscriptions, initiated under the guise of preventing a further Jacobite uprising, were actually part of a wider method of control by which the Anglo-British hegemony could deprive the Gaelic-Highland people of their cultural heritage. Two fundamental aspects of the Proscriptions that Grant singles out for criticism in her poem are the prohibition of weapons and Highland dress, and the restrictive nighttime curfews. In objecting to the disarming of Highland men, Grant suggests that the primary aim of these policies was the destruction of integral aspects of Highland life:

> No longer arm'd the sylvan haunts explore,
> And thunder from the fatal tube no more:
> No missile weapons, bright with silver, grace
> The long-descended sons of generous race [147]

Grant sees this Act as a punishment imposed upon the Gaelic-Highlanders by a decadent and effeminate people that cannot comprehend the heroic virtues of the people that they oppress.

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[144] Murray Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 234.
[145] Grant, *Poems*, 106.
[146] Matthew P. Dziennik, 'Whig Tartan: Material Culture and Its Use in the Scottish Highlands, 1746–1815', *Past & Present*, no. 217 (November 2012): 117–47, 122.
[147] Grant, *Poems,* 101.

With her inclusion of the phrase ‘no more’ in the above stanza, Grant invites the reader to extend sympathy for the ramifications of the disarming of Highland men. The linking of weapons to the act of hunting for sustenance in this stanza prompts the reader to consider Grant’s own three-stage theory of humanity, where the heroic age of the hunter takes precedence over the initial stage of barbarity and the final age of extravagance. While hunting for food had largely become an obsolete practice in English-speaking Britain, it was still a key aspect of Highland life prior to the breaking of the clans.[148]

Grant then explicitly identifies the banning of plaid and tartan as being detrimental to Gaelic-Highland culture:

> The home-spun garb, that, bright with various dyes
> Was wont to please the simple native's eyes
> Checker'd with dusky hues, and changing green,
> To steal upon the watchful deer unseen:
> Or form in folds, with easy grace display'd
> In simple drapery, the belted plaid;
> By the long lapse of years habitual grown,
> Endur'd the rigid law's forbidding frown * [149]

The opening line of this stanza alludes to the self-sufficiency of the Highland people and how the individual could take pride in the production of their clothing. This is something that those who sought to colonise the Highlands were keen to modernise (often leaning on Adam Smith’s theory around the division of labour).[150] There is a clear emphasis here on the unique clothing that is ‘home-spun’ and ‘native’. Peter Womack reads Grant’s poem as an ‘unconscious dialogue with Smith’ stating ‘Grant accepts, in a neat hostile summary of *The Wealth of Nations,* that in the commercialised south, “grovelling interest draws each sordid plan, / And all things feel improvement’s aid but man.” But the Highlands are, or at least were different’.[151] The alliterative culmination of this stanza is accompanied by an asterisk which informs the reader that Grant felt the need to explain the details surrounding this

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[148] James Logan, *The Scottish Gaël; or, Celtic Manners as Preserved among the Highlanders*, 2nd ed., ed. Alexander Stewart (Edinburgh: Maclachlan and Stewart, 1876), 46–47.
[149] Grant, *Poems,* 103.
[150] Peter Womack, *Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands*, 42.
[151] Womack, *Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands*, 128.

expression in her substantial ‘Notes on The Highlanders’. In the corresponding note, Grant explains how the term ‘forbidding frown’ references what she deems the unjust prohibitions of dress and weapons imposed upon the Highland people. She states:

> Nothing could depress the Highlanders more than depriving them of a national habit which they greatly preferred to any other, and found better adapted to the purposes of hunting, climbing mountains, fishing, and above all, sleeping out in the heaths, which they often did wrapped in the plaid, the colours of which were so well suited to the woods and dusky verdure of their high grounds that they could come very near their game unperceived.[152]

It is important to observe Grant’s terminology here and how she positions the Highlanders as having ‘national’ customs distinguishing their ‘nationality’ from that of their lowland Scottish counterparts.

Another connected theme raised by Grant in ‘The Highlanders’ is that of the desire of native Highlanders to be buried among their ancestors on Highland soil. When discussing the death of a clan chief in France, one of his followers laments:

> Not long upon that alien shore
> My banish’d master pin’d;
> With silent grief we saw his corpse
> To common earth consigned.[153]

As mentioned at the start of this section, the flora of the Highlands plays a significant role in the poem in terms of reifying the identity of the Highland men that find themselves exiled abroad. If it was not possible for a Highlander to be buried on his own soil, then it was customary for the deceased to be buried among plants imported from the Highlands. Having made contingencies for the death of a kinsmen, the Highland men in Grant's poem brought with them to France certain flora native to Scotland:

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[152] Grant, *Poems*, 136-137.
[153] Grant, *Poems*, 154.

> We strew'd the tomb with rosemary,
> We warter'd it with tears;
> And bade the Scottish thistle round,
> Erect his warlike spears. [154]

As previously noted, Pam Perkins has explored Grant's use of the Gaelic term for plants in her *Letters.* While various motives for Grant's interspersing of the Gaelic terminology for flowers in the *Letters* are considered by Perkins, notably, in 'The Highlanders' Grant opted to use the English names for the flowers instead. One potential reason for this difference could pertain to generic parameters or expectations. Perkins suggests that Grant's incorporation of the Gaelic terms for plants in the *Letters* 'well before she began to learn Gaelic' could be indicative of the writer's attempt at translating the landscape, 'defamiliarizing them [flowers] to her readers and thereby encouraging fresh ways of seeing'. Of course, the letters open to analysis were initially private correspondence. In 'The Highlanders', Grant's emphasis is upon a rhetorical petition rather than empirical explanation; the process of defamiliarization or alienation of the Anglophone reader would not suit this purpose.

Another point to consider in this stanza is the symbolic connection between biology and landscape, as the narrator imagines that it is the tears of the other Highlanders that nourish the Highland flora. In her *Essays*, Grant incorporates the imagery of another plant, Myrtle, in conjunction with a different symbolic bodily fluid when condemning the Highland Clearances:

> Whoever rudely tears them from their birth place, and the tombs of their forefathers, may be compared to Aeneas, when he tore up the myrtle plants from the grave of Polydore, and saw the roots drop blood.[155]

Grant's emphasis upon the interdependency between the indigenous Highland people and the Highland landscape is something that I address further in Chapter Two. However, it is useful to observe here not only how the sentiments expressed by Grant are in keeping with certain influential ideals of romantic nationalism that viewed 'blood' and 'homeland' as requisite

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[154] Grant, *Poems*, 154.
[155] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 156.

companions,[156] but, also how they resonate with the concept of *dùthchas* (loosely translated to a sense of belonging to a particular place), in traditional Gaelic exile poetry.[157]

'The Highlanders' and Discourses of Emigration

As demonstrated thus far, topics such as the Acts of Proscription, the Jacobite Rebellion, the aftermath of Culloden, the Highland Clearances and the political and dynastic tensions between England and Scotland are presented by a narrator with a distinct bias towards the point of view of the Highlands. Grant arguably treats the topic of emigration with the sympathy of one removed from the Highland Clearances, yet at the same time she extends empathy in a manner that suggests she has a connection to it. Not subject to precisely the same clearing as those Highlanders forcibly removed owing to cultural and ethnic ties, Grant nevertheless experienced forms of coerced emigration in her life, first from America to Scotland and then from Glasgow to the Highlands. Also, Grant had lived in an area that was subject to clearance, and this empirical knowledge served not only as the basis for this poem, but also for her *Essays*. Grant's treatment of the topic of emigration is therefore pivotal to understanding the extent of her Cultural Jacobitism.

There has been a degree of critical contention surrounding the way the Clearances are presented in 'The Highlanders'. The readings of the poem advanced by Kirsten Daly and Juliet Shields involve the question of whether Grant is pro- or anti-emigration. While care is needed to avoid generalisation about how particular contemporary political factions responded to the Highland Clearances, Daly implies that Grant is prone to a particularly Whiggish interpretation of the forces that promoted the emigration of the Gaelic-Highland people to the Americas; and it is with Whiggish philosophy in general that Daly aligns Grant.[158] In contrast, Shields interprets 'The Highlanders' as evidence of Grant's insistence that Gaelic-Highland culture will not survive if it is forced to relocate and that it is morally better to incorporate the Highland people into the British nation rather than exiled abroad. Shields reads 'The Highlanders' not as Grant's acceptance of Whiggish modernity, but, rather

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[156] Hans Kohn, 'Romanticism and the Rise of German Nationalism', *The Review of Politics* 12, no. 4 (October 1950): 443–72, 460.
[157] Michael Newton, 'Gaelic Literature and the Diaspora', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature*, vol. 2, edited by Ian Brown, Thomas Clancy, Susan Manning, and Murray Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 356.
[158] Kirsten Daly, '"Return No More!"' 31.

as a conservative lament against the geographical, cultural and political changes taking place in the Highlands.[159]

While Daly's interpretation seems to be the less successful of the two with other critics, such as Gottlieb,[160] within her oeuvre Grant did in fact promote the merits of migration of the Highland people to North America. In *Memoirs of an American Lady,* Grant explains how Canada is the perfect environment for transplanted cultures such as the Highland people to continue their traditions and culture uninterrupted. She writes:

> These provinces are peopled for the most part with inhabitants of true British hearts and principles; veterans who have shed their blood [...] clusters of emigrants who have fled unacquainted with the refinements, and free from the contaminations of the old world.[161]

Notable here is Grant's idea that owing to expansive Improvement and re-education in the Highlands, the traditional morals associated with Highland culture are endangered and, for her, the Highland region has been 'contaminated' by the old world. This negative reference to the 'old world' could be seen as a somewhat peculiar analogy given Grant's apologism for antiquated cultures. But Grant views the old world (established European nations such as France, Prussia and Britain) as already defeated by the refinement associated with liberalism, and she regards Canada, rather than the liberal Republic of the United States, as a place suitable for both the Highland emigrants and Native Americans to secure their cultures. Elsewhere in the *Memoirs* Grant speaks warmly of her father's intentions to cultivate land in the Flats near New York and 'people it with Highland emigrants'.[162]

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[159] Juliet Shields, 'Highland Emigration', 776.
[160] Daly argues that Grant's poem endorses the emigration of the Highland people to the Americas (as this offers them a chance for a fresh start while keeping much of their culture intact), accepts the futility of political Jacobitism, and gives her endorsement to the 1707 Act of Union. In his article, 'Blameless Empires and Long-Forgotten Melodies: Anne Grant's "The Highlanders", Walter Scott's *The Lay of the Last Minstrel,* and the Poetry of Sympathetic Britishness', Evan Gottlieb disagrees with Daly's interpretation: she is wrong to conclude that Grant's poem defends the practice of Highland emigration to North America', 256.
[161] Grant. *Memoirs*, 294. *This passage undoubtedly speaks of Highland emigrants. In the *Letters*, Grant distinguishes between the 'Saxons' of England and the Lowlands and the 'true Celtic British' of The Highlands, 1: 180. The notes to this passage (in the *Memoirs*) also congratulate the work of Lord Selkirk in facilitating 'ample justice' for the Highland people.
[162] Grant. *Memoirs*, 238.

Nevertheless, the current critical analysis of 'The Highlanders' offers a binary of two alternative ways of interpreting both 'nostalgia' and 'emigration': The former, proposed by Gottlieb[163] and Shields argues that Grant desired the British Government to help the Highlanders integrate into mainstream British culture. The latter, Daly's contention, argues that Grant wished for the Highlanders to transplant their culture overseas to America. I believe, however, that by taking Grant's Cultural Jacobitism into account, there is a third way of interpreting the poem. 'The Highlanders' suggests that Grant's desire was that the Gaelic-Highland population should be assisted in keeping their culture intact, yet also permitted to exist in their homeland, free from interference and undisturbed by mainstream British culture. While I agree with Shields's assertion that Grant was anti-emigration,[164] I believe the suggestion that Grant envisaged a Britain where the Highland people would be culturally absorbed and consolidated into the greater nation is ill-founded given the writer's consistent remonstrations against cosmopolitanism.[165] Specifically, Shields's claim around Highland people integrating into the British nation is at odds with Grant's protests in her *Essays* that it is precisely such encroachments of Enlightened English manners into the Highlands that have been responsible for the deterioration of Gaelic-Highland culture. In particular Grant notes how the Highland communities were underpinned by ties of 'love, pride, courage, patriotism' and, perhaps most significantly, of 'independence'.[166] For Grant, the chivalrous virtues that persist in the Highlands (but are notably absent elsewhere) were forged and maintained through cultural seclusion.[167]

Grant's Cultural Jacobitism is foregrounded in the poem by her arguments for the British to help preserve Highland culture. Grant stresses that it is English-speaking Britain that owes the Gaelic-Highlanders a debt of gratitude for assisting them both at home against Napoleon, and in securing colonies in the Americas. While there were no concerted efforts toward either an independent Gàidhealtachd, a jostling for national cultural prominence, or what Silke Stroh terms 'agitation for an independent re-gaelicized Scotland' [168] after Culloden, we

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[163] 'While Daly is correct to assert that Grant "situates herself as a nostalgic mourner whose aims are to record and celebrate the practices of a vanished culture," however, she is wrong to conclude that Grant's poem defends the practice of Highland emigration to North America'. Gottlieb, 'Blameless Empires', 256.
[164] Shields, 'Highland Emigration', 775.
[165] For example see: Grant, *Essays*, 1: 10.
[166] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 15.
[167] 'In the first place, the great distinction by which these people are marked out, as differing from any other we know, is their unbroken lineage; that uninterrupted series that has descended from the first occupiers of these secluded districts'. Grant, *Essays*, 1: 16.
[168] Stroh, 'Racist Reversals', 214.

nevertheless find throughout Grant's oeuvre subliminal suggestions of a desire for a protection of Gaelic culture, best facilitated by a form of cultural isolation. And there are suggestions in 'The Highlanders' poem to support the claim that Grant viewed the Highland people as deserving of the right to self-determination—something that would work against the cultural erosion that accompanied integration into wider British, Enlightenment society:

> But wherefore exil'd? while afar they rove,
> Still grow the filial breasts with patriot love;
> The thoughts of home still aching at their heart,
> While distance only aggravates the smart.
> Did not their hard hands earn with patient toil
> Their scanty pittance from the rugged soil?[169]

This stanza refers not to emigrants who have settled in the Americas of their own volition, but to those who enlisted in the British military and subsequently found themselves without a homeland. An interpretation of this stanza is that the Highland people in general deserve a reward for their martial duties and sacrifices, a reward in the form of their homes being returned to them and safeguarded by a protection of their traditional cultural habits and practices. Prior to 1745, the Highland peasantry had rented land from their clan chiefs (usually kinsmen).[170] They paid for this land with goods produced from the soil and used their produce as currency to trade.[171] After the collapse of the Clan System the farms that they once lived and worked on were bought by English and Lowland businessmen and transformed into land for sheep.[172] The stanza above suggests that Grant is critical of the manner in which the Highland people have been treated, and insistent that they should once again be permitted to live and work upon their own 'rugged soil'.

This alternative interpretation, arrived at via my positioning of Grant as a Cultural Jacobite, may appear conjectural when based solely on the evidence of this stanza. For example, the

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[169] Grant, *Poems*, 26.
[170] F. Clifford-Vaughan, "Disintegration of a Tribal Society: The Decline of the Clans in the Highlands of Scotland," *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, no. 43 (December 1974): 74–75.
[171] Sir John Scott Keltie, *The Scottish Highlands, Highland Clans and Highland Regiments*, vol. 2, para. 11 (Project Gutenberg edition), https://www.mirrorservice.org/sites/ftp.ibiblio.org/pub/docs/books/gutenberg/5/9/4/6/59469/59469-h/59469-h.htm
[172] Silke Stroh, 'The Modern Nation-State and Its Others: Civilizing Missions at Home and Abroad, ca. 1600 to 1800', *Gaelic Scotland in the Colonial Imagination: Anglophone Writing from 1600 to 1900* (2017), 73–74.

term ‘rugged soil’ could alternatively be read as Grant’s request for recompensed land in the Americas, where the Highland soldiers had been sent to fight and where her father had considered establishing a community of his compatriot Highlanders. Yet, in conjunction with what Grant has to say of this form of recompense in her other long poem, *Eighteen Hundred and Thirteen,* a much more convincing version of this interpretation can be presented. In the later poem, Grant repeats the assertion first advanced in ‘The Highlanders’ that, in return for assisting the British nation in securing victory over the French, the Highland people should be rewarded with a restoration of their traditional, pre-Culloden cultural status, that could be traced to antiquity or ‘ancient’ times:

> And may success thy generous toils reward;
> Her peasants thus to ancient rights restored,
> No more shall languish for their absent lord,
> No more Oppression’s iron grasp deplore,
> And lend rash aid to foreign foes no more:[173]

Michael Newton asserts that ‘Many clans saw Jacobitism as a means of restoring their losses’ and that ‘Scottish Gaels as a whole saw the potential of being restored to their rightful place within Scotland’.[174] Thus for Grant the ‘toils’ of the Highland soldiers who fought against the French should be ‘rewarded’, but more importantly, they should be ‘restored’. The ‘ancient rights’ that Grant wishes to see ‘restored’ pertain to the hereditary feudal Clan system set within the ancestral homeland of the Highland people. This sense of a culture of heredity is reflected in the ideology of Jacobitism, whose position it was to reverse the assault upon heredity in the wake of the Glorious Revolution.[175] In Grant’s vision, only when these changes to Highland society are reversed will the ‘absent lord’ be a thing of the past and the lower orders of Highland society once again feel secure. The Highland men will also then no longer be deployed to ‘lend rash aid to foreign foes’. This request for a reversal of the Improvements visited upon the Highlands as reward for services rendered against the French in Europe reinforces an interpretation of ‘The Highlanders’ as Grant’s plea for the Highland

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[173] Anne Grant, *Eighteen Hundred and Thirteen a Poem in Two Parts*, (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1814) 92.
[174] Newton, *Warriors* 34.
[175] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 17

people to be permitted to remain in their homeland; crucially, however, to remain culturally independent of Anglophone culture, rather than integrating and becoming subsumed by it.

Gender and Bardic Tradition

The eighteenth-century Highland landscape was often represented in the period as rugged and masculine terrain, inhabited by warlike clans that hunted for sustenance. The geography of the Highlands is commonly depicted as a place where one must have masculine strength simply in order to exist. Early nineteenth century Scottish women writers often adhered to this gendering of the Highlands, as Glenda Norquay observes:

> When Mary Brunton writes in her journal, 'Welcome, mine own rugged Scotland', she romantically inscribes but distances herself from the nation; Scotland is both hers and craggily, masculinely different.[176]

Similarly, the folklore of the Highlands tends to be presented as the sole preserve of men, with Ossian, Fingal and the warrior poets of the Fenian Cycle being the most prominent figures. In fact, James Macpherson's *Ossian* has been viewed as a text that significantly downplayed the presence of Highland women.[177] Perhaps unsurprisingly then, omissions around how women also existed and negotiated the rugged Highland terrain is a problematic aspect of the scholarship around Scottish and Highland literature. Yet modern scholarship on Highland culture has participated in sustained attempts to correct these omissions. Michael Newton discusses the topic of women bards in the Highlands, assessing their role not as peripheral objects, but rather as integral to the continuance of Highland culture and folklore.[178] When it comes to Grant, however, modern writers tend to cite the influence of male figures such as Blind Harry and James Macpherson, stressing how these writers shaped her interpretation of the Highlands.[179] Yet while Grant undoubtedly revered Scottish male

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[176] Glenda Norquay, *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Women's Writing*, ed. Glenda Norquay (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 1.
[177]Leith Davis, 'Women, Oral Culture, and Book History in the Romantic-Era British Archipelago: Charlotte Brooke, Anne Grant, and Felicia Hemans', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2021): 177–88, 178.
[178] Newton, *Warriors,* 158.
[179] Kirsteen McCue, 'Women and Song 1750–1850', in *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, ed. Kirsteen McCue and Pamela Perkins (London: Routledge, 2016).p. xxxiii. McNeil, Kenneth, '"Not Absolutely a Native nor Entirely a Stranger:" Anne Grant, Queen Victoria and the Highland Travelogue', *Scotland, Britain, Empire: Writing the Highlands,* Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2007, 153. Gottlieb, Evan. 'Blameless Empires', 255.

figures such as Ossian, William Wallace, Robert the Bruce and, Charles Stuart, she also frequently invokes women associated with Highland-Gaelic culture.

Leith Davis argues that in 'The Highlanders' and more widely throughout *Poems on Various Subjects*, Grant aligns herself less with the male figures of the Ossianic tradition and more with its female figures:

> Grant draws upon not Ossian but Malvina to be her muse: 'Daughter of Toscar! who by Lutha's streams / Oft met thy warlike spouse in mournful dreams: / Malvina! come in all thy pensive charms'.[180]

In essays included at the end of her *Poems*, Grant states how Macpherson 'in an evil hour […] injured the credit' of the fragments of Gaelic culture in his possession.[181] Clearly Grant viewed Macpherson as deficient when it came to the task of preserving the authentic traditions of Highland culture. In 'The Highlanders' the narrator's sentiments of bardic authority reflect Grant's own aspirations of replacing Macpherson as the bardic voice of the Highlands. Davis affirms the gender of Grant's narrator in 'The Highlanders' to be a woman, part of a triangulation of bardic women that consists of Grant herself, Malvina, and the poem's speaker:

> For Grant, however, Malvina is not just a fellow mourner; she is also a poet/bard whose harp has been hidden and thus silenced as a result of the old heroes' displacement by a new race, the 'sons of little men'.[182]

As Davis notes, in developing this link, Grant assertively brings women from the peripheries of Gaelic culture into the centre.

Grant's poem also exemplifies the significance of the role of women to the causes of Gaelic self-determination, Scottish nationalism, and Cultural Jacobitism in more direct ways. While the poem references male heroes from Scottish history, it is Flora Macdonald whose heroism is celebrated and whose exploits take centre stage in 'The Highlanders'. Flora was famously

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[180] Davis. 'Women, Oral Culture, and Book History', 184.
[181] Grant, *Poems*, 365-366.
[182] Davis, 'Women, Oral Culture, and Book History', 184.

responsible for saving the life of Charles Stuart and preventing the Highlands from being ransacked by Hanoverian forces. To begin with, in the poem as in other versions of the story, Flora risks her life by disguising the Prince in women's attire and assisting him to evade the British soldiers:

> In female garb the hapless youth array'd,
> She leads disguis'd in semblance of a maid;
> And from the English Chief with specious wile,
> Permission seeks to view her native isle.[183]

It is interesting how the enemy in Grant's poem is described not as Hanoverian, British, or Unionist, but specifically 'English'. In emphasising the nationality of the Chief in this way, Grant's interpretation of Cultural Jacobitism is at odds with the notions that Jacobitism was confined to a political ideology, as she identifies the movement's Scottish national and cultural roots. In the *Stuart Letters*, Grant gives a possible explanation as to why Jacobitism, though perhaps better financed in England, was more closely associated with Scotland:

> Few if any of the English Jacobites were publicly called to account. They possibly ow'd their safety to their numbers, it being rather dangerous to strike at so wide a confederacy. But this artful statesman [the Earl of Godolphin] did not fail to let them know individually that they were in his power, and to watch and distrust them afterwards. This was perhaps the principal reason why the Jacobite interest in England (tho' possessing far more power and property than in Scotland) lent such feeble aid to the insurgents afterwards.[184]

In her historical account of political Jacobitism, Grant perhaps aims at a degree of pragmatism, distinguishing between the English and Scottish Jacobites in terms of their geographical proximity to the Whig and Hanoverian leaders. In 'The Highlanders' however Grant suggests that, at its core, Cultural Jacobitism is an expression of Scottish identity in the face of English oppression.

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[183] Grant, *Poems*, 91.
[184] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 258.

Flora's function in 'The Highlanders' is part of a wider trope of women heroes rescuing men in Scottish poetry. The similarities between the exploits of Flora in Grant's poem and the heroism of another woman in another epic Scottish poem, Blind Harry's *The Wallace,* are striking. *The Wallace* is a poem that was keenly important for Grant as a child: she acknowledged how it was this poem (rather than Macpherson) that was the catalyst for her burgeoning passion to discover her Scottishness.[185] In anticipation of the following chapter where I discuss Grant's linguistic transitions and translations between English and Scots-Gaelic, it is perhaps worth noting here that *The Wallace* is composed of different languages; mainly literary Scots (or Scottice) with the inclusion of some vernacular or localised Scots. This aspect itself reflects some of the contemporary early-nineteenth century linguistic contentions and contestations around the English and Scots languages.[186] As in 'The Highlanders'*,* the enemy in *The Wallace* is specifically an 'English' Captain. Conspicuously, the manner in which Flora Macdonald disguises Charles Stuart in Grant's 'The Highlanders' is almost identical to the method employed by William Wallace's mother in Blind Hary's poem, who facilitates the eponymous hero's evasion of the English soldiers by dressing her son in women's attire:

> Gud cher thaim maid; for he was wondyr fayr,
> Nocht large of tong, weille taucht and debonayr.[187]

In many ways Grant's poem, taking influence from *The Wallace* so directly, presents the historic tensions between English and Scottish identities (rather than contemporary eighteenth-century political divisions) as the underlying concern in her poem.

Flora risks her life for a second time in 'The Highlanders' when, after being captured, rather than confessing to treason she mounts a rhetorical appeal to King George II, defending both her own and her clan's support for the Stuart Dynasty:

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[185] '[...] a Scotch sergeant brought me Blind Harry's "The Wallace," which by the aid of said sergeant, I conned so diligently, that I not only understood the broad Scotch, but caught an admiration for heroism and an enthusiasm for Scotland, that ever since has been like a principle of life'. Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence,* 1: 6.

[186] McKeever, *Dialectics of Improvement*, 18.

[187] Henry the Minstrel (Blind Harry), *The Actis and Deidis of the Illustere and Vailðeand Campion Schir William Wallace, Knicht of Ellerslie*, ed. Anne McKim (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2003), Book I, lines 11–12 (Hereafter,*Wallace*, Book I).

To loyalty, by pious precepts led, '
We ever sacred held th' anointed head; '
And thought each branch of that long-hallow'd line
A partial sharer of the “right divine” '
But, if the mighty hand that rules the ball,
And bids the heirs of empire rise or fall,
To you, dread Sire, the bitter cup had given,
From regal pomp to wretched exile driven ; '
If cast a suppliant on my native plain,
' You never should have sought my aid in vain ;
' Nor should a STUART prince have ever said '
That treacherous FLORA royal blood betray'd.[188]

Flora insists here that the Jacobites did not choose to support Charles, but rather they were obliged to by the divine right of kings. Clearly for Flora, Jacobitism, encompasses more than just a political ideology. The inference here is that King George should respect rather than castigate those who remained loyal to the Stuarts and that, if he were to treat them fairly, in time, they would develop the same loyalty for him. Flora’s magnanimous (but risky) oration persuades King George to reconsider his attitude, subsequently saving the lives of her countrymen. In a poem filled with Scottish heroes, it is significant that it is the bravery of a woman that is emphasised. Despite the modern criticism which has regarded Grant’s attitude towards gender as conservative, she presents the role of women in the safeguarding of Scotland to be active rather than passive.[189]

‘The Highlanders’ and *The Highlander*: Dynasty, Nation and Culture

The final section of this chapter offers the rudiments for a new critical interpretation of Grant’s poem that contrasts her proximity to Cultural Jacobitism with the sentimental Jacobitism of James Macpherson. To date, no substantial critical connection has been made between Grant’s ‘The Highlanders’ and James Macpherson’s epic poem, *The Highlander* (1758). Neither the similarity of the titles, nor the fact that Grant was once a neighbour of

[188] Grant, *Poems*, 97.
[189] Kirsteen McCue and Pamela Perkins, eds., *A History of Scottish Women’s Writing* (London: Routledge, 2016), xxxiii.

Macpherson and has much to say about him throughout her oeuvre, has prompted the consideration that the later poem may have been written in response to the earlier poem. Yet if 'The Highlanders' can be read as a direct response or even as a correction to Macpherson's poem, this allows us to contrast Grant's Cultural Jacobitism with the sentimental strain of Jacobitism evident in the output of Macpherson and other writers.

One possible explanation for such an omission (both in scholarly writing around Grant and in the extensive body of scholarship surrounding Macpherson) is that even modern writers specialising in Scottish literature are, for the most part, unfamiliar with this part of Macpherson's oeuvre. Kristin Lindfield-Ott has noted and redressed this oversight.[190] However, one contemporary early nineteenth-century reviewer, while not naming Macpherson directly, had also already identified the unrepentant Jacobitism of Grant's poem and contrasted it with the neutered political undertones evident in the works of an unnamed prominent historian or poet of the eighteenth century. This unnamed poet partly fits Macpherson's description:

> Let it not be forgotten, however, that Mrs. Grant's notes on this subject may still be perused with interest; and that her muse is less tame than a certain courtly, but lulling historian of the Scottish rebellion.[191]

This comparison may pertain to Macpherson, who did produce prose historical writing in his *Original Papers, containing the Secret History of Great Britain* (1775), or perhaps to John Home (1722-1808): unlike Macpherson, Home directly addressed Jacobitism in his then recently published *History of the Rebellion in the Year 1745* (1802), one of the first historical accounts of the conflict to be published. However, Home himself, fighting *against* the Jacobites was captured and imprisoned after the battle at Falkirk, making it unlikely that he would confer any form of praise on them.[192] In addition the reference to Grant's 'muse' as 'less tame' and a 'lulling' musical quality suggests someone more famed for his poetic strains than prose, and the term 'courtly' suggests one with intimate ties to the Jacobite cause, i.e.

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[190] Kristin Lindfield-Ott, '"See Scot and Saxon Coalesc'd in One:" James Macpherson's *The Highlander* in Its Intellectual and Cultural Contexts with an Annotated Text of the Poem', PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2011, 2.
[191] *The Monthly Review, or Literary Journal*, 1752-1825; London, vol. 44 (July 1804) 272-280, 275.
[192] Bruce Seton, 'Dress of the Jacobite Army: The Highland Habit', *The Scottish Historical Review* 25, no. 100 (July 1928): 270–81, 271.

Macpherson.[193] It should also be noted that while Macpherson's historical writing may not directly encompass the Rising of 1745, his Ossianic texts strongly allude to it.[194] Whatever the exact object of comparison, the reviewer is nevertheless comparing a more reserved, sentimental model of Jacobitism by comparison with the more authentic and assertive Cultural Jacobitism of Grant's 'The Highlanders'.

Comparing *The Highlander* and 'The Highlanders' reveals much, not only about Grant's ties to Highland culture, but also about her proximity to political Jacobitism and her resentment towards England. It may appear, on impulse, counter-intuitive that a writer like Grant, previously regarded by modern scholarship as a sentimental Jacobite, would seek to challenge a poem produced by one of her great heroes, and the producer of *Ossian*, a romantically patriotic production tinged with Jacobite imagery.[195] Many critics have taken the opportunity to present Macpherson's politics as sympathetic to Jacobitism; yet these conclusions are drawn mainly from *Ossian* itself and from conjectural circumstances such as his place of birth, cultural upbringing and familial connections. (Macpherson was born in the Highlands, his first language was Gaelic and Clan Macpherson fought alongside the Jacobite army).[196] Macpherson's *Highlander,* however, is diametrically opposed to the anti-Union tartanry exhibited in *Ossian*. For while *Ossian* contains both latent allegorical as well as overt and direct references indicating Macpherson's support for a sentimental Jacobitism, *The Highlander,* by contrast, conveys Macpherson's support for the 1707 Act of Union and demonstrates a distinct Whig partiality. I argue that it is Macpherson's position on such issues conveyed in *The Highlander* that elicited Grant's response in the form of 'The Highlanders'.[197]

Initially Grant thought highly of Macpherson. She regarded his translation of *Ossian* as something that brought attention to Gaelic-Highland culture, and paid homage to Scotland as a nation. Indeed, in a letter written at the age of twenty-three, Grant positions Macpherson as something of a saviour who had single-handedly revived Gaelic culture in Scotland:

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[193] Stafford, *The Sublime Savage,* 182.
[194] Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics,*184.
[195] Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics,* 183.
[196] Fiona Stafford, *The Sublime Savage: James Macpherson and the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988), 32.
[197] Dafydd Moore, however, reads Macpherson's position in the poem as one of 'Celtic-Whiggism'. Dafydd Moore, 'James Macpherson and "Celtic Whiggism",' *Eighteenth Century Life* 30, no. 1 (2006).

> I would […] tell you how the bard of bards, who reached the mouldy harp of Ossian from the withered oak of Selma, and awakened the song of other times, is now moving, like a bright meteor, over his native hills.[198]

Yet we can trace a discernible change in her attitude towards him throughout the course of her life and writing. Twenty-five years after this letter, Grant's opinion of Macpherson seems drastically revised. In her discussion of him in *Poems on Various Subjects*, while still acknowledging his efforts, Grant is decidedly more critical. She now viewed Macpherson's endeavour to meld Gaelic and Gothic forms into the epic narrative of *Ossian* as foolhardy and, pivotally for the argument of this chapter, she traces this experimental technique back to his earlier poem:

> […] the *Highlander*, has some original ideas and incidents, but is rendered obscure, and sometimes incongruous, by a strange mixture of Grecian and Gothic mythology, and is so strongly marked with the political prejudices in which the Author was educated, that it could not, on that sole account, be well received at the time when it was written.[199]

The 'prejudices in which the Author was educated' refers to Macpherson's formative period at Marischal College, Aberdeen, where, as Fiona Stafford has demonstrated, the writer was exposed to lessons that revolved around the barbarity of Celticism and the superiority of Anglo-Saxon culture.[200] Modern critics of Scottish literature such as Paul Barnaby and Tom Hubbard refer to Macpherson's reputation as 'arch-angliciser and apologist for the Union' on similar grounds.[201] By the time Grant came to publish her *Poems*, she no longer viewed Macpherson as the 'bard of bards', and goes on to suggest that *Ossian* was motivated not by the wish to preserve Highland folklore and customs, but rather by the prospect of financial gain, no doubt reflecting if not wholly sharing some of the scepticism that had gathered round the Ossian controversy in general. Rather than viewing Macpherson as assisting in the redemption of Gaelic culture, Grant now interpreted his publications to have damaged the way Highland culture was perceived by outsiders:

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[198] Grant, *Letters,* 3: 279.
[199] Grant, *Poems*, 361.
[200] Stafford, *Sublime Savage*, 36.
[201] Paul Barnaby and Tom Hubbard, 'The International Reception and Literary Impact of Scottish Literature', 35.

> The Translator, with such models before him, was at no loss in forging links to connect the detached parts into an unseemly whole. Having fame and profit more in view than tracing the familiar habits and domestic manners of remote times, he threw into shade on some occasions, circumstances that might betray our ancestors to the ridicule of modern fastidiousness.[202]

In the wider context for both writers, one aspect that differentiates Grant and Macpherson is her attitude to the future prospects of Highland culture. As James Porter has observed, it is generally accepted that 'Macpherson's recognition of the defeat of the Stuart cause was also linked in a broader sense to the defeat of Gaelic culture by the Anglo-Saxon forces of progress and the Protestant succession (cf. Moore 1998; Watson 1998)'.[203] Indeed, Macpherson's *The Highlander* opens pessimistically with a lament of bygone times, an allegorical reading of which signposts a post-Union melding of Saxon and Gaelic culture:

> Meantime Scandinavia's hostile pow'r
> Its squadrons spread among the murmuring shore
> Prepared at once the city to invade,
> And conquer Caledonia in her head.[204]

Caledonia, roughly speaking, corresponds to the region we now call the Highlands, yet, as Porter argues, in this stanza it is the 'city' of Edinburgh that acts as the centre of an amalgamated Scottish nation, inclusive of the Highlands. While the term initially indicated Northern Scotland, 'Caledonia' here is being used to refer to the nation of Scotland as a whole.[205] By conceding the inevitability of the cultural union between the Highlands and the Lowlands in this way (the Lowland City now represents the interests of Caledonia),

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[202]Grant, *Poems*, 365
[203] Porter, '"Bring me the Head of James Macpherson,"' 402.
[204] James Macpherson, *The Highlander, A Poem in Six Cantos* (Edinburgh: Ruddiman and Company, 1858), 4.
[205] It is not that Macpherson explicitly states in the quoted stanza that Gaelic culture is beyond restoration; this is deduced by considering his assertion that, in the thirteenth century, Edinburgh functions as the 'head' of Caledonia. Although Caledonia originates as a Roman designation for northern Britain, Porter argues that in this stanza Macpherson's phrase 'conquered Caledonia in her head' symbolically positions Edinburgh as the governing centre of the Highlands. By conceding that Edinburgh is the 'head' of Caledonia in this sense, Macpherson allegorically concedes to a cultural consolidation of the two regions. This Union (1707) is presented as Scotland's destiny and inevitably entails an element of sacrifice. Grant, in her poem, objects to the notion that political union necessitates cultural sacrifice.

Macpherson concedes that the once insular Highland culture has been compromised beyond redemption. While Grant certainly acknowledges the threat that this union poses to Highland culture, she maintains that, even at the time in which she writes (decades after Macpherson), it is still distinct and separate: it has not yet been consolidated into Anglophone, Enlightenment culture. Grant's poem, set in the immediate aftermath of the second Jacobite Rising, is in-keeping with an emphasis on the current plight of the Highlands and the need to secure and revitalise Highland culture. This interpretation of the poem is reinforced by her sentiments in the *Essays* that Highland culture, though not expired, is in a precarious state.[206]

Direct textual comparisons between the two poems reveal contrasting emphases. Both *The Highlander* and 'The Highlanders' cover eras where Scotland faced conflict with the English. In *The Highlander*, however, Macpherson refrains from mentioning or even alluding to Scottish-English tensions. Kristin Lindfield-Ott suggests that this omission by Macpherson was likely deliberate, so as to avoid criticising the union between the two home nations.[207] Unlike Macpherson, in her poem Grant willingly highlights the misdeeds committed by the English. She details how it is categorically the English and English-speaking Lowlanders that are driving out and replacing the 'heroic' Highlanders.

> When sons of little men, an abject race,
> Appear'd in thy departed hero's place [208]

Also conspicuously absent from Macpherson's poem is any reference to the Highland Clearances. While the poem may be set centuries before the Clearances, Kristin Lindfield-Ott's reading (as emblematic of events that unfolded in the eighteenth century) leads one to expect at least some kind of allegorical reference to such a pivotal series of events, especially in a poem titled *The Highlander*. As Lindfield-Ott has shown the poem does indeed address by way of allegory eighteenth-century events and concerns. However, Macpherson's reluctance to address the violent historical relations between Scotland and England in his epic, coupled with his avoidance of the Clearances suggests that these omissions were not accidental oversights. Afterall, Macpherson was a bona fide Clansman who could personally

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[206] 'The fair form, where inspiration has for so many ages, awaked the bard, animated the hero, and soothed the lover is fast gliding into the midst of obscurity and will soon be no more than a remembered dream […]' Grant, *Essays*, 1; 9.
[207] Lindfield-Ott, "See Scot and Saxon Coalesc'd in one,"'156-157.
[208] Grant, *Poems*, 23. Davis, 'Women, Oral Culture, and Book History', 184.

recount events from the aftermath of Culloden and the destruction caused to his family and property.[209] He was also a competent historian who would have been able to draw upon empirical knowledge of the first waves of emigrants leaving the Highlands.[210]

While Grant's 'The Highlanders' is the story of contemporary emigration, it is also a history of the relationship between Scotland (particularly the Scottish Highlands) and England. Grant's attitude to England is complex in that while she recognised that Scotland and England shared certain indelible ties and aspirations as members of the United Kingdom following the 1800 Act of Union, she also viewed English interference in the Highlands as malevolent. For Grant, the Highland Clearances were not simply a blameless, naturally occurring development in Scotland's destiny. Rather she viewed the Clearances as a 'crime' and she states as much in her *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland* (1811).[211] While there is no direct reference in the *Essays* to the perpetrators of this 'crime', in 'The Highlanders' Grant's support for the self-determination of Scotland directs the reader to the perpetrators:

> Nor think that rigour's galling chains can bind
> The native force of the superior mind.
> 'Twas not from such the glowing ardour arose
> That followers drew to WALLACE and MONTROSE.[212]

The 'Montrose' in question is James Graham 1st Marquess of Montrose (1612-1650) a prominent ally of the Stuart dynasty who fought for Charles I. Like William Wallace, he was he suffered a particularly brutal execution. Grant's comparison of these two men indicates a correlation between the Stuart dynasty and a persistent Scottish patriotism. The Stuart dynasty, with the aid of Grant's retrospection, is indelibly tied to Jacobitism, thus a link is made between Scotland, the Stuarts and the Jacobite movement that would come to fruition later in the seventeenth century. Grant gives Wallace and Montrose equal weight in this stanza, not simply because she considered them both to be heroic martyrs, but because they gave their lives fighting for their chosen monarch. That Grant opts to end her poem by

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[209] Porter, '"Bring me the Head of James Macpherson,"' 399.
[210] Lindfield-Ott, '"See Scot and Saxon Coalesc'd in one,"' 184.
[211] 'Utopian villages;- those sets of industry and abundance, which we are taught to consider as a sovereign remedy for the evil, I had almost said, the crime of depopulation!' Grant, *Essays,* 1: 150.
[212] Grant, *Poems,* 109.

praising the virtues of two Scots from different eras, both of whom in different ways resisted English power—Wallace, who led the Scots against Edward I, and Montrose, the formidable commander for the Stuart dynasty who initially objected to English influenced religious policy in Scotland—suggests that Grant was not averse to past manifestations of what, in the broader Cultural Jacobite mode that extends beyond the chronological constraints of 1688-1746, may be understood as tendencies for Scottish independence, nor perhaps to their possible future resonance.[213] While Grant's alignment with political independence for Scotland must remain largely speculative, what is more easily demonstrable when assessing her oeuvre is an advocacy for what Gerard McKeever describes as a Scottish literary, cultural independence.[214] What is clear is that Grant identifies a discernible link between the earlier Scottish nationalism of the medieval period (Wallace) and the later Stuart and Jacobite struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In his book *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, Murray Pittock has articulated that the links between Jacobitism and Scottish nationalism superseded Jacobitism's other concerns of monarchy, religion and constitutional reform.[215] Such critical framing allows us to position Wallace and Montrose as both Scottish nationalists and Cultural though not, of course, political Jacobites.

The histories presented by Grant and Macpherson in their poems culminate in their predictions for the future of the Scottish people. Where Grant focusses upon forced emigrations and the need to protect the distinctive Gaelic culture and language, Macpherson ignores these issues and is decidedly more optimistic, presenting a future whereby England and Scotland may proceed on an equal footing. Towards the end of *The Highlander*, in the penultimate canto, Macpherson crafts the rhetorical insinuation that England and Scotland are natural allies:

> Why mention him in whom th' eternal fates
> Shall bind in peace the long-discording states?
> See SCOT and SAXON coalesc'd in one,
> Support the glory of the common crown.

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[213] Murray Pittock has suggested a connection between Jacobitism and a desire for Scottish independence: 'For some Jacobites, the absent monarch was a messianic deliverer, the restorer of the Church, the nation's and not least their own fortunes; for others he was the symbol of Scottish or Irish nationality and independence'. Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 63.
[214] McKeever, *Dialectics of Improvement*, 18.
[215] Pittock, *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, 57.

> BRITAIN no more shall shake with native storms,
> But o'er the trembling nations lift her arms.[216]

Macpherson can be viewed here as something of a precursor to Scott with a vision that the English and Scottish will eventually 'coalesce' in harmony (where Grant consistently pits the Saxon against the Gael throughout her work and sees the two as culturally incompatible). While the great unifier of 'th'eternal fates' might possibly be considered as Charles Edward Stuart, close reading of Macpherson's poem shows that *The Highlander* undermines the feudal principle of heredity; thus, a favourable reference to Charles Edward's part in the future of Britan seems unlikely. Kristin Lindfield-Ott unpacks the conundrum of the 'him' in question:

> […] he who brings peace to the united Britain is George II, and not Charles Edward Stuart. It is under George II's 'common crown' that 'Scot and Saxon' are finally – after the '45 rising – 'coalesc'd in one'. [217]

In order for this harmonious prophecy to come to fruition in Macpherson's poem, a sense of acceptance of the outcome of the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion, and support for the Hanoverian dynasty, is required. To make this work, Macpherson ignores various important aspects of Scotland's past in his poem. The persistent historical military advances from Edward I through to Henry VIII, the Act of Proscription, and the Highland Clearances, were all issues that could potentially undermine Macpherson's case for supporting the 1707 Act of Union, and are undoubtedly intentional omissions. Lindfield-Ott assures us that Macpherson was concerned primarily with facts:

> Macpherson's emphasis on precision, dates and objectivity complicates any understanding of him as a forger, conjecturalist or philosophical historian.[218]

Selecting an era of Scotland's past, where the English were not the main adversary of the nation, as a setting for a poem is not itself unusual. However, notable omissions and obscurities related to major events that occurred during the time the poem is set, such as

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[216] Macpherson, *The Highlander*, 99
[217] Lindfield-Ott, '"See Scot and Saxon Coalesc'd in one,"' 163.
[218] Lindfield-Ott, '"See Scot and Saxon Coalesc'd in one,"'209.

Æthelstan's campaigns,[219] suggest that Macpherson's historical epic is based partly at least upon conjecture, and arguably influenced by a Whig interpretation of history. In contrast, Anne Grant's refusal to regard the Jacobite forces as pre-ordained failures, together with her refusal to ignore the transgressions not only of medieval England against Scotland but also of contemporary Britain against the Gaelic Highlanders, exemplifies both her Scottish nationalism and pride in her Gaelic identity. This is a prime example of how Grant's Cultural Jacobitism works to unite what may otherwise be regarded as separate issues.

Having already outlined, in the Introduction to this thesis, both my own and Peter Womack's reading of Grant's 'The Highlanders' as a counter-discourse to Adam Smith, it is notable that Grant's poem attempts to reify the importance of blood and kinship in maintaining a properly functioning society. In the following chapter, I return to a comparison of the philosophies of Smith and Grant regarding the tensions between bonds of friendship and those of kinship, but it is evident that certain traditional aspects of both Highland culture and Jacobitism appear incompatible with Smith. For example, a clear correlation can be observed between Scots-Gaelic culture and one of the primary tenets of Jacobitism upon which the Stuart claim was founded:

> James II and VII was the senior heir to the Saxon royal house through Malcolm III of Scotland's marriage to Princess Margaret; he was heir to the Plantagenets, and also of the Tudors, by James IV's marriage to Henry VII's daughter. In Scotland he was heir to the Bruce and in Ireland, claimed descent from ancient kings. His overthrow imperilled the hereditary principle not only in government but in society: the idea that the Revolution had undermined traditional property rights was widespread.[220]

While Grant takes care not to challenge the Hanoverian claim to the throne directly in 'The Highlanders', the Stuarts are nevertheless treated as the legitimate heirs to the throne of Scotland. This positioning of the Stuarts as native, and thus natural, inheritors was perhaps the sentiment most responsible for the allegiance of the Highland people.[221] It is the connection between blood and heredity in the poem that serves to reinforce the premise that

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[219] 'All the manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle report the key event of 934 with typical brevity: in that year "King Æthelstan went into Scotland with both a land force and a naval force, and ravaged much of it."' Sarah Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 165.
[220] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 17.
[221] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 133.

the Stuarts had a legitimate claim to the three crowns; for, as Murray Pittock has outlined, it was the vision of Charles Stuart that England, Ireland and Scotland should once again be ruled as distinct nations and cultures.[222] The usurpation of the Stuarts signified a threat not only to a significant aspect of Highland culture but also to a primary principle of the Scottish law of primogeniture. Grant's promotion of Cultural Jacobitism can be seen as a defence of both the sovereignty of Scottish law in relation to primogeniture, but also of the rights of the Highland people to live according to their own customs.[223]

The connection between blood and kinship is something that underpinned the Highland clans but in a wider context, Grant, in her poem also identifies 'race' as an important biological concept, distinguishing between the races of 'Celts' (the Highlanders) and the 'sons of little men' (English and Lowlanders):

> Let us with steadfast eye attentive trace
> The local habits of the CELTIC race;
> Renown'd even in those old heroic times,
> That live in OSSIAN'S songs, and RUNIC rhymes;[224]

Grant's criticism of the misdirected pathos in Macpherson's epic does not necessarily mean that she regarded the supposed Ossianic tradition itself as flawed. Indeed, the reference to 'runic ryhmes' implies that the history of Ossian can be traced back to a time before the Latin alphabet had been introduced into Britain. For Grant, the Scots-Gaelic language had a long tradition not only of oral but of written sonorous poetry. This relates to an essay in the *Poems* where Grant argues that Macpherson was the translator of existing literature rather than the fraudulent compiler that his non-Gaelic detractors claimed he was.[225]

While there is no direct reference by Grant to the offending lines in Macpherson's *The Highlander* that she wished to correct, there is, contained within his poem, some contention

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[222] Pittock, *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, 142.
[223] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 134.
[224] Grant, *Poems*, 31.
[225] 'Yellow parchments of great antiquity were demanded. To talk of impossibilities to a deaf multitude, predetermined against conviction, was useless. However it luckily, as he [Macpherson] thought, occurred to him, to produce a Leabhar Dearg, Or Red Book, in which a chieftain had caused several of the original fragments to be written down. It was parchment, and it was old; but upon examination it shrunk from trial; for I am told it was not three hundred years old; these, however, proved superabundantly that the translator was not the author of the poems'. Grant, *Poems*, 366.

around the primacy of blood and heredity. When discussing the values of his protagonist, Macpherson emphasises the absence of noble blood, suggesting that this should in no way impede his prospects:

> Nobler the youth, who, tho' before unknown,
> From merit mounts to virtue and renown,
> Than he, set up by an illustrious race,
> Totters aloft, and scarce can keep his place![226]

Lindfield-Ott suggests that, in Macpherson's poem 'merit' and noble deeds are superior qualifications to blood and heredity, as they are indicative of 'virtue and renown'.[227] For Macpherson, the hereditary traits of 'those set up by an illustrious race', and the old feudal ties of blood and kin have been rendered obsolete.[228] In *The Highlander* then, Macpherson's challenge to the primacy of heredity and kinship is in direct opposition to Grant's own perceived emphasis on the primacy of blood and lineage.

Ultimately, my reading of 'The Highlanders' suggests that Grant thought Macpherson unfit for the safeguarding of Gaelic culture, and that this task now lay with her. That she regards herself as the new custodian is evidenced by the imagery of her narrator taking up the harp. While Grant had previously regarded Macpherson as the last proper Gaelic 'bard', now she asserts that it is she who must pick up the 'harp' and 'teach the mountains to complain', stirring the landscape into defending the persecuted Highland population. While both poems contain varying degrees of pessimism regarding the state of Gaelic culture, for Macpherson, the culture of the Fingalians has already been eroded by consolidation through union; not necessarily an allegorical reference to the Union 1707, but rather the implication of an already existing cultural union or 'coalescence' between 'Scot and Saxon'. For Grant, however, Highland culture being extant, still retained a degree of distinction and thus, could still be redeemed.

Conclusion

[226] Macpherson, *The Highlander*, 27.
[227] Lindfield-Ott, '"See Scot and Saxon Coalesc'd in one,"'157.
[228] 'Nobler the youth… keep his place. Deeds matter more than reputation. This contradicts a Jacobite reading of the poem: lineage is not important'. Lindfield-Ott, 'See Scot and Saxon Coalesc'd in one', 91.

Although *Poems on Various Subjects* can be regarded as a successful first publication for Grant in terms of the number of subscribers it attracted, contemporary reviews of 'The Highlanders' poem are relatively scarce, and those that do exist rarely discuss Grant's poetic merits positively. In what must have been a tremendous slight for Grant, her friend Francis Jeffrey (1773-1850), a prominent critic of the poetry of the time and hugely influential in his role as editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, observed the *Poems* to be 'heavy and uninteresting'.[229] A little more forgiving is the review of 'The Highlanders' in *The Poetical Register*, where it is noted that, 'In some parts it is spirited, and elegantly descriptive; in others it is languid, and, of course, tedious; compression and correction would be of advantage to it'.[230] A third review in the *Monthly Review* compliments the originality, yet even this initially sympathetic reviewer criticises Grant's anthropological ambitions:

> […] moral and common-place views of an active life, as contrasted with habits of soft repose and frigid selfishness occupy too much space in the first and last parts of the poem. The object to be desired in a performance of this description is appropriate colouring, not general and trite morality. That active, laborious, and generous dispositions pre-eminently distinguish the Scottish Highlanders from the Lowlanders remains, perhaps, to be proved.[231]

The verdict here seems to be that Grant's poem focusses too much on overt explanations around the merits of Highland culture, detracting from its literary merits. The critic regards Grant's use of repetition to hammer home the merits of the Highland people to be vulgar and indicative of an absence of elegant 'colouring' and 'performance' expected in the writing of women during the romantic-era.[232] However, Grant was heavily influenced by Gaelic poetic tradition (both bardic and vernacular), including ballads which traditionally used blunt repetition, though this trope may have achieved a more sonorous and melodic refrain in Gaelic and was perhaps not best suited to poetry written in English.[233] It was important for Grant to implement her Gaelic credentials in as many ways as possible, but it was difficult to

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[229] Francis Jeffrey, *Edinburgh Review* 18, no. 36, (Aug 1811): 481.
[230] *The Poetical Register: and Repository of Fugitive Poetry*, vol. 3 (London, January 1805): 442.
[231] *The Monthly Review*; London, vol. 44 (July 1804): 272.
[232] 'Her poetry might not sell to empty-headed, fashion-hungry "Misses", but Grant hardly sees that as a mark of its failure as art: opposing femininity, frivolity, and casual amusement to masculine study, she firmly aligns herself with the latter'. Perkins, 'Incongruous Things', 148.
[233] Newton, *Warriors,* 118.

do this in fashionable English. In producing a poem about the Highlands written in English, one of the ways that Grant conveys both a sense of authenticity and of authority is by incorporating various aspects of the Gaelic songs with which she was familiar; 'experiments' to different 'purposes of poetic pleasure', in the words of an equally awkwardly received first publication of poems of ordinary rural life, Wordsworth's and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*.[234]

The *Monthly Review* seems to be motivated by a wish to deprecate Grant's cultural bias towards the Highlands, the insinuation being that such anthropological assertions are unfit for poetry. However, after admonishing Grant for her inclusion of anthropological claims in the poem, the reviewer proceeds to engage Grant in precisely the same manner:

> Impartial travellers, who have visited both districts of country, have more than once remarked that, unless roused by some powerful excitement, the Highlander is inclined to indolence, and will sit with folded arms, when his wife or daughter is engaged in those offices of drudgery, which the consent of civilized society has assigned to the stronger sex.[235]

It appears that the real gripe of the reviewer is not so much the style in which Grant's poetry is conveyed but rather her positioning of Gaelic culture as superior to Teutonic culture. The reviewer seems oblivious to the fact that the poem is (in part at least) a reaction to the Anglocentric, xenophobic stereotypes prevalent in early nineteenth century Britain, epitomised by their own claim that the Highlanders were 'inclined to indolence'. The decision to use English rather than Gaelic in her verse could be seen by traditional Gaelic-speakers as Grant's capitulation. Yet while the poem incorporates the veneer of an ostensibly English ballad, it also exemplifies certain aspects of Scots-Gaelic song. Traditionally the Gaelic ballad was formed around notions of praise for honour, valour, fortitude and bravery and contempt for the weaknesses thought to be characteristic of external Lowland and English societies. While Grant may cater to the linguistic requirement of her English readers, she nevertheless continues the panegyric tradition with 'The Highlanders'. Michael Newton has argued that a distinct Gaelic panegyric code is 'pervasive in vernacular Gaelic literature, particularly due to the historical experience of Gaels as a disenfranchised community', and it

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[234] William Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads* (London: Duckworth and Co., 1920), xvii.
[235] *Monthly Review,* 273.

is around this very sense of disenfranchisement that Grant's 'The Highlanders' is constructed.[236]

Political themes are also important in 'The Highlanders'. In the poem Grant's affinity with political Jacobitism emerges in both subtle and overt ways. Though the poem was published around fifty years after the last Jacobite uprising had been quelled, the ideology itself was still regarded by authorities in Britain as a potential threat to the established order. This may be surprising given the essential traditionalism of Jacobitism: Colin Kidd defines it as 'primarily dynastic, ecclesiastical and committed to indefeasible hereditary monarchy'.[237] However, Kidd also observes that while Jacobitism had galvanising qualities in that it gave Scotland a set of such conservative principles to bind the entire nation, and that the movement itself could not be considered to be a 'Gaelicist ideology *per se*', its roots could nevertheless prove to be divisively partial: 'Jacobites would have felt a natural affinity with the Gaelic heartland of their military support'.[238] The tension in Grant's poem between its affinity to Scotland as a sovereign nation and its wish to preserve a distinct Gaelic-Highland culture within this nation highlights the nuances that make Grant's writing so bountiful when analysing the complex nature of Scottish identity and politics in the late-nineteenth century.

Of course, Grant is not the only Scottish writer who has been associated with this particular political strain. Murray Pittock has linked the poetry of Robert Burns (1759-1796) with political Jacobitism.[239] Elsewhere Gerard Carruthers describes how the *Jacobite Relics* of James Hogg (1770-1835) implied more of a sentimental commitment to the spirit and energy of Jacobitism.[240] Yet Grant's connection to Jacobitism seems to go further than these positions, with the ideology a more pivotal aspect of her identity. Rather than disguising her Jacobite tendencies with allusion and allegory, as Burns did, Grant's political allegiances are more overt and pronounced, and, in 'The Highlanders' her incorporation of metaphor and pathos are skilfully rendered to elicit a sympathetic response to Jacobitism that anticipates the future as much as it does the past.

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[236] Newton, *Warriors*, 114.
[237] Colin Kidd, 'The Gaelic dilemma in Early Modern Scottish Political Culture' in *British Identities Before Nationalism Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600-1800,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1999) 135.
[238] Kidd, 'The Gaelic dilemma', 135.
[239] Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics,* 6.
[240] Carruthers, 'Jacobite Unionism', 137.

The few modern critics of 'The Highlanders' have established that its focus is on the plight of the Gaelic-Highland emigrants, the difficulties faced by those Highlanders left behind in Scotland, and the precarious position of Highland culture in general. However, what has not been considered is Grant's ambitious goal for the poem to play a part in reaffirming and securing a Gaelic culture and language within the Highland region of Scotland, a polity that would safeguard the Highland people from the threats of modernity. In comparing Grant's 'The Highlanders' with James Macpherson's *The Highlander,* I illustrated how Grant saw Macpherson's vision for the Highlands as antithetical to the preservation of Gaelic-Highland traditions and proposed Grant's alternative call for a rejuvenated *Gáidhealtachd*. Such an interpretation of Grant's poem as a response to Macpherson's vision is supplemented by the candid opinions of *The Highlander* expressed by Grant herself in the notes to *Poems on Various Subjects.*

My interpretation of the poem therefore highlights the integral role of Cultural Jacobitism in Grant's writing from its first public appearance. While Pam Perkins has downplayed the extent of Grant's Jacobitism, and, given the various ambiguities contained within her oeuvre, positioned the writer as more of a 'sentimental Jacobite',[241] Grant's response to James Macpherson's *The Highlander* exhibits her disdain for Macpherson's distancing of himself from Jacobitism proper. For Grant, Macpherson's achievement in recording aspects of Gaelic-Highland culture with his translations of Ossianic lore is blighted by his (quite literal) departure from all aspects of Highland culture, including Jacobitism, which she regards as indelibly linked. It is owing to Macpherson's revised proximity to both Highland culture and political Jacobitism that Grant, in the composition of her own epic, appears keen to replace him as the genuine preserver of the Highland bardic tradition.

Aside from the various political and constitutional connotations of the poem, by drawing upon Leith Davis's examination of Grant as a pioneer who brought women from the peripheries to the fore of the Ossianic tradition, this chapter facilitates an understanding of how controversies around Grant's attitude to gender can be read in the context of the controversies around her promotion of Highland culture as a viable alternative to Anglophone culture.[242] While breaking with contemporary conventions in this manner arguably facilitated

[241] Pam Perkins, '"She Has Her Ladies Too:" Women and Scottish Periodical Culture in Blackwood's Early Years', *Romanticism* 23, no. 3 (2017): 57.
[242] Shields, 'Highland Emigration', 774.

the production of a more original and impassioned poem, the principles and rhetoric exhibited in ‘The Highlanders’ undoubtedly motivated negative contemporary responses both to this poem and later to her *Essays*. Ultimately, however, Grant’s ‘The Highlanders’ gives a detailed poetic account of Highland customs and culture, and it is this aspect of her writing in which Grant persisted most faithfully, and in which she invested the greatest force of her endeavour. With the publication of ‘The Highlanders’ Grant clearly asserted her intentions to document and reify a culture that she viewed as endangered, and it was the commercial success of this poem that imbued her with the confidence to go on and publish successive Highland-themed anthropological analyses.

Chapter Two: *Letters* and Landscape

Letters from the Mountains; being the Real Correspondence of a Lady between the years 1773 and 1806 (1806) was Grant's second published text. The publication of *Letters from the Mountains* followed the success of *Poems on Various Subjects* (1803) which had already established Grant as a popular writer.[243] While some of Grant's later publications were met with mixed reviews, partly owing to her political, national and religious affinities,[244] *Letters from the Mountains* was well received throughout Britain, Europe and America, with multiple subsequent editions.

Letters from the Mountains begins in the form of a travelogue, with Grant as the traveller; yet it develops into a text where the traveller settles into the environment that she is traversing, takes root, and domesticates a space of her own, revising many of her former opinions and preconceptions around Gaelic culture in the process. In the book, Grant's physical journey of exploring the landscape evolves into a mental journey of finding herself. Grant's responses to changes in the landscape have an impact on how she comes to regard the Highland people and, ultimately, again, herself. Accordingly, in this chapter I examine Grant's relationship with the Highland landscape, how she perceives the influence that it exerted over the Highland people, and how this recursively informs her own sense of identity. This chapter also introduces examples of a liminal transitioning back and forth between Grant's alignment with sentimental Jacobitism and her affiliation with Cultural Jacobitism. This discourse itself prompts the interrogation of the concept of a 'Scottish identity', not least in Scotland's relationship with England, its place within the United Kingdom, and contrasting portrayals of its landscapes through various literary and artistic representations.

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[243] To maintain a sense of biographical chronology, it is worth reiterating here that although the *Letters* was published after the *Poems*, much of the actual correspondence featured in the *Letters* pre-dates the material in the *Poems*.

[244] In Chapter Four of this thesis I explore Grant's departure from an orthodox Protestant worldview and how she extends sympathy to pre-Christian Pagan customs. In her book Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland, Martha McGill observes post-Reformation distinctions between how Catholics and Protestants viewed ghosts: 'Prominent Catholics upheld the reality of ghosts in the face of Protestant challenges'. Martha McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland,* Scottish Historical Review Monograph Series, n.s. 2 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018), 25. It is interesting to note that Grant's views appear more in alignment with Catholicism than with her own Protestant denomination.

One thing that distinguishes the *Letters from the Mountains* from Grant's other publications is its size and substance. Published in three volumes, the book records the feelings and sentiments of Grant over a thirty-four-year period. Perhaps inevitably, the chronological scope of the text makes for a complex picture of Grant and her identity, given that it shows the author's opinions, beliefs, or attitudes as subject to flux and revision. The epistolary form of *Letters from the Mountains* allows for a particularly deep and nuanced sense of how an individual's ideas around identity can develop through experience, a documentary record, and also an inner life of writing. Reading *Letters from the Mountains* allows us to measure the progress of Grant's attitude not only chronologically but also geographically, tracing and mapping her physical proximity to the Highland landscape; beginning with her arrival in the Highlands, followed by her initiation into Highland culture while resident in Laggan, and concluding with her relocation to Stirling after the death of her husband.

Yet, it is not only the immersion of the writer in the landscape which stands out in the *Letters*. Also significant is the growth evident in Grant's transition from a young woman into a mature writer. Like many other texts in the period, *Letters from the Mountains* is a work about the expansion of the writer's mind, a work of Romantic *bildung* through revision or recollection in tranquillity.[245] Indeed, it was the demonstration of this organic idea of 'ripening' that particularly appealed to contemporary readers, as noted by the *Monthly Review*:

> The engaging volatility of youth apparent in the early part of the correspondence, and the good sense of more ripened years, which prevails in the latter part, equally pleased us. The sentiments of the author, when occupying the various relative situations of a daughter, a wife, a mother and a protégé, are truly praiseworthy.[246]

Despite its chronological range, however, *Letters from the Mountains* should not be considered purely as a biographical record of Grant's life during these decades. It is a selective literary work with numerous important omissions. For example, the text does not

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[245] William Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads, with Other Poems: In Two Volumes*, from the London 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Printed and sold by James Humphreys, 1802),viii.
[246] RE-S, W., *Letters from the Mountains; Being the Real Correspondence of a Lady between the Years 1773 and 1807*, *Monthly Review, or Literary Journal*, 56 (August 1808): 444–45.

record the precise date of Grant's removal from Laggan to Woodend, nor the reasons for this relocation. Much of the context around important transitional phases in Grant's life has also been omitted or withheld. A more precise and detailed account of her time in Edinburgh, later in life, was only made available in the posthumously published *Memoir and Correspondence of Mrs. Anne Grant of Laggan,* which is consulted in this chapter as a form of cross reference or source of supplementary information.

In contrast to Grant's *Essays,* which presents measured and logical arguments around the culture and identity of the Scottish Highlanders, *Letters from the Mountains*, compiled over multiple decades and addressed to an array of family and friends, offers a more complex and fractured perspective on cultural and national identity. Grant's attitude to the Highland people upon her arrival in the *Gàidhealtachd* is presented as mixed. While she aspires to fit in, she seems at times to recoil from certain aspects of Highland culture, seeking solace by reminiscing about what she views as the enlightened world to which she once belonged. As time progresses, however, a discernible change in her attitude occurs and Grant's proximity to what she terms the 'savage' Highland society narrows. It is, however, indicative of Grant's mediatory quality that a desire to maintain a strong connection to polite society permeates the text. The majority of her letters during her initial years in the Highlands, and certainly those presented in *Letters from the Mountains* were sent to friends in the urban, cosmopolitan, and maritime locale of Glasgow. Recipients such as Jane Ewing and Harriet Reid are heavily represented in the first volume of the *Letters.* Even in the third volume, Grant's letters to Glasgow are prevalent; by this point, her principal correspondents are Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Mackintosh and Mrs. Fraser.

This chapter traces the trajectory of Grant's philosophical approach and how the writer's proximity to Cultural Jacobitism oscillates, not necessarily according to a linear chronology. Yet what does seem a more determinate aspect of *Letters from the Mountains* is Grant's seemingly genuine concerns for the Highland people and landscape, and how these resonate with the concerns for communities and their environments that emerged in later modernity. The liberal economic system of laissez-faire in the early nineteenth century meant that government refrained from impeding agricultural expansion in the Highlands, and, as Grant's observations suggest, this protection of commercial interests came at the cost of significant damage to Highland communities and the Highland environment. Her analysis of the commodification of the Highland landscape, subjugated by commercial interest in the advent

of industrialisation and also by new methods of farming, feeds into our own modern concerns of how emphasis upon economic pursuits can divert attention away from environmental issues. Objections to forced cultural, agricultural and environmental changes collectively constitute Grant's powerful criticism of the detrimental effects that Improvement had on the Highlands. In many ways it is Grant's criticism of the encroachment of the Anglosphere, and what she understands as the conceit of Enlightenment philosophers, which helps us to understand her self-positioning as a defender of the Highlands and as a proponent of Cultural Jacobitism.

Just as her *Poems* had been published because of financial necessity, *Letters from the Mountains* also had its foundations in financial need, specifically that Grant needed money to furnish her son for a commercial maritime venture after his recent dishonourable discharge from the British military. In a posthumously published letter, Grant states:

> The equipment of my son was a new and heavy expenditure, for which I was not well provided. In this situation my friends strongly advised me to publish my Letters; a resource in which I had little faith […][247]

This biographical information was recovered after Grant's death in 1838, from papers which suggest that she was in the process of preparing another text for publication. Crucially, this information indicates that Grant was unembarrassed about writing for money, and more concerned with securing an income to support herself and her family than with the conventional disavowal of this motive.

While *Letters from the Mountains* is undoubtedly comprised of correspondence between Grant and her friends, some of which has left a documentary record, both the sincerity and authenticity of the text was brought into question by at least one contemporary reviewer, who highlighted the omission of the names and addresses of Grant's recipients in the 1806 edition. (The context to this questioning was the widespread use of epistolary form in fiction in the period, and many other pseudo-epistolary publications - *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady* — Samuel Richardson 1747–48 and *The Sorrows of Young Werther* — Johann Wolfgang von Goethe 1774, Germany.) As Pam Perkins has previously addressed, the second

[247] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence,* 1: 22.

edition, published in 1807, featured a restructured organisation of the order of the letters.[248] Together with the inclusion of Grant's name as author, this edition proved to be much more popular. Aside from the restructuring of the order of the letters and the inclusion of Grant's authorship, another new feature was the addition of the names of Grant's recipients. However, Grant, it seems, included the recipients' names owing to what she felt was coercion or duress. The introductory remarks in the second edition records Grant's gratitude to her friends for permitting her to disclose their real names, in the aftermath of the suspicious reception of the first edition:

> To you, my dear friends […] I inscribe these Letters, which you have kindly permitted me to illuminate with names, which accredit the writer, and totally destroy the unjust surmise,—that that you are all "like some gay creatures of the element, the creation of an exuberant fancy." To those who could suppose me capable of such an imposition, I only wish that, by being connected by ties as tender, with minds as estimable, they may be convinced of the possibility of your existence.[249]

Grant goes on to suggest however that even this inclusion of names and addresses would likely fail to placate the most determined detractors, conveying her frustration through a satirical and fabular metaphor:

> To my old, beloved, and long tried friends […] 'tis rather hard, that they should be reduced to the necessity so humorously described in the fable, where the critics so often contemned the likeness which the painter had drawn, that he was forced, for the vindication of his art, to desire the original to exhibit his countenance through the canvass;—this too they declared no likeness, till the man spoke out to the utter confusion of criticism.[250]

Grant's comparison between her own predicament and that of the imagined painter suggests that catering to every demand of the critics would be an exhausting pursuit. She seems to

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[248] Pam Perkins, 'Anne MacVicar Grant (1755–1838)', in *The Routledge Companion to Romantic Women Writers*, ed. Ann R. Hawkins, Catherine S. Blackwell, and E. Leigh Bonds (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2022), 247–48.
[249] Anne Grant, *Letters from the Mountains*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1807), 1: v-vi.
[250] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 1: xii.

have felt that publishing the names of her correspondents would do little to placate critics who were determined to prove her a fraud. Though prompted to give further authentication, Grant refrained from publishing any letters that she had received in the second or any other subsequent edition of *Letters*. This exchange is important as it suggests that a contest over Grant's basic veracity and reliability as a writer had thrown her onto defensive ground on questions of cultural and intellectual authenticity, from early in the major phase of her professional success; many of her later appeals to authority of different sorts can be read sympathetically in the light of this predicament.

Despite Grant's defensive attitude towards the 'surmise' of invention, *Letters from the Mountains* was generally regarded by the critics of the time as an authentic series of epistles. *The European Magazine and London Review* 'found them, on perusal […] to bear the strongest internal evidence of being genuine'.[251] The *Eclectic Review* took ingenuity as proof of authenticity: 'perhaps, no letter writer ever thought less of eventually appearing before the public, than did the author of *Letters from the Mountains'*.[252] *The Annual Review* made a similar affirmation:

> These were familiar and confidential letters; to set herself off seems never to have been the design of the author, but she has done it only the more effectually. She always appears to us in a light at once respectable and amiable. Her understanding is strong, her fancy lively, her sensibility acute: she has the art of placing every thing before our eyes—we see her, we hear her; and when we shut her book, we seem to take leave of a friend.[253]

While this reviewer ends their piece by referring to Grant with the epithet 'friend', perhaps detracting from her claims of an authoritative intellectual narrative voice (the kind of voice that she would attempt to achieve later, in the *Essays*), it is worth remembering that at the time the actual letters were written, Grant's literary ambitions perceptibly amounted to informal observations of travel and the detailing of her domestic setting for her coterie; and certainly the rhetoric of intimate social correspondence only half-inadvertently reaching

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[251] *The European Magazine and London Review*, vol. 49 (London, May 1806): 370–81.
[252] *Eclectic Review*, vol. 16 (1844): 173–77.
[253] *Annual Review of History and Literature*, vol. 5 (London, January 1806): 345–50.

publication was a highly effective strategy for women writers in the period, and perhaps one of the few ways that they could reach the public and draw attention to some topics.[254]

In the first edition of *Memoir and Correspondence*, Grant alludes to her reasons for excluding her own name from the first edition's publication. This decision, she writes, was partly owing to her insecurities around the merits of her writing:

> Happily, I met with a Scotch friend, who knew something of Messrs. Longman and Reese, and promised to introduce me. I went to them with no enviable feelings, being fully as much ashamed of my shabby manuscript as Falstaff was of his ragged recruits […] This was in Spring 1805. Summer and autumn passed, winter came, spring returned;—still not a word of my book. I thought my papers had been lost, or thrown aside as useless […] I had declined to give my name to the public as the author of the Letters, and therefore could not be much affected, farther than a pecuniary disappointment, by their being overlooked.[255]

The anonymous production of the *Letters* not only exacerbated questions regarding their authenticity, it also caused some degree of confusion for contemporary literary critics. For instance, the *Annual Review* reviewer mistook Captain Campbell for Grant's father (Grant had related in *Memoirs of an American Lady* that Campbell gave her a copy of Milton's *Paradise Lost* when she was six years old) assuming the author of the *Letters* to be not Grant, but a Miss Campbell.[256] Grant's name would eventually become firmly associated with the *Letters from the Mountains*, solidifying her reputation as a literary figure, and thought of by her contemporaries, at least, as one of Scotland's most forthright ambassadors.

Environment and the Concept of 'Indigeneity'

In order to comprehend and trace the development of Grant's Cultural Jacobitism in the *Letters*, it is necessary to discuss key abstract components that contribute to her identity. While Grant appeared confident at times that both her genealogy and the extent of her

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[254] Soren Hammerschmidt, 'Social Authorship and the Mediation of Memory in Anne Grant's Poetry', *European Romantic Review* 30, no. 2 (2020): 203.
[255] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1st ed., 1: 22-23.
[256] *Annual Review of History and Literature,* 346.

cultural assimilation in the Highland region reinforced her position as a Highlander,[257] her writing often also admits an awareness that her place of upbringing in America might act as an impediment to her claim. Occasionally this awareness led to hesitancy and insecurity in Grant herself and, in *Letters from the Mountains* she wrestles with the significance of her place of birth in particular. While the first volume highlights Grant's anxiety around fitting into the Gaelic-speaking Highland community, these anxieties eventually extend beyond her considerations of the Highland people and work towards the formation of a defence of her Highland credentials in the face of all possible English-speaking critics.

The concept of indigeneity however was important not only in terms of Grant's Cultural Jacobitism; it is worth noting again that political Jacobitism itself was very much founded upon the tenets of indigeneity and rights of heredity. Murray Pittock observes:

> The patriot or native qualities of the Stuarts were also important (one reason why the Hanoverian propaganda often tried to alienize them or their support). The string of foreigners who had been apparently (and to some extent really) preferred in the entourage of William II and III or George I was a powerful motive for pro-Stuart feeling, representational as it was of an envisioned settled order from the past, linked to a pre party political world when 'loyalty no harm meant'.[258]

This sums up both the indigenous ideal and enduring aspirations of Cultural Jacobitism. It resonates with Grant's arguments against cosmopolitanism, migration and immigration and, more importantly, it detaches Cultural Jacobitism from a dependency upon politics or, as Pittock states, the 'pre party political world', suggesting instead that Jacobitism has, at its root, cultural, moral and perhaps spiritual motivations, independent of politics or the dynasty with which it could (or ultimately, could not) maintain and reassert itself.

The Highland-Lowland Dichotomy

When Grant arrives in the Highlands at the beginning of the first volume of *Letters from the Mountains*, she narrates the formative stages of constructing a Highland identity for herself.

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[257] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 76.
[258] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 133.

Over the next few years, and letter by letter in the published work, this arduous endeavour entailed negotiating various obstacles, not least of which were her own preconceptions and the misconceptions that stemmed from her prior education in general enlightenment values. Along with discarding the theories that had underpinned her worldview, Grant had to learn new, alternative ways of interpreting the world. This was to be achieved primarily by learning the Gaelic language and integrating herself into what she describes as a thoroughly close-knit and exclusive community. Ultimately, this process culminated in Grant's perception and maintenance of a definitive Highland- Lowland cultural, linguistic and ethnic dichotomy.

In addition to its alignment with travel writing and *belles-lettres*-style content, *Letters from the Mountains* is particularly interesting from an anthropological or ethnographic perspective, because the reader is implicitly invited to consider the manner in which the writer of the letters candidly progresses from the vantage point of an 'outsider' to (somewhat paradoxically) that of a 'native'. The caveat to this sense of candid sentiments openly explored must remain the extent to which the letters themselves were edited or rewritten to conform to this narrative. Nevertheless the acknowledged dual perspective of Grant's work arguably argues for a significant degree of credibility for the care with which she draws on autobiographical insight in the formation of anthropological perspective.[259] *Letters from the Mountains* is often read at least partly as a travelogue, or in the context of her other Highland travel narratives.[260] In this frame, it is her *Essays* that modern critical assessment presents as the focussed analysis of culture, more preoccupied with the development of society and social progress in general.[261] However, I argue that thirty years before she had compiled her *Essays,* the material Grant drew on for *Letters from the Mountains* had already begun to acknowledge the need for some kind of anthropological assessment of the Highlands. This acknowledgment is expressed, not in a particularly scientific or nuanced manner, as was the aim of the *Essays* but rather in an impassioned rhetorical defence of Highland culture in the face of Anglocentric prejudice. While in the *Essays* Grant attempts to delineate in a scientific manner the Highland-Lowland cultural dichotomy, based on the testaments of others with herself as the mediating figure, a clear assertion of difference is still made in *Letters from the Mountains*, only in more personal or autobiographical terms. Her deprecation of Lowland

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Rob Sutton, 'Echoes of Albany: The Transatlantic Reflections of Anne Grant in *Memoirs of an American Lady'*, *Humanities* 14, no. 2 (2025): 20, https://doi.org/10.3390/h14020020.

[260] McNeil, 'Anne Grant, Queen Victoria and the Highland Travelogue', 192; Perkins, 'Landscape in Translation', 214-5.

[261] Perkins. 'Grant: Gender, Genre and Cultural Analysis', 225.

culture forty years prior to the publication of the *Essays* is coarse in comparison; however, the essence of the argument is the same:

> I think if ever I run wild on the rocks, which at times I feel much inclined to, I will not be a shepherdess, but a goatherdess; these creatures have more sense, and spirit than heavy-headed sheep; they differ just as Highlanders do from plodding lowlanders.[262]

In addition to her partiality to the Highland people and culture in *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant also expresses a distinct preference for the Highland landscape. In the opening letter of the third volume, addressed to her friend Miss E (presumably Miss Ewing), Grant writes:

> Yet, over and above the partiality which we are apt to contract for our place of abode, we found a sameness in that extent of lowland that did not compensate for the variety afforded by our wild hills and winding glens.—Besides, its north-east situation exposes it to such chilling blasts, as made us reflect with pleasure on the shelter we receive from our mountains, which are like some lofty and revolting characters, who appear stern and awful to strangers, but are all warmth and kindness to their own family.[263]

Grant clearly asserts the familial and genealogical component of Highland identity, while also claiming a bodily connection to a landscape that deters strangers while sheltering natives. Throughout her writing, Grant positions Highland people as being a more rustic, hardy, and resourceful 'race'. Not all of these assertions are based purely upon stereotype. Some of the arguments that Grant proposes are founded upon the real social history of the Highlands. For instance, in the century prior to Grant's time, when English-speaking Scotland had been culturally isolated from Europe to a substantial degree, residents of the Highlands had substantial experience of education in continental European locales such as Paris and Amsterdam.[264] After having been in the Highlands only for a few months Grant noted in a letter, again to Miss Ewing, that Anglophone stereotypes about the lack of education in the Highlands were unwarranted:

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[262] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 53.
[263] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 5.
[264] Thomas Brochard, 'Scottish Northerners in *Alba Amicorum*, c. 1540–c. 1720', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 43, no. 2 (2023): 111.

> They have assemblies every fortnight, gayer than your Glasgow ones; which may be accounted for by their being attended by the neighbouring gentry, who are numerous and polite.—These gentry too have many of them been abroad, in the army or otherwise, and thus add liberal notions and polished manners to the acute and sprightly genius of the country.[265]

Here Grant picks up on the cultural connections between the Highlands and continental Europe. The suggestion is that while the Lowland recipient may expect to hear reports of the rude or rustic society that inhabits the areas close to Fort Augustus, Grant's insistence in the quote that the neighbouring gentry and scholars are 'polite', coupled with their experience on the continent suggests that they had been exposed to Enlightenment philosophies. This echoes a real historical phenomenon reflecting the political ties forged between adherents of the Catholic house of Stewart and the French and Swedish crowns in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[266]

Five years later, in a letter omitted from the first edition but included in the second edition, Grant wrote again to Miss Ewing. This later letter takes pains again to emphasise the distinctive values of Highland culture, but by now Grant perceives also a contest over representation and a bias in the perception of 'Scotch manners', not simply their intrinsic virtue or values. Grant again adopts the method of directly comparing the Highland people with their Anglicised Lowland neighbours:

> Highlanders are all herdsmen, and the vulgar in the Low Country hold them in abomination. It just now occurs to me, why, in a country so near as England, and even in one so assimilated as Ireland, Scotch manners are so little understood. They never write a page on these subjects without making some blunder, which to a Scotchman seems very ludicrous.[267]

Crucially, in anticipation of how she would later present her position as authoritative in the *Essays*, Grant identifies the reason for literary misrepresentation:

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[265] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 6.
[266] Szechi, *The Jacobites,* 107.
[267] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 2: 53.

> This comes from confounding the peculiarities, dialect, &c. of the Highlanders with those of the Lowlanders, the two most dissimilar classes of beings existing, in every one particular that marks distinction; the former indeed are a people never to be known unless you live among them, and learn their language.[268]

For Grant, the English observer seems unable to differentiate between the Highland and Lowland societies, leading to myriad literary conflations between the two. Having sustained experience of both Lowland and Highland society, Grant alludes to her credentials as something of a partisan anthropologist. After only five years in the Highlands, Grant's allegiance to the region was firmly cemented, and the rhetoric of the above passage admits no qualification to her belief that the Highland people possessed a superior culture to the rest of English-speaking Britain.

Highland Emigration and the Destruction of Grant's Highlands

Ironically, at the moment Grant began to construct an identity based around what she regarded as the purer aspects of Scots-Gaelic culture – language and landscape – these aspects were the most vulnerable to change, and were indeed undergoing massive 'reform'. Not only had the remaining Highland population been subjected to various decrees in the form of the 1746 Act of Proscription that prevented them from using their own language and practising their own culture, but the land had been transformed through the process of sheep farming. In blunt terms, the Highland Clan system, the Gaelic language and the native animals, such as deer, had been usurped by polite society, the English language and the introduction of sheep, respectively. Forging an identity on the back of an endangered and repudiated culture likely took its toll upon Grant's psyche. By far the biggest worry for her, however, was the diminishing 'native' Gaelic population in Scotland. For Grant, the absence of the native people meant that the Highlands would cease to exist; and if the Highlands ceased to exist, the identity that had taken her years to construct would no longer be tangible or sustainable.

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[268] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 2: 53.

In response to this, Grant's writing frequently incorporates the Highland people into the scenery in a way that presents them as surviving in harmony with the environment. In the opening letter of the third volume of *Letters from the Mountains* (addressed to Mrs. Macintosh of Glasgow, 1794), she writes:

> The servants, tenants and *bairns* are all busy making our great haystack,—Jock and the men drive carts—the rest trample down the top […] This is what I account one of the pleasures of a country life, to see so many people usefully busy, and innocently happy.[269]

For Grant there is an indelible link between the pastoral setting and the people that comprise it. This example of a rustic idyll in Grant's writing, while reminiscent of the bygone feudal Highland society, had, by 1794, become an exception to the status quo in the Highlands. While a substantial number of Gaelic people remained in the Highlands in spite of the Clearances, the Enlightenment influence against parochial, close knit, familial communities reverberated throughout Scotland more generally, making scenes such as this increasingly rare:

> The abolition of heritable jurisdictions in 1747 could be seen as marking the transition in the Enlightenment's view: the old patriot nobility were defeated for the last time at Culloden, and modernity, Britain's gift to an ungrateful Scotland, could supervene.[270]

The prominent identification and positioning in the work of the continuity of Grant's own feudal-based family is all the more important in the light of this exception.

Grant's observations of emigration, or what she calls in her *Essays*, 'the crime of depopulation', are not as pronounced or explicit in *Letters from the Mountains* as elsewhere. This is likely because the passionate rhetoric against emigration she deploys elsewhere in her oeuvre was formed in retrospect, after considerable reflection. In *Letters,* however, Grant's observations were more confined by her immediate context; while references to the depopulation can be found, as the process of clearance unfolded around her, its full impact

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[269] Grant, *Letters*, 2: 68.
[270] Pittock, 'Historiography', 264.

was yet to be observed. She does however provide comment on how the Highland people were being replaced by outsiders. In a letter to Miss Ourry dated November 19, 1791, Grant makes a correlation between the negative impact of emigration on the Highland landscape and its people:

> Our tumults in the north appear aggravated and formidable to you in London, which is the region of political panicks […] The only cause of complaint in Scotland is the rage for sheep-farming.—The families removed on that account, are often as numerous as our own;[271]

She then goes on to defend the Highland people who objected to the Clearances and who had been accused of the destruction of property and life by the British military:[272] 'Though the poor Ross-shire people were driven to desperation, they even then acted under a sense of rectitude, touched no property, and injured no creature'.[273] When faced with the immorality of forced emigration from their own land, Grant stresses the superior morality and 'rectitude' of the Highland people, in contrast to those who were responsible for their plight.

Letters from the Mountains also addresses a particular aspect of emigration that many other contemporary writers were perhaps not in the position to address, namely, the prospects of those Highlanders subject to the transatlantic journey to America. Having herself recently arrived from America, Grant had first-hand experience of what awaited the emigrants there, and she was well aware that relocation to North America held considerable dangers for others. Grant's pessimism around emigration, then, was not only born out of considerations of what the Highlands would lose but was also founded upon her anticipation of what actually awaited the Highland people when they arrived in North America. (It must be stressed that not all emigrants to America were subject to force or coercion. Some Highland-Scots undertook the journey out of choice, motivated by the hope of building for themselves and their families a new and more prosperous life.) While Grant often reminisces with fond recollections of her time spent in America, towards the end of *Memoirs of an American*

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[271] Grant, *Letters,* 2: 195.
[272] In Scotland, the dramatic political, economic, and social reorganization of the Highlands in the wake of the failed 1745 Jacobite uprising—British military occupation and forced anglicization, the introduction of land-intensive sheep grazing, and the subsequent forced 'clearances' of large numbers of peasants whose labors were no longer marketable. Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 20.
[273] Grant, *Letters,* 2: 196.

Lady, her conclusions (just prior to the outbreak of the War of Independence and preceding the height of the Highland Clearances) suggest that the country was on the edge of a calamitous transformation and that it was not a place to migrate in search of a better life.

Grant's unique perspective on such prospects was not only due to her own experience of America as a child, but, crucially, because she had kept up regular correspondence with friends there, who kept her informed on American affairs. Accordingly, in *Letters from the Mountains* we find correspondence from the younger Grant anticipating the older narrator of the *Memoirs,* cautioning against the prospect of emigrating in the pursuit of happiness. In a letter sent to Mrs. Mackintosh, dated September 1794, Grant advises caution specifically on the notion held by some Highlanders that they will attain a better quality of life in America:

> Did I tell you what pleasure it gave me to find your friend and favourite Dr. M—s had given up that wild scheme of going to America?—I was fond of that country to enthusiasm, and spent the most delightful and fanciful period of my life in it; for mine was a premature childhood [...] Yet, from what I know of the alterations which the last twenty years have brought about in that country, and the still greater difference which other views and associations have made on myself, though I had it now in my power to return, my judgment would check my inclination.[274]

Although, as some critics state, Grant at times depicts America as a form of 'Eden', there is a clear distinction between antebellum and postbellum America in her work [Antebellum and postbellum refer to Civil War not War of Independence], the latter having clearly fallen in her estimation.[275] Having established Grant's attitude to indigeneity in the earlier section, it is worth reiterating here that one of the overarching arguments in Grant's oeuvre is that a people's identity is indelibly tied to the landscape. For Grant, Highland culture will not remain entirely intact if the people are relocated to a foreign environment. Ironically, just as Grant begins to settle in the Highlands and establish for herself a Highland identity, she is compelled to sympathise with those emigrants whose identity is under threat as a result of their removal from the region.

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[274] Grant, *Letters*, 2: 71-72.
[275] Pam Perkins, 'Paradises Lost', 327.

Grant's representations of the Highlands alter through the course of *Letters from the Mountains*, owing largely to her exposure to new places, experiences, people, and language. While many of the nuances in Grant's depictions of the Highlands are a direct result of such experience, it is important to point out that before returning to the Highlands (at the age of seventeen) Grant had developed many pre-conceived, second-hand notions of the region; not only through her voracious consumption of literature, but also from the oral depictions of the landscape and lore passed down by her mother and father. Notwithstanding such positive depictions, when the teenage Grant was informed that she was to leave America for a new life in Scotland, it was unwelcome news to her. Writing retrospectively in *Memoirs of an American Lady*, Grant recalls with explicit anxiety Aunt Schuyler's accompanying her to bid a final farewell to her friends and the societies with which she had become accustomed in preparation of moving to what was, at this time in her life, a foreign land:

> She now so timed her visit (though in dreadful weather) that I might accompany her, and take my last farewell of my young companions there: yet I could not bring myself to think it a final one. The terrible words, *no more,* never passed my lips.[276]

As discussed in the previous chapter, the term 'no more' echoed the popular Gaelic lament attributed to Highlanders being coerced or forced to remove from the Highlands; Grant had already echoed this phrase in her poem 'The Highlanders'. In this case, however, the term is reversed to signify migration across the Atlantic in the opposite direction; from the Americas to Glasgow (and eventually the Highlands), and the loss of America.[277] It is difficult to say how much this moment in *Memoirs* is the retrospective application of a language of Highland loss, developed in the intervening period, to the loss of American childhood, or whether it was the earlier loss that informed Grant's attachment to Highland lament; either way the transfer of the terms and scenes of pathos is interesting. What is clear is that Grant felt a deep sense of loss in having to move from the land that had been her home for the majority of her life, and that her journey as a fourteen-year-old was an inversion of the coerced transatlantic crossing undertaken by many Highland people at the same time and later.

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[276] Grant, *Memoirs*, 267.
[277] Kirsten Daly, 'Return No More!', 25.

Grant reveals how it had almost occurred that she remained in America on the basis of an appeal from the eponymous American Lady*;* the condition being that she should stay under Aunt Schuyler's tutelage in Albany. This of course would have meant that *Letters from the Mountains* would never have existed. However, Grant's father made the ultimate decision:

> Aunt leaned hard to the latter expedient, but my father could not think of leaving me behind to await the chance of his return; and I had been talked into a wish for revisiting the land of my nativity.[278]

Grant's choice of the term 'nativity' here is crucial. *Letters from the Mountains*, and later comments in her writing, indicate that Grant's return to the Highlands was particularly disenchanting for her, and that the region did not immediately live up to her expectations. While Grant is not explicit about the precise terms in which her father persuaded her to consider a return to Scotland, the passage of her *Memoirs* anticipating the return begins to speculate romantically about the landscape of the country that she would contrive to make her home:

> Having lulled my disappointment in regard to Clarendon, and filled all my dreams with images of Clydesdale and Tweeddale, and every other dale that was the haunt of the pastoral muse in Scotland, I grew pretty well reconciled to my approaching journey; thinking I should meet piety and literature in every cottage, and poetry and music in every recess, among the sublime scenery of my native mountains.[279]

Notably, Tweeddale and Clydesdale are situated within the Lowlands and not the Highlands: it appears that Grant had been mentally prepared to relocate to regions compatible with her already existing cultural, literary and linguistic tastes, and that this did not at first include the Highlands. Thus, it is crucial to comprehend how, at this stage in her life, Grant associated her Scottish identity with specifically Lowland and Border spaces; undeniably aligning herself with the 'pastoral muse.'

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[278] Grant, *Memoirs,* 276.
[279] Grant, *Memoirs,* 271.

By the time we arrive at the second volume (second edition) of the *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant's attitude to both the 'dales' and the 'pastoral muse' appears to have altered drastically. Writing to Miss Ewing in Glasgow in November 1778, Grant positions her recipient in exactly the terms of her earlier projection of a pastoral muse, now seen from the other side of a different divide, and maintaining the independent origins of Highlanders and Lowlanders marked by difference linguistically, culturally and biologically, now asserted as immovable indigeneity:

> As for you, good sober souls of Clydesdale and all the other Dales, sung by the pastoral muse, your ancestors were good plain Saxons; who, begging to be excused from any particular intimacy with Danish ravens and Norman leopards, and all foreign birds and beasts, came northward, to shelter under the Scottish fir […] In short, you dwellers of the dales […] are just what the old English were in the days of the rival roses.[280]

After undergoing a period of cultural immersion into the Highlands, Grant now uses the precise locations that she had previously identified with as a marker of difference between herself and her Lowland friends. The suggestion that these 'dales' including 'Clydesdale' pertain specifically to Lowlanders and are not areas with which Grant (or Highlanders in general) identifies is at odds with her description of them in *Memoirs of an American Lady* where the dales represent a distinctly imagined Gothic or Teutonic locale and culture. Even though Memoirs was written after Grant had left the Highlands, she seems keen to recreate for her reader how she constructed the region in her mind as a child living in America. Together with her references to the 'dales' in this letter, however, Grant employs the term 'Briton' to distinguish herself and her ancestors from that of her 'Saxon' recipient. Rather than using the term 'Briton' to denote a Scottish nation recently consolidated by its larger English neighbour with the 1707 Act of Union, Grant employs the term to delegitimise any Anglophone claims on the Highlands:

> The Highlanders are Celts (as Pinkerton in the bitterness of his soul calls them). Now, I and my ancestors are genuine Britons, who, retired with surly independence before

[280] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 2: 54-55.

> the red eye of the King of the world, and his imperial Eagles, made the strength of the rock ours, snuff'd like wild asses at the voice of the pursuer […][281]

Grant's reference to the 'red eye of the King of the world' here conjures imagery of a wrathful and watchful roman force on Scotland's border. It also reinforces her claims elsewhere of the 'unmingled' ancestry of the Highland people,[282] who she regards to be the 'genuine Britons', isolated from successive Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Norman acculturation. This reading of Grant is similar to Kenneth McNeil's reading of James Macpherson's insistence that:

> the mountainous terrain of the Highlands both molded the character of the people who settled there and effectively cut them off from the usual forces that promoted race mixing […] the implication of his claims for a common ancestor that unites all the races of Great Britain is that the Highland Gael is not simply the truest Scot but the truest Briton as well.[283]

The primary significance of the passage in Grant's letter are assertions to her Lowland correspondents that the Highland people are indigenous to Scotland, while the Lowlanders arrived much later in the land to 'shelter under the Scottish fir'. This particular theory was the source of a major debate during the latter part of the eighteenth century. At a time when the Highland landscape was in the process of cultural consolidation by English-speakers from England and the Lowlands, the rhetoric of John Pinkerton served to bolster the argument that in fact the Teutonic-English people could lay claim to Scotland in its entirety.[284] Colin Kidd has argued for the likelihood that the claims for Celtic indigeneity, adopted by James Macpherson, and advanced here by Anne Grant, was in fact much closer to the truth.[285]

There has already been some critical scrutiny of the rhetoric deployed by Grant in this letter. Pam Perkins suggests that Grant's reference to Pinkerton may well be indicative of her

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[281] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 2: 54.
[282] '[…] the most ancient, unmingled, and original people in Europe.' Grant, *Essays*, 1:7.
[283] Kenneth McNeil, "'Native Tongue:' Ossian, National Origins, and the Problem of Translation," in *Scotland, Britain, Empire: Writing the Highlands, 1760–1860* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 36–37.
[284] McNeil, '"Native Tongue," 33.
[285] Colin Kidd, 'Constructing the pre-romantic Celt', in *British Identities Before Nationalism Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600-1800,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1999) 204.

knowledge of contemporary literary and philosophical debates, while questioning the chronology of her incorporation of this knowledge:

> [Grant] was strongly engaged with contemporary intellectual debates […] She was also following more specifically Scottish debates […] Indeed, since the first of her references to Pinkerton is in a letter dated 14 November 1778, nearly a decade before the publication of Pinkerton's most controversial work, it appears that Grant was either following literary arguments, as well as exchanging poems, in manuscript or was revising her letters to play up her interest in the subject.[286]

While it may yet be the case that Grant edited her letters for publication, the inference that she intended to 'play up' perhaps underplays the possibility of her earlier knowledge of Pinkerton. It is true that, in 1778, the twenty-year-old Pinkerton was still to publish the work and provoke the controversy for which he is perhaps best known, via his *Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of the Scythians or Goths* (1787). However, Patrick o' Flaherty suggests that in 1776, by the age of eighteen, the *Weekly Magazine* (an outlet that 'by 1776 had a circulation of 3,000 copies') had published one of Pinkerton's poems.[287] In the same year, he had also anonymously self-published a poem titled 'Ode to Craigmillar Castle'. Flaherty states that by 1778, the year that Grant references Pinkerton in her letter to Miss Ewing, he had already become part of, and perhaps led, a private literary '"circle"' in Edinburgh. [288] While the likelihood remains that Grant's inclusion of his name in the 1778 letter was the subject of a revision, the prospect that Grant, educated and well-read as she was by the age of twenty-two, may have actually been familiar with at least a sense of Pinkerton's ideas, and proceeded to have document and debunk these in private correspondence, cannot be ruled out. In this scenario, Pinkerton is perhaps drawn into a shared pattern in *Letters from the Mountains,* of youthful preconceptions and misconceptions about Highland identity disillusioned by the intervention of (from Grant's point of view) lived experience.

Grant's mental recreation of the Scottish landscape began with an ardour that would never be dampened. In contemplating her move to Scotland, Grant juxtaposed her connection to the

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[286] Kirsteen McCue and Pamela Perkins, *Women's Travel Writings in Scotland,* xxxiii.
[287] Patrick O'Flaherty, *Scotland's Pariah: The Life and Work of John Pinkerton, 1758–1826* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 8.
[288] O'Flaherty, *Scotland's Pariah,* 11.

pastoral setting of the Lowlands with a more tenable bond of association to the Highlands, by virtue of her ancestry. Grant recalls how her best friend had joined with the appeals of Aunt Schuyler to let Grant remain behind in America. However, her newly impressed thoughts and images of Scotland could not be quelled:

> […] nor […] could I have divested myself of the desire now waked in my mind of once more seeing my native land, which I merely loved upon trust, not having the faintest recollection of it.[289]

Again, the identification of the native land can be interpreted in different ways here. On the one hand, it could refer to Grant's actual place of birth (Glasgow); conversely, it could refer to the Highlands, where she had lived up until the age of eighteen months, and where she would eventually come to claim affinity through settled status and the lineage of both parents. Alternatively, this could simply be a reference to Scotland more generally, with less emphasis upon perceived regional and ethnic / cultural divisions. While neither Glasgow nor the Highlands are the basis of recollection, except those reflected memories which may have been the product of the family culture of Grant's later childhood, both locations were objects of love and trust. Either way, it is apparent that before leaving America, Grant had great expectations of both the Scottish landscape and the Scottish people.

An opposition of Lowland and Highland in Grant's work along the lines of a Burkean division of picturesque and sublime is important; here, as broadly elsewhere in this division, the picturesque and the pastoral bring joy and comfort to the observer, while the sublime elicits more troubling sensations of anxiety and fear alongside aesthetic pleasure. In what may have appeared mildly indecorous sentiments for epistolary writing between women in the period, Grant declared to Miss Reid (May 2, 1773) an intent to exercise her love for natural sublimity: 'I propose indulging my delight in overcoming difficulties, and exploring odd places and odd things, by many a walk in pursuit of the retreating sea nymphs'.[290] This letter was penned only a month after Grant had arrived in the Highlands, and its wider context suggests that her first four weeks in Scotland had been spent with a group of people whose attitudes she did not share, and also that she had likely been confined within a

[289] Grant, *Memoirs*, 272.
[290] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 44.

domestic setting. Its confident identification and pursuit of difficulty and oddness is nevertheless striking. In *Memoirs of an American Lady*, Grant was to recount how she had maintained a penchant for the wild and impressive outdoor environments of upstate New York that were later in the century to provide the very epicentre of the American sublime, in the paintings of the Hudson River school. In Scotland, after four weeks confined to the tame setting and polite company of Fort Augustus, Grant hankered for a taste of the thrills that she found in the American wilderness. However, on her first journey into the Highland sublime, she finds herself confronted with a type of landscape and a form of sublimity for which she is unprepared:

> […] it is country, without being rural; it is highland, without being picturesque or romantic; it has plains without verdure, hills without woods, mountains without majesty, and a sky without a sun […] O, this is a bad country for a butterfly, a bee, or an enthusiast to expatiate in.[291]

This scenery is not what Grant had anticipated. It is neither 'rural', 'picturesque', nor 'romantic'. The inhospitable climate is unsuitable for companions be they a 'bee' or an 'enthusiast'. In keeping with the sentiments of Burke and Kant, Grant feels decidedly isolated, and notions of solitude associated with sublimity overcome her. But neither is it quite identifiably sublime: 'mountains without majesty'. Grant's preconceptions of the Highlands as Romantic and picturesque locale in either mode are scuppered when she encounters the landscape first-hand, and it induces sensations of disorientation in her.

Again, the problem was a transference of assumptions between incomparable cultural settings. *Memoirs of an American Lady* offers similar equivocations on sublimity. Grant recalls encountering the dangers of nature armed with a sense of fortitude and resilience which cannot quite bear the weight of aesthetic ideals:

> In one place, where we were surrounded by hills, with swamps lying between them, there seemed to be a general congress of wolves […] The bullfrogs, those harmless, hideous inhabitants of the swamps, seemed determined not to be outdone and roared a

[291] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 98

> tremendous bass to this bravura accompaniment. This was almost too much for my love of the terrible sublime.[292]

This experience of sublimity was 'almost' yet not quite 'too much' for her, a threshold moment of 'overwhelm' which itself conforms to the model of sublime enjoyment. In the middle of a swamp, surrounded by wolves and frogs, Grant derives thrills or enjoyment, but it is not exactly direct enjoyment of the landscape as such. As if to highlight her own bravery in the face of sublimity, Grant recalls how 'some women, who were our fellow-travellers, shrieked with terror.' Betty Hagglund suggests how this was a model of 'masculine' assertion and contradistinction common to travel writing by women in the period.[293] The Highlands was to provide further contrasting prompts to self-definition, as it was a very different setting for them.

The group dynamic of Grant's sublime encounters in America is somewhat at odds with the understanding of natural sublimity which tends to require the isolation of the observer.[294] She was not alone on these occasions. More sustained periods of isolation and independence in the Highlands seemed to significantly impact her perceptions and mental state in other ways, rendering her yet more susceptible to anxieties in the face of the grandeur of nature. Grant's isolation in the Highlands extended beyond aesthetic interpretations of landscape. When in the Americas, she generally had access to varied society, and her recollections detail how she found happiness in her community. In her initial year in the Highlands, Grant was not part of any such community. Stationed in a military barracks and only occasionally interacting with the local people, Grant was isolated in much less appealing ways. It was perhaps through the cathartic exercise of writing letters to friends in the more familiar Glasgow, the letters that subsequently formed the basis of *Letters from the Mountains*, that Grant sought solace. Writing to Miss Harriet Reid in Glasgow (June 31, 1773), Grant observes of her interactions with the two contrasting communities, the military personnel and the local Highland people:

> […] nobody will care for me here, because nobody will understand me.—I cannot blame them.—I am too rustic, too simple at least, for people of the world, with whom

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[292] Grant, *Memoirs,*197-198.
[293] Hagglund, "Not absolutely a native, nor entirely a stranger," 45.
[294] Frances Ferguson, *Solitude and the Sublime: Romanticism and the Aesthetics of Individuation,* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 3.

> manner is everything; and though myself uneducated, I painfully feel I have too much refinement, too much delicacy for uninformed people, with whom I feel no point of union but simplicity.[295]

Early in *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant's ideological adherence to Cultural Jacobitism had not yet been conceived. Equipped with a somewhat painful burden of the expectation of gendered polite virtues such as 'refinement' and 'delicacy' and an immediate prejudice against both the landscape and culture, the eighteen-year-old Grant registered a growing sense of depression and dissatisfaction which might only be redeemed by aiming at 'simplicity'. In another letter to Harriet Reid, dated slightly earlier in spring 1773, Grant gives further description of encounters with the Highland scenery where a sense of detachment from her friend, with whom she was accustomed to share picturesque experiences, is starting to become palpable, in a turning away from familiar things:

> I past over all the beautiful groves and cornfields that adorn the lower side, for I had seen such things before, and they brought images of happiness and tranquillity which my mind could not relish in its depressed state. But the solemn and melancholy grandeur of the lofty dark mountains, and abrupt rocks tufted with heath and juniper, that rose on the other side of the lake, and seemed to close its upper end, arrested my attention at once.[296]

In a follow-up letter to Miss Reid, dated May 17, 1773, Grant reveals that she is 'prejudiced against this place [Fort Augustus] because I was brought here against my inclination'. She goes on to elaborate:

> dismal, dismal, it appeared to me; drenched with cold rains, and covered with clouds of unusual darkness.— The shore so flat and unmeaning!—A long low moor spreading behind; very little verdure in sight; no peaceful vales or sweet streams;— the very river Nevis to me looks gloomy and stupid; 'tis a little Acheron.—Ben Nevis is a great clumsy mountain, without any fanciful breaks, or fine marked outline, like those of Morven. It is great, without sublimity, and seems to nod above this ugly

[295] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 182.
[296] Grant *Letters*, 1: 9-10.

> town, and shake a perpetual drizzle from its misty locks. As far as a mountain can resemble a man, it resembles the person Smollet [sic] has marked out by the name of Captain Gawky. I wonder much how any one lives here, who could live any where else.[297]

Here Grant's letter-writing is its most urbane and satirical, paradoxically. Her personification of the mountains as 'Gawky' is significant in that it is not a conventional response to the sublime scene, but rather stressing a comic awkwardness entirely antithetical to it. Elsewhere in *Letters from the Mountains*, satirical and comic notes are prominent too: Grant invokes Sterne's caricature of the Dunbartonshire novelist and traveller Tobias Smollett as 'Smelfungus' to describe a Highland man who exhibits traits that Grant believes are unbecoming of men from that particular society.[298] It is an important initial moment in the book where her own claim to a more authentic Highland sensibility is asserted, but the urbanity of the reference is suggestive too.[299]

Over the course of the sequence of epistles that *Letters from the Mountains* presents, Grant begins to settle into Highland culture and her attitude to the mountainous topography softens. In the later letters she views the mountains not only as simple geography and as aesthetic scene but as a source of comfort, citing the protection they afford Highlanders from both the elements and from invaders. In a letter to Miss Ewing, dated May 1774, only one year after complaining to Miss Reid, Grant's perspective is quite different, and clumsiness is reframed as abrupt movement of a more admirable sort:

> Come with me then, to the capital of the Highlands.—The town is most agreeably situated at the very threshold of this rugged territory; the mountains which rise with abrupt grandeur to bound the prospect on one hand […][300]

By the third volume of *Letters from the Mountains* (second edition), and in the wake of further decades of experience, Grant has moved on from simply describing her own response

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[297] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 95-96.
[298] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 36.
[299] Grant's descriptions of the geography at the outset of her own journey from Glasgow to Fort William at times also resembles the geographical descriptions in comic travel fiction such as Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker* or Sterne's *Sentimental Journey.*
[300] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 4.

to the Highland landscape and instead articulates a more layered patterning of aesthetic modes. In a letter to her friend Mrs. M, dated Sep 21, 1794, Grant writes:

> We now retrace our first and purest ideas of happiness; the rural ease that dwells in the pastoral valley; the soothing quiet and artless innocence of the cottage; the solemn gloom of the forest, in which we wish to meditate undisturbed; and the sublime solitude of the mountain, from whose elevation we wish to look down on low pursuits, and give a kind of repose to the wearied mind.[301]

Loosely organised as a paratactic list without obvious hierarchy, different modes can be overlapped and 'retraced' here; Grant's mediatory instinct extended to landscape as well as to language and culture. Different forms of natural setting form a harmonious, open-ended space which can be adapted to need. The mountains no longer seem to isolate Grant or provoke anxiety in her; instead, they offer comfort and companionship. Upon moving to Stirling after the death of her husband, Grant writes to her friend, Mrs. Smith of Jordan Hill, in 1803:

> The front of the house commands an extensive and varied prospect over a level and fertile country, bounded by mountains lofty and wild, whose fine marked contour is always noble, and at sunset beautiful.[302]

Where Grant had previously noted the absence of the sun and regarded the mountains as foreboding and antagonistic, excluding her from Highland culture, the sun is now an integral feature, warming the scene, and the mountains instil in her a sense of security and belonging.[303] In resolving her control of aesthetic language, Grant consequently resolved a significant part of her personal trepidation around belonging within the sublime Highland landscape.

Grant's gradual reconciliation with the Highland landscape can be traced in many forms through *Letters from the Mountains*. Although it is suggested that her initial encounter with

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[301] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 3: 8-9.
[302] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 3: 201-202.
[303] It is significant that the return of the sun is a prevalent trope in Jacobite literature, suggestive of the development of Grant's proximity to the ideology throughout the course of the *Letters.* See: Moore, 'James Macpherson and 'Celtic Whiggism', 4.

the Highland landscape offered a more challenging or conflicted (and certainly more uncertain) experience of the sublime than America, an experience which could only be recovered through community and communication, after her immersion in Highland society, Grant's reaction to the Highland landscape shifts from one of anxiety to one of affinity.

Ossian and 'The Highland Tour'

The 'Highland Tour' was a derivative of the 'Grand Tour' of Europe that had been fashionable amongst the largely wealthy and privileged British travellers of the eighteenth century.[304] With the onset of Anglo-French hostilities in a series of wars, the 'Highland Tour' had become a suitable alternative to traveling through and around Continental Europe. It enabled parties of less wealthy or less aristocratic tourists to visit the Highlands and investigate a relatively close culture where the people happened to speak a different language.[305] Aside from perceived cultural and ethnic peculiarities distinguishing the people of the region, the Highlands were also an attractive destination for aesthetic tourists, offering forms of mountainous and insular landscape unlike other locations in Britain. It was, of course, also an opportunity to visit locations featured in one of the eighteenth century's most widely read texts, James Macpherson's *Ossian* poems. Nigel Leask has identified a distinction between those tourists visiting the Highlands purely out of aesthetic or artistic interest, and those visiting the region out of literary and oral folkloric interest.[306]

Viewed as a travelogue, *Letters from the Mountains* is comparable to its precursors, especially in its early sections. It aligns with the journey undertaken by Boswell and Johnson, according to modern scholars such as Nigel Leask, in that Grant's ostensible initial motive is a surveying of Highland scenery for perceptible traces of Ossian.[307] It is at this juncture, however, it becomes necessary to clearly distinguish between Ossianic lore and James Macpherson's representations of this lore. For instance, Kenneth McNeil suggests that while the first volume of *Letters from the Mountains* centres on the idea of Grant's own distinctive

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[304] Catherine Jones, 'Travel Writing', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Volume Two: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1919)*, ed. Susan Manning, Ian Brown, Thomas Clancy, and Murray Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 277–78.
[305] Zoë Kinsley, 'Home Tour', in *Keywords for Travel Writing Studies: A Critical Glossary*, ed. Charles Forsdick, Zoë Kinsley, and Kathryn Walchester (London: Anthem, 2019), 120.
[306] Leask, 'Fingalian Topographies', 189.
[307] Leask, 'Fingalian Topographies', 188.

version of a 'Highland Tour', he qualifies this by stressing how she was influenced primarily by Macpherson's text, discounting the extent to which Grant may have been influenced by oral folkloric tradition.[308] Similarly, Pam Perkins also identifies the ways that Grant's comments are infused with the contemporary vogue not only of interpreting the landscape through Ossian, but specifically through Macpherson.[309] Yet, Grant's understanding of Ossian and the Highlands likely did not descend purely from or even primarily through Macpherson. Evidence suggests that Grant was familiar with the Ossianic poems before she had read Macpherson's text: despite the notorious controversy around whether *Ossian* was a translation or an original production, Nigel Leask and others have noted that Macpherson was by no means the originator or only source of Ossianic lore in the culture and literature of the Highlands.[310] In *Memoirs of an American Lady,* Grant makes direct reference to stories told to her as a child by her father and his friends. These tales delineated many places connected to folkloric, and orally transmitted Ossianic traditions:

> A very worthy Argyleshire friend of his, in the meantime, came and paid him a visit of a month; which month was occupied in the most endearing recollections of Lochawside and the hills of Morven. When I returned, I heard nothing but the Alpine scenes of Scotland, of which I had not the smallest recollection; but which I loved with borrowed enthusiasm.[311]

Morven is one of the most important locations for stories of Fingal and Ossian in the Scottish context, and it is entirely likely that the tales to which Grant was exposed at this time pertained to already existing folkloric traditions surrounding these figures. It is reasonable to assert therefore that Grant's initial travels in the Highlands were not filtered wholly or purely through the writing of Macpherson but influenced as well by older oral traditions.

The initial touristic style and framing of *Letters from the Mountains* has some parallels with Samuel Johnson's record of his tour of the Highlands. The fundamental difference between the two travellers, however, is that, prior to her tour, Grant fully believed in the origins of

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[308] McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 104.
[309] McCue and Perkins, *Women's Travel Writings in Scotland*, xxxiii.
[310] Leask, 'Fingalian Topographies', 185.
[311] Grant, *Memoirs*, 265.

Ossian,[312] the history of the related folklore and the viability of Gaelic culture and Gaelic language. Johnson, by contrast, approached his journey with the intent to undermine Ossian and disparage the validity of an idea of Gaelic culture. His scepticism towards Ossian was based largely upon his beliefs that Gaelic was not a written language, and that a spoken language could not bear the weight of epic poetic tradition. As such, the folkloric figures associated with the Ossian cycle were, for Johnson, mere superstition.[313]

Grant's observations in the early letters of the first volume of the text, to a large degree, resemble the contemporary tradition of writing about the region from the perspective of a traveller or outsider. However, unlike writing by other travellers visiting the Highlands, Grant's observations (both geographical and anthropological) are increasingly inflected by a burgeoning sense of her own Gaelic identity, culminating, by the end of the text, in a powerful sense of belonging. As McNeil states, the initially touristic quality of references and observations gradually disappears throughout the course of the *Letters from the Mountains* as Grant's critical viewpoint evolves into one that is more sympathetic for the culture that she observes.[314] One pivotal catalyst for this transition was undoubtedly Grant's growing familiarity with the Gaelic language.

Although Grant had held preconceived notions that Highland society was congenial and friendly, her initial experience of social exclusion jarred with her preconceptions. Yet, even before her departure for the Highlands, the fear of social isolation had seemed to prey on Grant's mind. In one of the early letters to Miss Reid, dated April 13, 1773, Grant sombrely anticipates how 'If others were secluded like me, or exiled, as I am about to be, from all that was wont to please they would be forced to seek resources within themselves'.[315] A little further on, Grant implies that the Highland landscape, like the language, is sealed off and 'inaccessible' to her. In a slightly later letter to Reid, dated May 24, 1773, Grant observes of the terrain:

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[312] 'Grant was a strong believer in the genuineness of the Ossianic poems, and she used her readings of 18th- and 19th-century Gaelic verse to support her argument that the Highlanders were truly a 'poetical' people, with untaught bards still composing poetry'. Betty Hagglund, 'A Journey to the Highlands*', Travellers and Tourists: Women's Non-Fictional Writing About Scotland 1770–1830*, (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2017), 96.
[313] See: Leask, 'Fingalian Topographies', 186 and Pittock, *Poetry and Jacobite Politics*, 179.
[314] McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 112.
[315] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 38.

> inaccessible precipices, overhanging mountains, and glens narrow, abrupt, and cut through with deep ravines, combining with rapid streams, dark pools, and woods so intricate, that the deer can scarce find their way through them.—Yet the natives are looked upon as happier than others.[316]

The similarities between the barriers of language and those of landscape are suggestive. Grant's inclusion of the terms 'inaccessible', and 'intricate', while an overt expression of her reaction to the landscape, is also a signpost to her attempts to integrate into the 'inaccessible' and 'intricate' world of the Gaelic-speaking Highlanders. In the *Essays*, Grant eloquently observes how the 'sublime charms' and 'wild wonders' of Gaelic culture are 'concealed in a language difficult to acquire'.[317] The Highland terrain and Highland idiom are positioned as equally inaccessible to outsiders.

Grant first became fully alert of her status of 'non-Gaelic speaker' when she attended a church sermon where the service was carried out in Gaelic. In her letter to Miss Reid, dated May 5, 1773, Grant describes the experience at the church in Kilmore:

> It is by no means a Jewish Sabbath that is kept here, it would be bold to call it strictly a Christian one […] I was waked […] by the beadles coming to the seat to ask if I had Gaelick, because if I had not, there was to be an English discourse.—Judge of my self-importance, in having a sermon preached for my very self.[318]

Grant's inability to speak the local language in this initial scenario seems to be no particular impediment, and, in fact, she seems to view the beadle's offer of 'an English discourse' as something of an honour. At this stage, her monoglot Anglophone position does not necessarily perturb her, or leave her with a particular sense of alienation; yet it does mark the first evidence of her immediate awareness of pressing cultural and linguistic differences. What is also notable here, and relevant to tracing the process of Grant's overall cultural assimilation, is her reaction to what she deems an unorthodox or even barely Christian strain of theology of the Highlands. This is something that I explore in greater detail in Chapter Four.

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[316] Grant. *Letters*, 1: 126.
[317] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 28.
[318] Grant. *Letters*, 1: 56-61.

It was not long after this experience, however, that Grant's lack of Gaelic began to render her more vulnerable. Just nineteen days after writing about her experience in church, Grant wrote another letter to the same recipient, May 24, 1773. In this second letter she seems to acknowledge how her ignorance of Gaelic marks her as an outsider, stating, 'Alas! for me, that am of "language strange," and have returned to the land of my forefathers, with only this Chaldean English'.[319] It is at this juncture that the correlation between language and ethnicity becomes particularly suggestive. The use of the term 'Chaldean' implies the heterogeneous nature of the English language, by analogy with a proverbially heterogeneous ancient language and, by extension, this mixing and diluting of languages implies the heterogeneous ethnicity of the English people.[320] Among other eighteenth-century thinkers, Samuel Johnson had previously acknowledged the hybridity of the English language.[321] This hybridity contrasts with what Grant goes on to describe in the text as the supposed 'purity' of both the Gaelic language and the Highland people. Even though she has not yet assimilated into Highland culture, Grant implies and assumes that the varied constitution of the English language and her dependence upon it renders it (and thus her) as somehow inferior.

Twelve years later, after becoming a relatively fluent Gaelic speaker, Grant wrote a letter to her friend Mrs. Smith of Glasgow, August 1785, (included in the second edition) where she expresses the desire that her children shall be taught Gaelic before they are taught English. In contrast to what she regards to be the mixed and impure nature of the English language; Grant posits Gaelic as entirely 'original' and 'pure'.

> you are to know, that I make a point of making my mountain nymphs speak the language of the mountains in the first place [...] You cannot think what a source of pleasure my little acquaintance with that emphatic and original language has afforded me. I am determined my children shall all drink "from the pure wells of Celtic undefiled." They shall taste the animated and energetic conversation of the natives;

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[319] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 124.
[320] 'Chaldean' - Chaldea was a location in the Middle East. Grant stresses in the *Essays* how the English-speaking Lowlanders are 'non-native' to Scotland, and that they are comprised of mixed ancestry. The precise terminology is 'inferior monger race of intruders' (*Essays* 1:28). In contrast to the language of "Celtic, undefiled" Grant also seems to view the English language as compromised and impure. She arrives in the 'land of her ancestors' with only 'this Chaldean English' and this makes her feel inferior to some degree.
[321] Susan Manning, 'Post-Union Scotland and Britishness', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Volume Two*, ed. Susan Manning, Ian Brown, Thomas Clancy, and Murray Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 45–56.

> and an early acquaintance with the poetry of nature shall guard them against false taste and affectation. I never desire to hear an English word out of their mouths till they are four or five years old.[322]

In what may appear a paradox, this claim is couched in allusion to a poetic tradition signalling the purity of the English language: Spenser's famous line on Chaucer as the 'well of English undefiled' simply being transposed into the 'Celtic'.[323] This suggests that Grant's immersion into Gaelic was not as complete as she would have her recipients believe and that she maintained a distinct love of classic English poetry. Perhaps it is Grant's prevailing fondness for English literature, demonstrated with quotations and intertextualities throughout her work, that prompted Peter Womack's interpretation of her wish to teach her children Gaelic first, not so much a boast of the superiority of that language but rather as a concession of the inevitable dominance of English as 'the language of Improvement.'[324] Womack draws upon the contemporary framing of Gaelic culture and language as immature in comparison to English language and culture, and he positions Grant as complicit in this framing. Yet, again, if we consider Grant's own three-stage stadial interpretation, it can be argued that while she may well regard the transition from Gaelic to English in parts of the Highlands as an inevitable process, this transition signifies a deterioration rather than, as Womack asserts, an 'Improvement'.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that, for Grant, language, culture and ethnicity are indelibly linked. She felt this sentiment to be shared by those who were now her compatriots: in the *Essays*, she claimed that Highlanders viewed the mixed genealogy of the Lowlanders with disdain, regarding them to be 'a very inferior mongrel race of intruders'.[325] Grant's writing is not the only place where such sentiments were documented and there is evidence of this anti-Teutonism in earlier works that may have influenced Grant. Writing in 1689, English chaplain and traveller Thomas Morer (1651-1715) also noted a similar idea:

> We take the Low-landers to be a medley of Picts, Scots, French, Saxons and English, as their language and habit insinuate, which is the reason why the High-landers, who

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[322] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 2: 94.
[323] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A. C. Hamilton (London: Longman, 1993), Book IV, Canto II, stanza 32, 23.
[324] Womack, *Improvement and Romance*: *The Scottish Highlands in British Writing after the Forty-Five*, 237.
[325] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 28.

> look on themselves to be a purer race, cannot effect 'em; but on the contrary deal with 'em as a spurious degenerate people.[326]

In spite of Grant's penchant for earlier English writers, by inferring a linguistic and cultural dichotomy, she seems keen to elevate the Gaelic language by attacking what she determines to be the impure origins of English. The derogatory comments towards the English language made by Grant in the *Letters from the Mountain* imply that her initial inability to speak the language of her ancestors to some extent thwarted her own designs to forge a complete and genuine Highland identity for herself, and that the forging of this identity would necessitate some element of self-negation.

While Grant regarded her genealogy as pure, the fact that English was her primary language made her feel like an outsider in the Gàidhealtachd. By teaching her children the Gaelic language first, Grant aimed to navigate and avoid any such concerns on their behalf. This analysis should, though, be set in the wider historical context of Grant's time. Pivotal to Grant's proposal is Kenneth McNeil's observation of how Grant's endeavour to ensure that her children spoke Gaelic first ran directly against a more common endeavour to eradicate the Gaelic language in Scotland:

> In wanting to educate her children in Gaelic *before* they learn English, Grant's linguistic program constitutes a reversal of the large-scale efforts of groups like the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge to 'civilize' the Highlands by replacing Gaelic with English.[327]

Initially at least, the focus of the SSPCK (Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge) was to remove all traces of Gaelic language and culture from the Highlands. However, pertinent to Chapter Three of this thesis, another branch of this organisation, the SPCK, extended the same aspirations to the Americas by attempting to suppress Native American cultures and languages. Grant's objections to the erasure of marginalised cultures in both the Highlands and the Americas are part of her role as a proponent of Cultural

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[326] Peter Hume Brown, ed., *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1891), 271.
[327] McNeil, '"Not Absolutely a Native,"' 213.

Jacobitism, an ideology of preservation that might, therefore, be extended to other marginalised groups.

In its acknowledgment that the same Anglocentric force responsible for the eradication of Scots-Gaelic culture was responsible for the attempted eradication of cultures elsewhere, Cultural Jacobitism could be seen as an international force for the marginalised and culturally dispossessed. While differentiations may be drawn between internal and external forms colonialism to illustrate how Gaelic emigrants participated in the British imperial project, this must be nuanced by the understanding that methods of force and coercion were used both to ensure that Highlanders would enlist in the British army and otherwise to ensure that they would abandon their homeland. Kenneth McNeil scrutinises the approach that the Highlands can be regarded as a unit that was complicit in British colonialism. In response to Linda Colley and Robert Crawford's arguments that the Celtic peripheries possessed substantial agency in colonial participation, McNeil states 'neither work fully accounts for the uneven power relations between cultures within Great Britain […] not all members of the varied population groups of Britain had equal voice in the production of British culture'. Rather, postcolonial theory, in insisting upon differentiating between the brevity of the experience of the Gaelic-Highland and Native American people perhaps overlooks the way in which a common oppressor employed identical tactics in the subjugation of both groups:

> The SSPCK's experiences on both sides of the Atlantic often overlapped and influenced each other. Experience in administering among "natives" in the Highlands and North America helped shape the SSPCK's overall attitudes toward the indigenous cultures with which it worked. Over time, Donald Meek observes, the SSPCK grew increasingly tolerant of certain aspects of native culture, particularly native language, in the effort to achieve its aims. At the same time, close contact and interaction between Native Americans and newly arriving Highland settlers allowed missionaries to observe them together and to draw parallels between the two "primitive" cultures in their reports back to Scotland.[328]

[328] McNeil, 'Introduction', *Scotland, Britain, Empire: Writing the Highlands, 1760–1860* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 13.

To return to McNeil's analysis of Grant, he concurs that her eventual preparedness to speak with authority on Gaelic culture and language correlates with her evolving relationship with the local landscape:

> *Letters from the Mountains* had charted the increasing complexity of her thinking: the tourist-like references to sublime landscape and effusive allusions to Ossian of her early letters disappear, as Grant settles down and begins to establish herself as a Gaelic-speaking authority on Highland society and literary traditions, able to speak with some confidence herself on the authenticity of Macpherson's work.[329]

Grant indeed shows the growing knowledge of Gaelic culture and language (intervening on contested aspects of the Ossian controversy) that she would come to showcase in the *Essays*, already translating for her coterie in *Letters from the Mountains* Gaelic phrases and lyrics into English. However, it is worth adding that in the *Essays*, she distinguishes between what is conventionally termed translation and practises instead what she calls the method of 'transfusion'.[330] This distinction arises from Grant's assertion that the Gaelic language has terms for phenomena, feelings and senses that people living outside of the Highlands can simply not experience. Language, for her, is indicative of cultural experience. However, the term 'transfusion' also invokes the symbolic imagery of a perceived connection between language and blood. Blood transfusion had been available as a metaphor since 1667, when Jean-Baptiste Denis conducted the first successful transfusion of blood between patients. However, Grant's sense of transfusion is complicated by her ideas about linguistic compatibility and competence; even with the help of a translator, the English reader will never be able to fully receive or comprehend the original Gaelic sentiments; they cannot, in that sense, be infused into new bodily circulation.

Grant had already broached the concept of transfusion in an unpublished letter sent to George Thomson in October 1801. Discussing Macpherson's treatment of Gaelic relics, Grant states,

> there are some things in the Gaelic the spirit of which could not be easily transfus'd into our language unless one took Mr. Macpherson's liberties which I know he

[329] McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 111.
[330] Grant. *Essays,* 2: 195.

> himself greatly regretted taking as they discredited the authenticity of the originals. But these untouched fragments contain high poetical merit a more authentic translation would not have pleased us generally, but it would have pleased us longer not only as a beautiful poem but as a genuine remain of antiquity.[331]

While Gaelic-Highland culture may possess abstract sensations unintelligible outside of the Highlands, for the individual who is prepared to persevere, integrate and learn the language and cultural peculiarities of the Highlands, with acculturation the transfusion of language at least offers many rewards. There is however a caveat or potential barrier to this figurative transfusion to which I return in the 'Language and Biology' section of this chapter.

In the terms of her broader intellectual context, the position adopted by Grant here is a rejection of a particularly influential strand of Enlightenment philosophy, articulated by Adam Smith, whereby morally formed bonds of friendship denote a more virtuous form of sympathy than do automatic or innate bonds of kinship.[332] Juliet Shields has analysed how attempts to replace bonds of kinship with bonds of friendship were complicated in the literary context of the Scottish Highlands:

> Scottish national tales mediate between two nations and two concepts of nationhood: a Highland nation bound through filiation, or the ties of birth and blood and a British nation united through affiliation, or through shared sympathies.[333]

Grant's writing, along these lines, may not be a complete rejection of the merits of elective and affective affinities, but remains broadly a rejection of the theories of men like Adam Smith and David Hume, theories that stipulated how, in order to exhibit modern sensibility, society must refrain from insularity, and embrace cosmopolitanism. As Shields suggests:

> In contrast to historiographers like Hume and Smith, who argued that sensibility can be cultivated only in refined, commercial society, Grant follows James Macpherson

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[331] University of Edinburgh Library Heritage Collections, MS LA ii 357, ff. 63–68.
[332] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Part VI, Section II, Chapter 1, para. 18, Adam Smith Works, https://www.adamsmithworks.org/documents/chapter-i-of-the-order-in-which-individuals-are-recommended-by-nature-to-our-care-and-attention
[333] Juliet Shields, *Sentimental Literature and Anglo-Scottish Identity, 1745–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010),115.

> and Adam Ferguson in suggesting that material hardships encountered by primitive peoples do not preclude, but rather encourage the cultivation of refined emotion and strengthen the ties of affection[334].

While an emphasis upon kinship and blood ties may have been at odds with some important strands of the Scottish Enlightenment writers, it shows Grant's closer proximity to those aspects identifiable as Cultural Jacobitism. Murray Pittock notes how

> the Jacobite officers who led at the point of impact were in addition more likely to behave with physical bravery, particularly in regiments closely tied by kinship and associational obligations, than their government counterparts'.[335]

The ideology of Jacobitism relied heavily upon the parameters and tenets of Highland clanship, the most obvious of which were bonds of kinship. Where many other Scottish Enlightenment thinkers viewed cosmopolitanism and commercialism as conducive to sensibility, Grant positions secluded, insular and culturally distinct societies as greater venues for compassion and affection. Grant's argument against the philosophers who argued against the sensibility of insular cultures as retrograde was always that they, unlike her, had no immediate actual empirical experience of the groups they denigrated. In order to fully comprehend the peculiarities of Highland landscape, language and culture, the observer, as Grant would come to conclude in her *Essays*, must be 'One who, like the writer of these pages, is not absolutely a native, nor entirely a stranger'.[336] This important phrase has been much quoted in the existing critical literature on Grant, indeed serving as the title of several pieces summarising her work.[337] But while 'not absolutely a native' has been leant on heavily to stress the deliberately mixed and hybrid nature of her identity, this may obscure the central weight nonetheless placed on that word (native) and the claims to nativity and indigeneity she nevertheless consistently attempted to uphold, while the anxiety of remaining a 'stranger' also remained palpable amidst the vehemence of her claims to familiarity.

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[334] Shields, *Sentimental Literature,* 119.
[335] Pittock, *Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, 98.
[336] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 10.
[337] See: McNeil '"Not Absolutely a Native nor Entirely a Stranger"' and Hagglund '"Not absolutely a native, nor entirely a stranger."'

Grant repeatedly asserted that the Gaelic language had words, terms and phrases better suited to describe and reflect the Highlands than could be found in the English language and took up a campaign of defence in the interest of Gaelic. However, this was not always an easy position to hold. Having been a Gaelic speaker for over twenty years, in 1800 Grant wrote to Mrs. Mackintosh, assuming an authoritative position on a particular controversial aspect of Scots-Gaelic culture. This was, again, Macpherson. Grant here confidently affirmed in her notes how one of his Gaelic verses has been 'elegantly and not unfaithfully translated'.[338] Yet three years later in a letter to her friend Helen Dunbar, Grant discusses how the essay on Macpherson and Gaelic published in her *Poems* had not been well met:

> But after all, my locality, the narrow circle I walk round, must forever preclude me from exciting general interest.—By the pains you take to sooth my feelings with regard to the wrath of those who ought to thank me for my well meant efforts, I should fear I had expressed too strongly my opinions on that subject;[339]

'Locality' and a 'narrow circle' of Highland familiarity were the basis of authority on the topic of Highland language, yet as Grant recognised, this locality might have a hindering effect on the successful transmission and transfusion of her efforts into a wider sphere.

Conscious of the criticism drawn by Macpherson's claims that he too had translated his published material, in her *Poems* Grant explains how an exact translation from Scots-Gaelic into English was impossible, not only owing to those feelings and sentiments that existed in Gaelic culture being incomparably un-English, but also the familiar problem for translators (especially translators of metrical verse) of compression: where one Gaelic word could be equal to many English words.[340] The emphasis upon the inadequacies of English translation raised the problem that it might render her recipients at least partially 'deaf' to Gaelic culture, and the latter as doubly silenced. But the process of translation from Gaelic to English, for Grant, was nevertheless valuable in how it destabilised existing notions of the superiority of English as a language. In relation to broader linguistic dynamics in the period, Ina Ferris has

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[338] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 3: 103.
[339] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 260.
[340] 'The first verse is so compressed in the original, that it is not possible to confine the sense in an equal number of English lines. The second has also some peculiar epithets that cannot be transfused into English in the same bounds'. Grant, *Poems*, 403.

discussed how language played a key role in the relationship between the colonised and coloniser, especially as a limit to the latter's power:

> Never far from the surface is the sense of another language that cannot quite be incorporated, and this sense draws attention to the fact that the matrix of translation includes both the untranslatable and the untranslated […] the other language keeps something in reserve, marking a limit to the reach of the translator's tongue.[341]

Grant's sense that not all of the Gaelic language could be made sensible to the English ear may be seen in the light of this limiting of the 'reach' of English.

Letters from the Mountains also seeks to show how a reverse process of translation, from English to Gaelic, adds to the destabilisation of perceived English superiority. Grant suggests that, in learning English, the Highland people themselves appropriate and alter the meaning of some traditional English words, in a type of reverse imperialism:

> You always hear Highlanders talk of countries; but did I ever tell you what our countries are?—not by any means parishes, counties, or any such divisions as you are used to:—a country here means a habitable track, divided by rocks, mountains, and narrow passes, from the adjacent countries, and inhabited by a particular clan.[342]

Grant can perhaps be seen to anticipate much later thinking about the instability of language as a tool for enduring cultural domination. In his seminal work *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha theorises how a dominant language undergoes an appropriation of sorts in mimicry;

> In the very practice of domination, the language of the master becomes hybrid—neither the one thing nor the other. The incalculable colonized subject—half acquiescent, half oppositional, always untrustworthy—produces an unresolvable problem of cultural difference or the very address of colonial cultural authority.[343]

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[341] Ina Ferris, 'Translation From the Borders', 212.
[342] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 274.
[343] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 31.

This reflects some of Grant's observations in the *Letters*. According to her account, the previously monoglot Gaelic-speaking Highland people adopt the English words of their colonisers and in the process of translation, the meaning of the English word (in this case 'countries') is susceptible to alteration; the language of the coloniser itself is occupied territory.

This persistent rhetoric of the corruption and appropriation of language in *Letters from the Mountains* reinforces Ferris's idea of how translated languages can challenge the hegemony:

> […] translation in the nineteenth century produced an anxiety that went hand in hand with imperialist confidence… metaphor of translation as invasion by the translated language rather than conquest by the translator tongue provides a different gloss on the often-repeated motif of the violence of translation.[344]

The difference here is that where the anxiety recognised by Ferris stems from the marginalised language (Gaelic) tarnishing or violently invading the space of the dominant language (English), Grant's Highlanders display a potentially more intrusive and probing threat to the imperialist forces, with the prospect of altering the coloniser's language. Ferris observes that, at times 'two languages seek fully to occupy the same space at the same time, and only one may do so'; in her reading this results in a situation in texts such as Scott's *Waverley* where, 'The Hanoverians must destroy the Highlanders because the Highlanders operate in terms at once oppositional and minor, and so doubly resist domination'.[345] Yet Grant's Highlanders seem to do more than simply 'resist domination'. With Grant as the translator and self-appointed authority on Gaelic and English voices, the Highlanders, while subjugated politically, dominate and subjugate the English by virtue of their moral and cultural superiority as well as their more 'emphatic and original' language.[346]

The Function of Sound – Johnson and his Journey

When Grant negotiates the language barrier, her negative perceptions of the Scottish landscape subside and give way to more affirmative insights. If we accept Grant's claim that

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[344] Ferris, 'Translation from the Borders', 213.
[345] Ferris, 'Translation from the Borders', 219.
[346] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 78.

knowledge of the Gaelic language affords her a greater appreciation of the landscape, then, fundamentally, we can say that it is the accomplishments of Grant's ears that enabled her eyes to interpret the landscape in a more positive light. Ferris highlights how, in contrast to visual representations of landscape, 'Ears have not generally been featured as prominently as eyes in critical discourse on these issues'.[347] In the following section, I will highlight how Grant's ability to decipher particular sounds and phonetics creates a necessary psychological frame of mind for the eye to interpret the Highland sublime as a source of exhilaration rather than one of anxiety.

The efforts made by Grant to acquire the language and 'hear' the alluring qualities that bind Highland culture and Highland landscape are pivotal to understanding her burgeoning Cultural Jacobitism. In order to best demonstrate Grant's departure from status as Anglophone 'outsider' to Gaelic-speaking 'native', I will compare aspects of her initial 'tour' of the Highlands and the development of her appreciation of Gaelic culture with Samuel Johnson's experience as recorded in his own travel writing. The responses of these two writers are arguably informed as much by the sounds that they experienced as by their visual impressions. In contrast to Grant, Johnson's exposure to the sounds of the Highlands led to an increasing aversion to Gaelic culture on his part. Grant's process of immersion into Highland culture and her appreciation of the Highland landscape, though far from smooth, was underpinned by a sense of value in Gaelic sounds and sweet airs, and her belief that the language was not antiquated but very much alive is once again the crucial distinction between what this thesis calls 'cultural' as opposed to 'sentimental' Jacobitism.

From the outset of his *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland,* Johnson seems to have been determined to find flaws with everything that he encountered in the Highlands, not least with the Gaelic language. While Johnson's *Journey* presents itself as a straightforward, honestly brusque depiction of the Scottish Highlands and islands, his writing seems preoccupied with affirming the superiority of the English language; diatribes against the Gaelic language permeate his observations. Johnson openly admits to having formed a negative bias against Scots-Gaelic prior to his journey, based purely upon hearsay about the language:

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[347] Ferris, 'Translation from the Borders', 214.

> Of the Erse language, as I understand nothing, I cannot say more than I have been told. It is the rude speech of a barbarous people, who had few thoughts to express, and were content as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood.[348]

The paradox of Johnson's confession that he knows and understands nothing of a language to which he is nevertheless vehemently opposed is never really confronted, but it exposes on a basic level the conceit of an English traveller castigating the Highlanders for their ignorance in not being able to converse with him in his native tongue, while he is in their land. Johnson's prejudice was also more general: because the Gaelic language was unfit for a modern cosmopolitan world, therefore Highland people were also unfit for the modern world, being as they are 'a very coarse tribe, ignorant of any language but Erse'.[349]

There is a very specific point of textual comparison between the narrated experiences of Grant and Johnson that illustrates the contrast in their preconceptions sharply. Upon hearing a group of women rehearsing in the Gaelic language in a room beneath him, Johnson instinctively reacts negatively to the sound: 'The ladies are studying Erse. I have a cold and am miserably deaf and am troublesome to Lady Macleod'.[350] Johnson evasively presents his 'deafness' as the response of bodily affliction rather than his inability to comprehend Gaelic, a doubling of auditory silencing of mental response that suggests a deeper anxiety and bewilderment. Grant's first experience of encountering the Gaelic language, recorded in *Letters from the Mountains,* is strikingly similar in some ways to Johnson's. In a letter to Harriet Reid, dated 28 April 1773, Grant describes how at dinner with her family at a lodge in Oban, she hears music being played on a 'Jews harp', also emanating from a room below, accompanied by a woman singing in Gaelic. Although she also cannot understand the words, Grant's reaction is decidedly different to Johnson's:

> My Ossianick mania returned with double force; where every blast seemed to touch a viewless harp; and every passing cloud, brightened with the beams of the moon, appeared to my mind's eye a vehicle for the shades of the lovely and the brave, that live in the songs of other times. How softly sweet, how sadly plaintive, were the

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[348] Samuel Johnson and James Boswell. *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* and *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides,* (London: Penguin Books, 1984), 116.
[349] Johnson and Boswell, *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*, 92.
[350] Johnson and James Boswell, *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland,* 145.

> strains that now arrested my attention! from the dark caverns of the kitchen they proceeded, and, through the loose disjointed floor of our apartment they "Rose like a stream of rich-distill'd perfumes." This musick was both vocal and instrumental; but no such voice, no such instrument, had I ever heard.[351]

Grant's ear, unlike Johnson's, seemed primed for an appreciation rather than deprecation of Highland culture. It is possible that the positioning of this scene in the arrangement of *Letters from the Mountains* represented a direct response to and repudiation of the scene in Johnson's popular and widely-read travels, without making this point explicitly, and with a complicated chronology, given that Grant's encounter took place in the same year as Johnson's *Journey*, which was published after her letter, but well before the publication of her book.

Johnson's dismissive attitude towards Highland people and Gaelic culture has provoked offence in many readers, Scottish and otherwise, ever since the publication of his work.[352] However, his remarks can also be read more sympathetically, or at least in terms not only of superficial conceit but also of a deeper sense of insecurity, vulnerability and exposure.[353] The contrasting reactions to Gaelic of Johnson and Grant also shed light upon, and are based in, the respective writers' attitudes to Macpherson and his Ossian texts. Both Grant and Johnson had read the Ossianic poems before visiting the Highlands, yet, where Johnson adjudged them fraudulent, Grant's willingness to believe in the authenticity of the poems – or in the authenticity of their roots, at least – illustrates how positive or negative bias and preconceptions were mirror images of each other. However, it is crucial to observe the historicity of Grant's letter here. The nostalgia Grant feels in response to melodies and songs coming from the kitchen below is fixed to a particular time, positioned against moments later in the text when she is confronted with the precarious yet determined survival of this culture.

Language and Biology

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[351] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 12-13.

[352]' Porter (Ferguson 1998; Gaskill 1986, 1988; Trumpener 1997), '"Bring me the Head of James Macpherson,"' 398.

[353]Ina Ferris suggests that what actually occurs in a scenario where the listener is unable to properly understand another language is that they develop a sense of inferiority and become defensive regarding their own language.[353] Johnson's emotive response when he hears Scots-Gaelic can be said to be owing to the fact that it alienates him, rendering him an outsider, by literally impairing his ability to hear. Ferris, 'Translation from the Borders', 213.

Having already discussed the metaphoric transfusion of language and culture, this section explores the very literal function of blood in Grant's writing, which always shows something of a strain between the efforts that she made in order to adopt the behaviour characteristic of Highland culture (stranger) and the frequently repeated pronouncement of her Highland familial connections (native). It is perhaps in *Letters from the Mountains* where the contention around the competing factors of 'culture' and 'nature' is felt most keenly. She stresses that were it not for a familial thread, she would not be able to knit together a Highland identity. In a letter to Miss Reid, May 12, 1773, from the period when she did not yet feel comfortable in the Highlands, Grant describes a moment of epiphany, which depends on the intercession of two older women, Grant's mother and their host:

> We climbed the hill, and were received with a kind of stately civility by a tall, thin, erect person, a widow,—pale, wan, and woebegone. She never asked who we were, till a good fire and most comfortable tea-drinking, with many other good things, put us in humour to make replies. She asked my mother if we were connected with the country.—Now we had just left my father's country, and entered my mother's. She told the good lady her whole genealogy, by no means omitting the Invernahyle family, on which the old lady rose with great solemnity, crying, "All the water in the sea cannot wash your blood from mine,"[354]

The emphasis on blood here recalls Grant's use of the term 'transfusion' in connecting language with biology. The 'pale, wan' civility of the initial welcome from the Highland widow is literally bloodless, but once genealogy is told, 'humours', bodies, and spirits rise together, and belonging is 'felt in the blood, and felt along the heart.'[355] There is a tangible diminishing of anxiety around the location of Grant's upbringing here. Yet Grant's bodily sense of genealogy remained positioned against mental accomplishment, such as the learned acquisition of language. It is only cultural, and, more precisely, linguistic absorption that ultimately enables Grant to feel at home in the Highlands and to feel at ease in, and with, the surrounding landscape. The temporal scope and movement of *Letters from the Mountains* again positions Grant's belonging as essentially a matter of learning and mental development;

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[354] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 76.
[355] William Wordsworth, '*Tintern Abbey',* in *Lyrical Ballads*, 2nd ed. (London: David Nutt, 1891), 203.

nowhere is this better exemplified than when she retrospectively considers the mental impact of learning Gaelic. For this we have to look outside the scope of *Letters from the Mountains*.

In a later letter to the English poet Catherine Maria Fanshawe (1765-1834), dated 13th February 1809, Grant states how upon arrival in the Highlands, prior to learning Gaelic:

> Particular spots charmed me; but the general aspect of the country made me always think myself in a defile guarded by savage and gloomy giants, with their heads in the clouds and their feet washed by cataracts; in short, it appeared to me awful.[356]

She then goes on to explicitly draw a correlation between the treasures of the Highland landscape, concealed from strangers and the treasures of Gaelic culture, concealed from those who cannot speak the language:

> Time however went on: I began to grow a little savage myself […] and when I grew acquainted with the language and the poetry of the country, I found a thousand interesting localities combined with those scenes where the lovely and the brave of other days had still a local habitation and a name;[357]

Grant's prior experience of the Highland landscape, equipped only with an Anglophone vocabulary, had obscured her aesthetic appreciation, specifically by concealing the names of places and depriving them of the memories and history that brought them to life once she learned to speak Gaelic. Grant's access to the landscape and culture did also have the effect of prejudicing her against England and the Lowlands. Importantly, learning one set of cultural values involved the unlearning and loss of another. In the same letter Grant describes a visit to Edinburgh and the Lowlands, a sad experience after her life in the Highlands:

> When after a long residence in this land of enthusiasm, I left the abode of ghosts and warrior hunters and heroines to come down to common life in a flat country, you cannot imagine how bleak and unsheltered, how tame and uninteresting it appeared […] It had lost all its attractions for me, and I gladly returned to dwell under the

[356] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 186.
[357] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 186.

> sheltering shadow of my mountains, and to see—what I shall ever see elsewhere—delicacy of sentiment and generous tenderness, courtesy and gentle manners, in cottages.[358]

Rather than expressing a sense of the flexibility of a culturally liminal position, which some modern readers assume, the sentiments expressed here suggest permanent loss and forfeiture: that in order to integrate in the Highlands, Grant had to lose any affinity she had for the Lowlands. The alliterative terms doubled in 'the sheltering shadow of my mountains' draw attention to the two main aspects that characterise Grant's Cultural Jacobitism: first, that culture is again inextricably tied to landscape. While the mountains physically 'shelter' the inhabitants from invasion and migration, Gaelic culture shelters the inhabitants of the Highlands from the corrupt and immoral values that Grant associates with the Enlightenment lowlands. Second, that belonging is possession and tenure: Grant now feels that she belongs to the Highland landscape and that the Highland landscape belonged to her through nativity and duration. Effectively, Grant's experience of what she regards to be a more valuable landscape, culture and language comes as a package, an inseverable and irrefrangible inheritance, the components of which are co-dependent and cannot but demonstrate the inadequacies of that which has been left behind in an unsheltered 'flat country'. This distinction helps us to set Grant against sentimental and nostalgic Jacobitism: for her version of Cultural Jacobitism, the Highlands remained the future, and the Lowlands a 'tame and uninteresting' past. She was to uphold this distinction even while the rest of her life was, contrarily, lived in the Lowlands.

In another letter to Fanshawe, dated 13 February 1809 Grant emphasises again the intense connection between language and landscape, and a language of horizontal and vertical spaces.[359] To begin with, she establishes a difference in her position to how the outsider (in this case, the recipient of the letter) would intuitively respond to the Highland landscape:

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[358] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 186.

[359] 'Miss Catherine Maria Fanshawe, to whom several letters in this collection are addressed, was the daughter of John Fanshawe, Esq. of the Board of Green Cloth. She was distinguished by her attainments in literature and the fine arts, and was the intimate friend of Lady Hesketh, the cousin of Cowper […]' Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 186.

> I know you would see it with the eye of a painter and a poet, though at the same time you would long to return to your fertile plains after the first effervescence of sublime delight.[360]

Grant believes that she knows how the recipient would react when confronted with Highland sublimity, not through surmise, but through empathy. This empathy likely stems from Grant's recollections of her own response to the mountains when she first arrived in the Highlands, unable to speak Gaelic and isolated from society. In another letter to Fanshawe, dated 17 September 1810, Grant writes:

> When I first went to the Highlands, and, from not knowing the language or the people, could not taste the charms of their poetry, the sentiments of their music, or the delights of manners more courteous, and conversation more intelligent, than are anywhere else to be met with among rustics,— when first, I say, I wandered, untaught and forlorn amid the desolation of brown heaths and dusky mountains, I was at times charmed with peculiar scenes, but the general effect was as much lost on me as on these tourists: I was like the ignorant maid who tried her master's violin all over, and could never find where the tune lay.[361]

The violin was (and is) an important instrument in the musical culture of the Highlands; with this image, Grant aligns herself perhaps not with the classical instruments of ancient Gaelic (the Ossianic harp), but with the folk instrument of the common Highland people (although she still uses the word 'violin' and not 'fiddle').[362] In recent work Pam Perkins explored how Grant took pains to differentiate the Gaelic that she had learned, 'drawn from the land and its people—picked up in the fields and gardens', from the 'old heroic Gaelic' documented in parchment and formerly used by the elite class.[363] Moreover, Grant's metaphor of being unable to play this instrument stresses both the capacity for communicative expression, language, and something more than language. Grant's translations from Gaelic into English, as we have seen, often also dwell on a sense of 'more than'. It is unusual for a translator from

[360] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 185.
[361] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 250.
[362] Newton, *Warriors*, 258.
[363] Perkins, 'Landscape in Translation', 217.

the dominant culture to foreground the language of the marginalised and empathise with the people in this way. Ina Ferris informs us how the process of translation usually

> is routinely allied with the aestheticizing gesture of the tourist, who translates land into 'landscape' and local inhabitants into 'figures', placing them under the controlling spectatorship of the gaze or transforming them into commodities.[364]

In Grant's case, the reverse is true. By the end of the first volume of the *Letters from the Mountains,* Grant hardly presents a tourist's interpretation of the Highlands at all. Rather than altering the landscape and its inhabitants to suit a particular aesthetic model, in many ways it is Grant herself who has become 'altered' in the process of translating the landscape.

By the third volume of *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant positions herself as something of an expert in the Gaelic language, and her rhetoric often positions the recipients of her letters (and ultimately, her English-speaking readership) as partly unhearing interlocutors, in much the same way that she herself experienced a deafness upon arrival in the Highlands. While her English-speaking correspondents had been a source of familiarity and normalcy on Grant's arrival in the Highlands, it is now these correspondents who have become 'othered'. In a letter to her friend Miss Dunbar, dated April 24, 1802, Grant emphasises the untranslatability, relegating her recipient to the status of an outsider in the process:

> You must know that in the progress of Highland society, there was an intermediate state, to which a good deal of pleasing, fanciful poetry owes its origin. But then it is so local, so peculiar, so untranslatable, 'tis absolute sal-volatile.[365]

Sal-volatile, or volatile salt, was the chief ingredient in smelling salts that, used to revive or restore consciousness. Yet their effects can be numbing, and wear off quickly. Grant's allusions to the reviving qualities of the Gaelic language for herself, while at the same time suggesting the inability of outsiders such as Miss Dunbar to benefit from this experience, may suggest to the reader similarly volatile effects, or a purely solipsistic gatekeeping. Such an interpretation is in-keeping with the interpretation of Grant's emphasis upon blood or

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[364] Ferris, 'Translation from the borders', 214.
[365] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 199.

biology as a barrier to prevent outsiders appropriating Highland culture. Perkins, however, in an equally plausible reading, has suggested that these claims were often intended to provoke and awaken her non-Gaelic correspondents and readers to the possibility of learning the language for themselves.[366]

Infrastructure and Improvement: Roads and Gardens

Both roads and gardens are modifications to adapt the landscape for the utility of humans. Both were important symbols and objects of discussion in the eighteenth century. While Grant's convictions around tradition and her aversion to modernity are largely consistent in her work, her attitude to these particular forms of Improvement (roads and gardens) is interestingly varied, and an analysis of her writing on these features shows how the appreciation of Highland landscape and Gaelic culture did not follow a smooth progress or a neat plot; occasionally, Grant's enthusiasm to 'become' a Highlander led to significant stones in her pathway. The physical obtrusion of roads and gardens in *Letters from the Mountains* is conspicuously incongruent with a linear understanding of Grant's cultural immersion and development, as I shall demonstrate in this section.

Roads are often associated with the subjugation of nature by culture in that they create accessible routes for people, goods, and knowledge to enter wild environs with relative safety. They also facilitate the establishment of urban settlements. John Prebble has suggested how one of the ways in which the British government enticed the clergy and ministers of the Highlands 'with a few noble exceptions' to betray the local parishioners and give 'God's authority to Improvement' was with the construction of 'carriage roads to their doors'.[367] Yet the general social convenience of roads, and the economic advantages that they brought to the Highlands were clearly secondary to their main purpose of subjugating not only nature but the native population. General Wade's military roads were an important part of Jacobite 'pacification' in the eighteenth century (though Pittock has observed how the Jacobite army would later use Wade's roads to their advantage[368]) playing a pivotal role in the

[366] Perkins, 'Landscape in Translation', 227.
[367] John Prebble, *The Highland Clearances,* (Norwhich: Fletcher and Son Ltd, 1963), 71.
[368] Pittock, *Jacobitism,* 93.

dissemination of English language and culture throughout the Highlands more broadly.[369] This process entailed dominant and marginalised cultures coming into contact, largely to the detriment of the latter, and accelerating the transition from the agrarian model of feudal clanship favoured by the Stuarts to the commercial model of liberty and self-interest preferred by the Hanoverians.[370]

At the beginning of Grant's journey in *Letters from the Mountains*, modern roads, even as she travels along them, are seen by the writer as an affront to the Highland landscape and people.[371] Grant notes however that hers was not a popular sentiment among her travelling companions:

> Mr. G is provoked at my stupidity, in not being lost in admiration and astonishment at the military roads. Highbridge, which makes a part of them, I do admire, but have no clear apprehension of their general beauty, or wonderful usefulness.—I do not just take it for granted, that they are to civilize the country so speedily and effectually; the people were very *civil* when they were well treated; they were so agile and familiar with their own bye-paths, and so accustomed to go
>
> "Over moor, over mire,
> Thro' bush, and thro' briar,"
>
> that I am not clear they will always forsake their old short cut, for the pleasure of going ten miles round on hard gravel.[372]

Grant's objection to roads is not openly founded upon the fact that they were constructed for the British military to maintain hegemony, although this is hinted at being taken for granted by others; her emphasis is on the principle that 'bye-paths' established by local custom are aesthetically in tune with the Highland landscape. She goes on to suggest that the military roads are aligned with a globalist, cosmopolitan project based upon commercial interests:

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[369] Charles W. J. Withers, 'A Nation Transformed: Scotland's Geography, 1707–1918', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Volume 1: From Columba to the Union (until 1707)*, ed. Ian Brown, Thomas Owen Clancy, Susan Manning, and Murray Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007),14.
[370] See: Newton, *Warriors*, 34 and Andrew Skinner, 'Economic Theory' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment,* ed. Alexander Broadie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)*,* 189.
[371] Grant never uses the term 'rural'; she always writes 'savage'. For Grant, the term 'savage' is positive. She sees the Highland people, the Native Americans and the Dutch settlers as 'savage'. It is these groups that she aspires to emulate rather than the polite societies of Western Europe.
[372] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 117-118.

> These roads will afford access to strangers, who dislike and despise the natives, because they do not understand them; and to luxuries they cannot afford to pay for, and would be happier without.— Early accustomed to savage life, I have not the horror at it that wiser people have.—As far as merely regards this world, I am not sure how much my old Mohawk friends have to gain by being civilized,[373]

Even early in her life, and early in her work, Grant moves instinctively to a comparative questioning of the 'gain' of civilisation, here drawing on the experience of another marginalised indigenous culture to question Enlightenment progress.

It was not merely the imposition of actual roads to which Grant objected, but also the concept of a smooth modern 'road' imaginatively, with its connotations of compliance and uniformity. In the same letter to Miss Reid, Grant illustrates a metaphorical comparison between the artificial and the inventive path of constant exigency and contingency required by the inheritors of a wilder landscape:

> I am so provoked at seeing shallow, artificial people, who have no ideas but what they borrow, treating the inventive children of the wild with scorn.—Those who pace all their lives on in [sic] an even-paved road, doing every day just what they did yesterday, are unable to estimate the powers of those, who must bend their mind every hour to some new and unpremeditated exertion.[374]

However, a little further on in the same letter, Grant records an incident that seems to have prompted a change of heart. In one of the early letters in *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant imaginatively peopled the landscape with heroes such as Robert the Bruce and Rob Roy.[375] Now, however, 'lost in contemplation' and enjoying the 'pastoral scenery' of Glenmore, there is a disconcerting moment of disillusionment. Mr. Gray explains how, before the roads:

> this sweet hamlet was really inhabited by the only remaining horde of those plunderers, who used to consider making a *spreath* [cattle raid] as a gallant exploit; now, a spreath was carrying away forcibly a herd of cattle, and fighting their way

[373] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 118-119.
[374] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 119-120.
[375] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 10.

> through all opposition. I felt a kind of horror on finding that the cluster of innocent peasants' cottages I had been admiring was merely a den of thieves. [376]

Grant's fantasies around Robert the Bruce and Rob Roy dissipate, and her enthusiasm for the 'inventive children of the wild' is temporarily quelled when confronted with English tales of Gaelic crimes (literally, in the incorporation of the term 'spreath'). When induced by her guide to imagine the landscape as peopled with violent plunderers rather than noble Scottish heroes, her aversion to roads diminishes. She concedes: 'I now began to hold the military road, and civilizing the natives, in all due reverence'.[377]

The cause of Grant's anxiety is arguably not so much the intelligence of the recent presence of Highland bandits, as rather the rhetoric employed by her Lowland tour guide when presenting this intelligence. Grant takes it on faith that the spreaths referenced by the guide were malevolent and dishonourable crimes. However, when she came to compile her *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland,* thirty-seven years later, Grant espouses a rather different perspective on Highland cattle raiders. Now, at something of a distance both temporally and spatially, she could excuse or even endorse their daring:

> Their spreaths can hardly be classed under the head of ordinary theft; yet it was a proof of a very confused and imperfect notion of morality […] What was diminished of the horror excited by the depredation, by a certain air of daring gallantry.[378]

In a frame of additional historical and cultural context (namely, why the Highland clans specifically targeted Lowland cattle), the Highlanders were no longer for Grant simply the 'plunderers' and 'thieves' presented to her by the tour guide when she was seventeen: 'new and unpremeditated exertion' could be recuperated, and her earlier reverence for the civilizing road presumably could also be rejected.

Yet Grant's attitude towards the Highland roads remained notably unstable, as it had been even prior to the question of robbery and getaway. She had made an earlier ambivalent link between the absence of roads and the absence of clarity of identity and location:

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[376] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 121.
[377] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 121.
[378] Grant, *Essays,* 2: 120.

> I arrived here last night at eleven, after a tedious journey, in a very rainy day, through the *Mono Lia*, or grey mountain, an endless moor, without any road, except a small foot-path, through which our guide conducted the horses with difficulty. The height of the mountain is prodigious. Crossing it, we were enveloped in the very region of storms and clouds. A small dreary lake, or abrupt grey crag, was the only variety which interrupted a scene, enough to fill any susceptible mind with awe and horror.[379]

Grant's trepidation is perhaps surprising given her demonstrable experience of wilderness travel throughout her earlier childhood in America (especially her journeys between Albany and Fort Oswego). In the accompanying footnote on the Highland location, Grant repeats her use of the word 'dreary' in relation to the scenery, and stresses that it is particularly owing to the experience of having no 'road but the path of cattle'. Already in Grant's early work, the ghostly presence of the Highland people, the drovers and their herds, provides the clue to how even the most drear of landscapes will be recuperable to a way forward.

Like the formation of roads, the cultivation of gardens also reflects a desire to control nature. Viewed in their most negative light, where laying a road obliterates and clears natural obstruction, the cultivation of gardens demonstrates the capacity to manipulate and coerce nature. These two ways of interacting (destruction and coercion) are where human violence towards nature is seen in its most dominating aspect. Grant offers a powerful critique of this tendency, but as in the case of roads, her attitude to gardens is also prone to change and ambivalence. Initially in *Letters from the Mountains,* gardens seem to represent for Grant a taming or domesticating of nature that offers a sense of comfort. Grant's early reaction to such spaces resembles places where humanity is in ascendancy over nature; these spaces also mark out or distinguish the pastoral from the sublime. Confronted by the daunting grandeur of the Highlands, the nature-loving teenager initially sought solace in the familiarity and comforting conformity of the garden, aligning herself with polite Anglophone society and also, to some degree, with the ideology of Improvement. In a letter to Miss Reid, dated June 15, 1773, Grant seems to relish the ways in which the garden puts nature at the disposal of man:

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[379] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 4.

> Next [*sic*] the lake the Gour has created a most picturesque shrubbery and garden in the dry ditch that surrounds the fort, and has covered the wall with fruit trees, and hid the masked battery with laurels.[380]

It is important to observe however, that this domesticated form of nature is admirable largely and perhaps, only, in relation to what Grant perceives as the ugliness of walls and artillery; as disguise and camouflage.

Even after 'becoming savage' in the Highlands for some time, then, Grant retained a penchant for the civility of the garden. In a letter to her friend Mrs. Smith dated, August 18, 1785, Grant still reserves a distinct partiality for the domesticated and orderly garden over untouched nature: '[…] the whole *country* of Strathspey opened upon us—Castle Grant, the surrounding pleasure grounds and gardens, which are very fine, though surmounted by rude environs'.[381] The gardens are described as 'very fine' even though the ominous sublimity of the Highlands looms encroachingly. The image of the domesticated garden helps Grant to retain a sense of a former polite, cosmopolitan identity, even as that identity necessarily and inevitably has to cede to and be overwhelmed and 'surmounted' by a greater and truer force.

Grant eventually found a middle position: the more undomesticated, natural garden, over the cultivated garden, somewhat in line with shifts in eighteenth-century taste more broadly; however, intriguingly, this shift is not signalled until after she has left the Highlands and relocated near to Stirling. At the time of the letters that comprise the third volume of *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant had lost her husband and had moved to a place called Woodend. At Woodend, Grant decided against cultivating her plot to resemble the polite gardens of the Lowlands. Instead, it would be deliberately unkempt, acting as a bridge between the comparative tameness of her present environment and the rugged nature of Highland landscape that she had been forced to leave behind. In a letter to Miss Smith, dated 1803, (second edition) Grant offers the following description of this *locus amoenus*:

> It is surrounded by a wild hedge, after the Devonshire manner, mixed with fruit-trees, and allowed to run into a little becoming disorder, which nearly emulates "the

[380] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 160.
[381] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 85.

> negligence of nature, wide and wild." In short, the place is neither trimmed or rolled, and I like it the better […] I am accustomed to love and be beloved by those around me, and I miss the cordial glance of sympathy and kindness.[382]

Grant's desire for a clear division between untamed (sublime) and domesticated (beautiful) nature, even admitting the precedence of the former, is now 'becoming disorder'. In much the same way that nostalgia had motivated her affinity for the domesticated garden while in the Highlands, when she resides in the Lowlands, it is the rugged and irregular form of the more natural-looking garden that invokes a sense of nostalgia or homesickness. At the start of the *Letters from the Mountains* the ruggedness and sublimity of nature in the Highlands had forced Grant to ruminate upon her social isolation and cosmic insignificance. Yet now it is her memories of the Highland landscape, and the positive experiences enjoyed with her husband, family and community while resident there that offer Grant the chance to recall the 'sympathy and kindness' that she experienced while part of a Highland community. This preference is juxtaposed with Grant's analysis of English gardens in a letter to Miss Dunbar, in the same volume. While moving to Woodend may have signalled the end of Grant's explorations of the Highlands, necessity ensured that she would still travel, albeit south rather than north. On her way to London to arrange the publication of *Poems on Various Subjects*, Grant details how in January of 1803 she passed through Liverpool, taking particular notice of the gardens there:

> I dare say, I did great injustice to Liverpool, which, I am sure is a fine town […] but my eyes, half closed, could not admit its symmetry, or contemplate its regularity […] I was disappointed in their farmhouses […] O, these are gross and unrural! […] They have, indeed, little gardens before, but they are such confined, formal, suburban-like things, that they banish the idea of rustic simplicity, nay, even or rural ease.[383]

In her objections to the uniformity of such 'trimmed' gardens in favour of the 'ruggedness' and 'disorder' of her own garden at Woodend, we can see how the development of Grant's attitude to the wider aesthetic considerations of the natural landscape are determined largely by what she remembers and wishes to reconstruct in her mind: the idea of simplicity.

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[382] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 3: 202-203.
[383] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 229-230.

Grant's preference for kept gardens, not only on her arrival in the Highlands but also for the duration of her time there, seems to have remained partly motivated by a sense of nostalgia for the polite societies that she had left behind. Even after becoming 'settled' in the Highland community of Laggan, her love of gardens epitomises the liminal nature of her identity. When she returns to the civility of the Lowlands, however, Grant experiences a reversal or inversion of this sense of nostalgia, whereby she begins to deprecate the tame uniformity of conventional gardens and, expresses a preference for the partly wild and unkempt over the uniform and domesticated. When forced to leave behind the rugged Highlands, Grant's writing about the region (the *Poems*, the *Essays*, and all her post-Laggan correspondence) seems purged of previous reservations about a lack of civility present in her earlier correspondence on artificial and natural landscapes. This was part of the same movement through which the reluctance expressed in Grant's earlier correspondence to align herself with Cultural Jacobitism fades; by the time she relocates to Woodend and then Edinburgh, she is much more assertive in discussing the post-Culloden disenfranchisement of both Scotland and the Highlands and also suggesting ways in which the British could atone for their transgressions.

Grant's concerns about ecology and alterations to the environment on one level seem to anticipate modern liberal or green attitudes of today. Yet there is a sense in which such sentiments also denote early-nineteenth-century traditionalist or romanticist philosophies. Thomas Hallock identifies a strategy elsewhere in Grant's writing that connects her concerns for the environment to a distinct rejection not only of land reform but also of social upheaval. In much the same way as comparisons have been drawn between the manners of the Native American and Highland people as well as their experiences of colonialism, such a correlation can be drawn between the deforestation, new modes of land cultivation and also the infrastructure to support commerce and trade that Improvement ushered in to both North America and the Scotland.[384] Hallock states that in *Memoirs of an American Lady,* Grant conveys 'a desire to reverse the excesses of democracy; nature offers a counterweight, by

[384] 'Improvement contained many fraught junctures: a new road or set of picturesque estate improvements might effect the cultural well-being of local communities and damage the environment'. McKeever, 'Introduction', *Dialectics*, 3.

extension, to the levelling forces of a frontier'.[385] This reactionary desire to curtail democracy is in part owing to Grant's observations of alterations to the land but it should also be regarded as her objections to the eradication of traditions associated with Cultural Jacobitism. Moreover, not only do Grant's concerns for the environment in the *Memoirs* reflect her anxieties around the reforms of roads and gardens in her *Letters* but, as I demonstrated in Chapter One, they also reflect her poetical entreaty for the Highland wildlife and animals subject to the ramifications of post-Culloden democratic values and Improvement:

> With an ecological conscience that might strike readers as contemporary, Grant notes that 'impenetrable swamps' provide nesting grounds for geese and ducks (1:93). Wetlands are 'sacred' from 'the human foot', and the young author seeks similar 'sanctuaries' where she might 'herbalize' (2:173-74). But the concern for wild land (however exceptional for this place and time) serves the immediate purpose of justifying a precommercial economy.[386]

Hallock goes on to suggest that Grant's 'nostalgia for the woods ''keeps open [a] vision of historical alternatives" and amid changes in the colonial scene, it may ground an older order in the physical terrain'.[387] This 'older order' may be interpreted as the colonial Dutch society, the Mohawk society, the community of Laggan or an amalgamation of the three. What is undeniable is that Grant saw herself as at odds with both conservative and liberal applications of Improvement and, for her, the ideology best suited to protecting these groups is Cultural Jacobitism.

Conclusion

Over the thirty years in which the content that would come to form *Letters from the Mountains* was compiled, Grant was not only prone to reconsidering her own personal sense of identity but was also affected by changes that were taking place in the landscape and people around her. It is clear that even in her early letters, themes associated with Cultural Jacobitism resonate with Grant and are reflected in her writing. When Grant began writing

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[385] Thomas Hallock, 'Reversing Revolution Through Nature: Anne Grant, Timothy Dwight', in *From the Fallen Tree: Frontier Narratives, Environmental Politics, and the Roots of a National Pastoral, 1749–1826* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 185.
[386] Hallock, 'Reversing Revolution Through Nature', 182-3.
[387] Hallock, 'Reversing Revolution Through Nature', 185.

her letters, the Highland people were experiencing the immediate aftermath of the profound changes that included large-scale emigration, the beginnings of industrialism, the introduction of a fiscal system, and proscriptions that required them to speak a new language and relinquish many of their cultural traditions. Yet though the aftermath of the Battle of Culloden had essentially forced a process of cultural assimilation upon the Highland people, when Grant was writing, the Highlands was still largely comprised of local communities that were partly independent of life outside of the parish. While in the Highlands, Grant's immediate social exchanges were confined to people who were also unknown outside their own small area. When she moved to Edinburgh, however, Grant found herself courted by some of the most famous people in the world. Residence in the 'Athens of the North' with its philosophical, cultural and political clamour, after thirty years in relative (Highland) isolation, inevitably inflected Grant's identity. However this impact transpired to strengthen rather than weaken her resolve that the Gaelic-Highland society was the pinnacle of humanity.[388] The publication of *Letters from the Mountains* as a literary event, rather than just its documenting of the experiences it recorded, marks an important inflection point and moment of departure in more ways than one.

Grant's departure from a sentimental Jacobitism and her burgeoning affinity with Cultural Jacobitism is traceable in a chronological sense by reading the letters that she sent over three decades. Certainly, Grant's childhood was perturbed by a sense that she did not quite fit into any particular society. Biographically, *Letters from the Mountains* picks up where *Memoirs of an American Lady* leaves off. But the earlier published work also worked as a template for the latter. Arriving in Scotland from America in 1773, Grant's desire to forge a Scottish identity is recorded in *Letters from the Mountains* as a journey that encompasses revelations as well as tribulations, both factors that would impact Grant's perceptions of herself. Exposure to new experiences, countries, landscapes, languages, cultures, and classes ensured that Grant's understanding of the people she observed, together with her understanding of her own place in the world, was reflexive. In contrast to *Memoirs of an American Lady*, always intended for publication and written over a relatively short period, *Letters from the Mountains* (composed and collated over a series of decades) bears a more complex layering of temporal traces, enabling the reader to follow a complex internal dialogue around the issue of personal

[388] J. Rubén Valdés, 'The Prejudices of Education: Educational Aspects of the Scottish Enlightenment', *Atlantis* 27, no. 2 (2005): 103, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41055207.

identity. The journey of landscape ultimately became a journey of self-discovery through which Grant was able to determine a region that she ultimately came to recognise as her home.

The complexities and nuances of Grant's alignment with Cultural Jacobitism should be seen in the light of the temporal dimension of *Letters from the Mountains,* particularly given the many (often contrasting) appellations that scholars have applied to Grant as 'British', 'Scottish', 'Lowland-born' and 'Highlander'.[389] Essentially, each of these terms may well have been applicable to Grant at different periods of her life. This chapter is not an attempt to reinforce Grant's repeated affirmations that her biography qualified her to claim affinity with the Highland people. Neither is it an attempt to undermine or contest the appellations applied to Grant by her readers. Rather, the aim of this chapter is to emphasise that while each of these terms may well have been relevant and applicable to Grant at particular stages in her life, her identity (and the notion of identity in general) is not a static conception, but subject to a continuous process of construction and, at times, deconstruction. In turn, Grant's proximity to Jacobitism can be viewed as something that, as a teenager, initially resembled a sentimental kind of Jacobitism, vulnerable to destabilisation by ideas of enlightenment progress, but developed into a more serious espousal of the desires and requirements of Cultural Jacobitism after she settled into Highland culture, contesting rather than conceding the status quo.

[389] McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 130.

Chapter Three: *Memoirs*, Travel, Memory and Mediation

While Grant wrote with generic variety and flexibility across her published work, *Memoirs of an American Lady* perhaps stands out owing both to its subject matter (American landscape and culture, rather than a focus upon the Scottish Highlands) and because, unlike her other writing, it is a wholly retrospective account that does not stress a current and continued presence on the scene of cultural contest; it was composed at a greater distance from its subject both spatially and temporally, forty years after the experiences depicted take place, and a continent away. The main focus of this chapter is Grant's observations over a sustained and formative period of eleven years in America. Yet this alternative geographical subject in many ways exhibits some of the qualities at the heart of Grant's Cultural Jacobitism, qualities which show an important international aspect to that set of ideas. While political Jacobitism is relevant particularly and directly to Britain, the tenets of Grant's Cultural Jacobitism are relevant and transferable to other cultures that find themselves threatened by machinations of their own government or an external hegemony of Improvement and the alteration of existing and indigenous ways of life. In the *Memoirs*, both the Native Americans and the Colonial Dutch are presented by Grant as cultural counterparts to the Highland people, all of whom have been subject to such hegemonic pressures. Therefore, the strain of Jacobitism that Grant employs when defending the Highland people against the English is rooted in the same ideas that she employs when defending the Mohawk and Colonial Dutch against the British.

Underpinning this chapter is the premise that the borders of travel writing tend to be variable and even the classification of what constitutes a travelogue is open to interpretation. The genre undoubtedly shares much common ground with what would later form anthropology and its observation of cultures and societies. In this chapter I focus on the anthropological aspect of travel writing, tracing the extent to which both Grant's time in the Americas influenced her writing of the Scottish Highlands and also how her time spent in the Highlands and her initial treatment of that topic influenced her recollections of Albany. Comparing Grant's treatment of the communities in the Highlands and those in New York gives a sense not only of Grant's worldview, but also how it moved across enlightened and 'savage' societies. By the time that Grant began writing and publishing, Scottish memoir writing and biography had, in the wake of Boswell and under the critical influence of Francis Jeffrey,

become established as something of a bridge between conjectural Enlightenment history and antiquarianism, providing an outlet for a 'broadened, culturally orientated kind of history'.[390] Grant's *Memoirs* was digested in America by a large readership and in many ways the text helped to shape the way Americans came to view themselves.[391]

As long ago as 1940, Dorothy Dondore identified how at least two prominent writers on early American history and Native American culture owed some of their anthropological observations to Grant, these two being James Kirke Paulding (1778-1860) the author of *The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Johnson* and the much more famous James Fenimore Cooper (1759-1851) the author of *Last of the Mohicans*. Dondore picks out specific elements in their texts and implies that they both borrowed heavily from Grant without acknowledgment. As Dondore notes: 'All but nine of the thirty chapters of Cooper's novel [*Satanstoe* (1845)] are laid in scenes or contain events for which Mrs. Grant's work may be said to be a basis'.[392] An unpublished letter sent by Grant to her publisher John Coates in 1832 suggests that she was aware, at least, that Paulding had borrowed from her *Memoirs*:

> I tell you some other time why I make your family the depository of my American books. Beg of your ____ to read Paulding diligently. I should like Dr. Chalmers saw it and to find out what he thinks of it. I had not the confidence to trouble him myself. Paulding is a dignitary of the state no more for pity to my head.[393]

Grant wishes the Scottish antiquarian George Chalmers (1742-1825) to review Paulding's work in the hope that he will clearly identify the plagiaristic elements, however, she implies that her own modesty and politeness prevent her from reaching out to him directly.

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[390] Karen O'Brien and Susan Manning, 'Historiography, Biography and Identity', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1918)*, ed. Ian Brown, Thomas Clancy, Susan Manning, and Murray Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 149.
[391] The *Memoirs* is historically important as one of few extended narratives that documents mid-eighteenth-century upstate New York, and unique as written by a Scottish woman and as seen from the perspective of a child. Two notable points for comparison are J. Hector St. John de Crévececoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* and Cadwallader Colden's *History of the Five Indian Nations*. Crévececoeur was a French nobleman who moved to New York; his account was published after Grant's time in Albany. Colden was a Scottish-born physician who moved to Philadelphia in 1710, later serving as Governor of New York. For this chapter I have used the single volume 1846 New York edition which includes a useful publisher's notice that gives useful context on contemporary responses relating to the book's veracity.
[392]Dorothy Dondore, 'The Debt of Two Dyed-in-the-Wool Americans to Mrs. Grant's *Memoirs of an American Lady'*, *American Literature* 12, no. 1 (1940): 54.
[393] Edinburgh City Archives, NRA (S) 2952/22.

Unlike many other travelogues of the time, Grant's text was not compiled with the aid of a diary or ledger. Part of this chapter therefore discusses the issue of the fragility and fallibility of human memory in autobiographical writing. This is not simply a matter of detriment and unreliability: it also raises questions of empiricism, immersion, and the viewpoint of the observer. What complicates Grant's *Memoirs* is the particular mixing of memory and cultural immersion. In her writing around the Scottish Highlands, Grant frequently relied upon her childhood experience to explain and convey her understanding of the different marginalised communities she encountered as an adult. Integral to a reading of the *Memoirs* is the fact that this mixing of memory and cultural exposure also occurs the opposite way around: Grant's recollections of the Mohawk people and colonial Dutch communities as a child are coloured and shaded by her more recent experience of the Highland people. Grant's *Memoirs* challenges another orthodox feature of more workaday travelogues, whereby the physical journey takes precedence over mental reflection and imagination. Grant's text is one that challenges attempts to fix the writer's position in one place or period, a work that shows that the mental traveller sets out long before the commencement of the physical journey and, equally, that the mental journey can continue long after the physical journey has come to an end. The maxims and morals that ultimately came to their full expression in Grant's Cultural Jacobitism were not formed solely in the Scottish Highlands, but were part of a recursive and reflective process that can be traced back to her childhood in the Americas.

Travel, Retrospection and Reliability

Before appraising Grant's comparisons between Highland, Mohawk and Colonial Dutch societies, and how these informed her Cultural Jacobitism, it is worth considering the problem of time, memory and verisimilitude in her *Memoirs*. Carl Thompson has given a loose general definition of what constituted travel writing in the eighteenth century. He addresses the liminality between travel writing and travel fact in the period by stressing how detailed empiricism was often subjugated to the demands of an 'interesting' narrative. Generic parameters tended to require that 'the narrative offered by a travel book will almost invariably be a retrospective, first-person account of the author's own experience of a journey

or of an unfamiliar place or people'.[394] Thompson also draws upon Paul Fussell's positioning of the travel narrative as a sub-species of memoir in which the autobiographical narrative arises from the speaker's encounter with distant or unfamiliar data, and in which the narrative— unlike a novel or other fictional form—claims literal validity by constant reference to actuality (a 'contract' with reality which also characterises the theorisation of other forms of life writing).[395] While Grant's *Memoirs* largely meets this generic horizon of expectations, in the form of a retrospectively composed, first-hand account organized in episodic chapters, the prospect of the text's 'literal validity' is shot through with suggestions of the partiality of memory. Readers from the nineteenth century through to modern critics have highlighted specific historical inaccuracies in *Memoirs of an American Lady* and over a period of time the text has gained the dubious reputation of being distinctly unreliable.[396] Before Grant's own voice is even heard, a 'Publisher's Notice' in the 1846 edition defensively anticipates any accusations of fictionalisation or falsehood:

> I thought it proper to present to you a few circumstances anent the authenticity of that very interesting history. It is not a romance; nor a novel, nor a fiction, nor a tale partly founded on reality—but it is an authentic detail of facts.[397]

The assurances of 'facts' offered by the publisher are somewhat more confident than the author's own views. In her introduction, which follows in the same edition, Grant concedes:

> Yet in the dim distance of near forty years, unassisted by written memorials, shall I not mistake dates, misplace facts and omit circumstances which form essential links in the chain of narration?[398]

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[394] Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing* (Routledge, 2011), 26.
[395] Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 14.
[396] 'In 1938, the historian John Lydekker clarified the matter to some extent: Grant surely witnessed Theyanoguin's son Paulus, rather than Hendrick, but misremembered the event […] Grant's idiosyncratic syntax and curiously organized book, combined with the knowledge that engravings of Theyanoguin sold in London in the 1750s, if not earlier, have misled many readers into believing that she truly saw King Hendrick in about 1740 rather than his son in 1759'. Alden T. Vaughan, "American Indians Abroad: The Mythical Travels of Mrs. Penobscot and King Hendrick," *The New England Quarterly* 80, no. 2 (June 2007): 308-309, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20474536. See also: McNeil 'Memory on the Margins', 96.
[397] Grant, *Memoirs*, 3.
[398] Grant, *Memoirs*, 15.

In private letters that remained unpublished until after her death, Grant expressed her frustration about having to depend upon memory to compile the *Memoirs*:

> But this retrograde, crablike march over the years that are no more—this tale of other times, where you are neither allowed the liberty of embellishment, nor the collateral lights that in other cases aid research into the past—is a cheerless toil, where all the faculties must needs mount upon the memory.[399]

Betty Hagglund suggests that rather than undermining her account, Grant's admission of her fallible memory, may reassure the reader that the narrative they are about to read is honest, founded upon emotional or psychological authenticity rather than mechanical verisimilitude:

> On the one hand, the disclaimer undermines any claims of authority or accuracy. On the other hand, Grant's use of the first person, her specific detailed descriptions of customs and people, and her inclusion of personal childhood memories create in the reader a belief in the truthfulness of the portrayal.[400]

In this respect too, Grant's writing can be seen in terms of the large shifts in Romantic-period life writing, privileging authenticity over accuracy. Nevertheless, the impact of Grant's historical inaccuracies on the reputation of her work has been at times quite significant. Writing in 1860, Jane Williams scrutinised the discrepancy between Grant's accounts of certain events in her *Letters from the Mountains* and how these seemed subject to revision in the *Memoirs*. Williams notes how the two works 'give totally different accounts of Aunt Schuyler's birth and parentage'.[401] Williams then goes on to illustrate Grant's apparent ineptitude for maintaining chronology, even within the pages of the same text:

> At page 141 in the 'Memoirs' Mrs. Grant states that the old Colonel did not live to witness his eldest son's marriage with Catalina, which took place in the year 1719. At page 163 of the same volume, she states that this younger pair chiefly resided with the Colonel for two years before his death, which took place in 1721![402]

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[399] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 157.
[400] Hagglund, '"Not Absolutely a Native, nor Entirely a Stranger"', 47.
[401] Jane Williams, The Poetess: Anne Grant', *Literary Women of England* (London: Saunders Otley and Co., 1861): 537.
[402] Williams, 'The Poetess', 537-8.

Not every contemporary response to the text's historical validity was concerned with accuracy, however. An anonymous (presumably female) writer belonging to 'a society of ladies' considered how the *Memoirs* would appeal to 'the lover of unsophisticated nature, of historical truth, and elegant description.'[403] This reviewer's inclusion for Grant's 'historical truth', albeit sandwiched between elegance and enthusiasm, shows that readers could overlook minor slips in the interests of 'authentic detail'.

One 'reality effect' often incorporated in non-fiction writing of this period (and at other times) to reassure the reader of the truth of the narrative was the inclusion of verbatim dialogue.[404] In her *Memoirs*, Grant relies upon this trope. Recalling a conversation about a land exchange patent, Grant suggests that she has the faculties to recall many such conversations from forty years ago:

> For instance, one that I recollect: "We exchange with our brother Cornelius Rensselaer, for so many strouds, guns &.c., the lands beginning at the beavercreek, going on northward, to the great fallen plane-tree, where our tribe slept last summer; then eastward, to the three great cedars on the hillock; then westward, straight to the wild duck swamp […]'[405]

The passage is an interesting combination of specificity and vagueness, from the detailed direction and recollection of quasi-legal and geographical documentation to the uncertain 'so many' and 'et cetera' that admits of more fallible recollection.

While *Memoirs of an American Lady* presents itself as a record of the sentiments of a mature colonial Dutch woman, called 'Aunt Schuyler', the third-person biographical account put forward by Grant often merges into an introspection that is as much the record of the author's first-person sensibility as that of the eponymous American Lady. Indeed, the title of the book is plainly somewhat paradoxical, as it would lead many readers to assume that the author of the work, Anne Grant, would be the lady in question. Hagglund comments on this overlap,

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[403] *The Lady's Monthly Museum, or Polite Repository of Amusement and Instruction: Being an Assemblage of Whatever Can Tend to Please the Fancy, Interest the Mind, or Exalt the Character of the British Fair*. (London: Society of Ladies, 1809): 6, 99.
[404] Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 28.
[405] Grant, *Memoirs*, 250.

and adds that both of these possible narrative positions are complicated with the addition of textual elements suggesting a third mode of narration, the view from nowhere of 'generalized description':

> Although purportedly a biography of Catalina Schuyler [. . .] The two-volume work also included autobiographical narrative, generalized description of a kind we might now refer to as ethnography, reflections of the origin and nature of 'man', and descriptions of wilderness travel.[406]

While the *Memoirs* perhaps reveal as much about Grant's sense of the world as about the thoughts of Aunt Schuyler, the way in which Grant largely viewed the world was also hugely influenced by the teachings of her mentor; neither is she simply a proxy for Grant's opinions. Throughout the rest of Grant's writing, there are sentiments that seem to bear the stamp of influence or reflect the wisdom she attributes to Aunt Schuyler, together with other shared ideas and accomplishments that tie the biographies of the two women together inseparably. One example of Aunt Schuyler's influence on Grant is seen in the attribution of the motivation to pursue new languages. Schuyler, according to Grant, was a sophisticated, shrewd, intelligent and diplomatic woman, open to new experiences and modes of communication:

> The Mohawk language was early familiar to her; she spoke Dutch and English with equal ease and purity; was no stranger to the French tongue; and could (I think) read German. I have heard her speak it.[407]

Characteristically, the marginalised native language comes first in the order of precedence, before the list of competencies in European languages. Grant also observes how the active development of this kind of relative cultural and linguistic understanding was important to the Schuyler family, who every year would send their children to reside in New York where they would 'learn the more polished manners and language of the capital'.[408]

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[406] Hagglund, '"Not Absolutely a Native, nor Entirely a Stranger"', 42.
[407] Grant, *Memoirs*, 72.
[408] Grant, *Memoirs*, 32.

It is important to Grant in the *Memoirs* that she too demonstrated a proficiency for acquiring new languages at an early age. As a child, not only did Grant 'hover about the Wigwams' exchanging dialogue with the neighbouring Mohawk tribe, she says, but also learned the language of the Dutch colonial children.[409] Yet, to Grant's dismay, this did not fully vouchsafe the social acceptance she desired:

> The children of the town were all divided into companies [. . .] though I, belonging to none, occasionally mixed with several, yet always as a stranger, notwithstanding that I spoke their current language fluently.[410]

What would later serve as the token of belonging in and to the Highlands (Gaelic fluency) remained a 'notwithstanding' in New York; not enough to anchor belonging for the 'stranger' identity that would also be explored in the Scottish writing. Another tension between language and identity is asserted by Grant later in the text when she elaborates on being caught in between an Anglophone British military culture and the Dutch-speaking colonialists:

> I was, indeed, a little ashamed of having a military father, brought up as I had mostly been, in a Dutch family, and speaking that language as fluently as my own; yet, on the other hand, I had felt so awkward at seeing all my companions have fathers to talk and complain to, while I had none that, I thought upon the whole it was a very good thing to have a father of any kind.[411]

Even so, the time spent within these communities and the acquisition of new languages meant that Grant's status as a 'dweller' enabled her to give a much more detailed and firsthand account of the communities in question. This liminal neither/nor social status clearly troubled Grant even at the time of writing; however, it was precisely this liminality that she would advertise a few years later in the central claim of the *Essays*.[412] In the three years between publication of the *Memoirs* and the *Essays*, Grant had time to contemplate how her failure to completely integrate with the Dutch children could be something positive, endowing her

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[409] Grant, *Memoirs*, 67.
[410] Grant, *Memoirs*, 39.
[411] Grant, *Memoirs*, 193.
[412] As previously discussed, one who 'not absolutely a native, nor entirely a stranger […] has added the observant curiosity of the latter to the facilities of enquiry enjoyed by the former' Grant, *Essays*, 1: 10.

anthropology with the credentials to accurately portray the marginalised communities she experienced without (she claims) marring her observations with a partiality.

What stands out most in terms of Grant's liminal cultural and linguistic status in *Memoirs*, however, is that by occupying such unique positions, both Grant and Aunt Schuyler can assist the marginalised Mohawk chiefly by attacking and undermining negative depictions of them. (A position of negation can be as powerful as one of affirmation.) This is a key feature of Grant's Cultural Jacobitism which stands out in her Scottish-themed writing, and there is a sense of a belief that such an explosion of what were not yet called cultural 'stereotypes' could be extended to facilitate and protect all ethnically marginalised cultures throughout the world. Grant's childhood observations of how Aunt Schuyler embraced the peripheral and marginalised culture of the Native Americans certainly influenced her own ethics of encounter. Grant states that Aunt Schuyler had been 'well acquainted with the language, opinions and customs' of the Mohawk and that she was 'exceedingly partial to those high souled and generous natives'.[413] Yet while supportive, Aunt Schuyler is represented in the *Memoirs* as aiming at impartiality and disinterestedness. Rather than condemning outright opposed groups, her sphere is one of cultural tolerance and co-existence:

> At the flats [Aunt Schuyler's residence] the self-righted boor learned civilization and subordination; the high bred and high-spirited field officer gentleness, accommodation and respect for unpolished worth and untaught valour. There, too, the shrewd and deeply reflecting Indian learned to respect the British character [...][414]

Schuyler, like Grant, can be regarded as a mediator, and her greatest influence on Grant seems to have been to show the possibilities of such a role. Grant would emulate the manner in which Aunt Schuyler supported the Native American people by herself advocating for the Highland people. Juliet Shields, among other critics, has observed that Grant 'self-consciously adopted the role of cultural mediator or translator, undertaking to explain Highland culture to Lowland and English readers'.[415] It was not just a matter of self-consciousness, but a position developed under the influence of another female cultural mediator in a commensurable yet very different cultural and historical context.

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[413] Grant, *Memoirs,* 72.
[414] Grant, *Memoirs*, 126.
[415] Shields, 'Highland Emigration', 773.

Influence and retrospection are difficult to separate here: the similarities between the figures of Aunt Schuyler and Grant herself may be due to childhood, observation, tutelage, and imitation under the wing of an 'American Lady'; or the retrospective imposition of some of Grant's own notions, ideals and ideas onto the 'American Lady' as a much more imaginary figure; or some combination of the two. Gender dynamics of authorship and proxy are also an issue here. Gary Kelly points out the potential pitfalls of perceived female authorial agency at the turn of the nineteenth century:

> Many Romantic social critics saw 'Bluestockings', learned ladies, and women writers as extremes of woman—symptoms of courtly effeminacy, potential Revolutionary feminists, or representatives of new puritanical utilitarianism.[416]

Writing under the auspices of the American Lady as a shelter or foil, Grant perhaps attempted to present some of her own convictions and concerns while attributing them to another woman; retaining credibility by attempting to avoid the charge of excessive originality or (not entirely sympathetically) the label of a revolutionary or a 'blue stocking'.[417] It is undoubtedly the case that many of the views attributed to Aunt Schuyler in the *Memoirs* were only slightly later acknowledged and claimed by Grant as her own opinions in the *Essays*. The former is something of a precursor to the latter. But the *Memoirs*, unlike the *Essays*, are not presented as the result of anthropological authority, so its strategy is more indirect, introducing perspectives that are positioned and to some extent contained as the considerations of a respected historical personage. The *Memoirs* may be read as a sort of literary litmus test for Grant to gauge the public reception of not only her opinions and views about cultural politics but also the possibility that they could be received and credited to a female literary and mediatory intelligence at all. The American Lady was a stalking horse in more ways than one.

In a letter dated 31st May 1809, to her son James, Grant comments on the commercial success of *Memoirs of an American Lady*, a success that must have given some sense of a positive result to this strategy:

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[416] Gary Kelly, *Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790–1827* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 176.
[417] Gottlieb, 'Blameless Empires', 253.

> I trembled for the fate of this book; but it has gone off with great success: the whole impression of fifteen hundred copies was sold in three months, and the second edition is now printed, and selling rapidly, I believe.[418]

However, this was the book's American interest. In Britain, the book was seen at least in part as the beginning of a falling away:

> We cannot assign any high degree of literary eminence to Mrs. Grant. Her 'Memoirs of an American Lady', which followed two years after, was deficient in the spirit and the simplicity which characterized her first work; while her last, the 'Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland', was a failure, not because she was unacquainted with the general subject, but because she was unable to bring to it that deep and extensive learning, which such a subject demanded.[419]

This was a later judgement, although it drew on the gendered expectation of 'spirit and simplicity' that beleaguered almost all female writers earlier in the period. But while this disparagement reflected the dangers of moving from writing positioned as the product of youthful informality and spontaneous expression to an authorial position based on cultural authority and observation, Grant was nevertheless now beginning to make this move with increasing confidence, in the interest of advocating for marginalised communities as well as her own professional profile. In the *Memoirs*, Grant's travel writing is certainly more active and confident compared to the passive approach adopted in *Letters*, and her intervention in anthropological, social and political matters is decidedly more serious and pronounced.[420]

Comparisons and Conflations

Throughout her writing, Grant observed social similarities between the Highland people and the Native American people; some of the descriptions of the Mohawks in the *Memoirs* are almost interchangeable with her descriptions of Highland society elsewhere. The first

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[418] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1: 212.
[419] Stowell, 'Review of Memoir and Correspondence' *Eclectic Review,* 16 (1844): 174.
[420] Perkins, 'Grant, Gender, Genre', 223.

references to Native American society in Grant's writing had already appeared in her initial publication, *Poems on Various Subjects*. In that text, Grant claims Native Americans to be a people untouched by Enlightenment doctrine, ignorant of Western culture, yet dignified and in possession of a sonorous language and a natural propensity to poetry and oratory:

> First it is said to be impossible that a people so savage and barbarous as the ancient CELTAE should either entertain generous and tender sentiments, or possess expressive and emphatic language [...] The clearest way to ascertain the possibility of heroic sentiments being delivered in eloquent language by wandering savages, who subsist by hunting, is to trace the manners of people who still exist in a similar state of society. The banks of the *Mohawk* very lately did, and the borders of the *Huron* and *Oneida* lakes still do afford an apt illustration […] There every chief is an orator; and every orator a poet.[421]

Grant arguably perceived similarities between the Highland people and the Native American tribes in abstract stadial terms, but there is also undeniably an ulterior motive for putting forward such a comparison. The motive is first and foremost the defence of the Highlands. Highland people had been presented as possessing both a primitive language and a retrograde culture, a longstanding anti-Gaelicism exacerbated owing to the immediate polemical association of the Highlands with Jacobitism. Grant uses her firsthand experience of the merits of Native American culture to claim bonds of equivalent cultural virtue and value in indigenous communities outside of mainstream European influence, value which could (and did) provide evidence of sophisticated abstract thought and language in poetry and language in particular. Grant's positive appraisal of the Native Americans, then, primarily enters her writing as a means to bolster her argument around some of the central concerns of Cultural Jacobitism. But it was also a somewhat risky strategy that invited dismissal of both cultures as equally 'savage'.

Comparisons between the Native Americans and Highlanders first became prevalent in the writing of figures such as James Macpherson, alongside Joseph Ritson (1752-1803) and Adam Ferguson (1723-1816). It is possible that Grant's childhood recollections of the Native Americans were coloured to some extent by these literary comparisons; her complex position

[421] Grant, *Poems*, 353.

in relation to the influence of Macpherson has already been charted. Yet while the likes of Macpherson may have had limited experience in the colonial territories of the Americas, Grant had a source of immediate authority which they could not claim: she had been raised there and, unlike any of these figures, had immersed herself in at least one Native American culture and language. Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, at the opening of the *Memoirs* (a text reflecting on observations of the Americas from Scotland) Grant ran the analogy between the vitality of the Mohawk people and the spirit of the Highland culture in the other direction of reference too:

> [. . .] the high-spirited rulers of the boundless wild [Mohawks], who, alike heedless of the power of the splendour of distant monarchs, were accustomed to say with Fingal, "sufficient for me is the desert, with all its deer and woods".[422]

Grant consistently adjoins the two cultures when discussing the benefits of the common weal, contrasting them with the polite societies of Europe that favour the merits of the individual. For example, she observes how in Native American society 'every man was proud of the prowess and achievements of his tribe collectively; of his personal virtues he was not proud, because we excel but by comparison'.[423] Grant would make a similar claim about the Highland people in the *Essays*:

> Amongst these people, even the meanest mind was in a manner enlarged by association, by anticipation, and by retrospect. In the most minute, as well as the most serious concerns, he felt himself one of many connected together.[424]

Grant's praise for the common weal is not merely a Rousseauvian longing for a simpler society, nor entirely an anticipation of the ideas of 'primitive communism' theorised by later anthropologists and political thinkers, however. It is more clearly aligned with a discourse contemporary to Grant in which Jacobitism sought to counter the individualism associated with the world of Whig modernity and reinstate an emphasis upon tribal bonds of kinship.

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[422] Grant, *Memoirs*, 26.
[423] Grant, *Memoirs*, 104.
[424] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 51.

As Kenneth McNeil has pointed out, Grant's comparisons often include a dimension of personal as well as broader social or even universal history, between the Native American society of her youth and the Highland society that prevailed anterior to the destruction of the clan system. Crucially, these comparisons are drawn to the Highland culture about which Grant had only anecdotal information, and not the community within which she existed. It is folklore and literature rather than empiricism, as McNeil observes, that underpins the philosophical state that Grant terms 'the reign of the affections':

> The overlapping and cross-pollinating influences of both her reading and her transatlantic experiences shaped Grant's ideas on precivilised peoples; these culminated in a full-fledged theory in the *Essays* that she had been developing throughout her career and to which she would allude in the *Memoirs*.[425]

In his article, 'The Location of Empire', McNeil claim Grant's rhetorical comparison situates these societies on the 'lower rungs of the ladder of social advancement',[426] and, while this framing is somewhat contentious, he is certainly correct elsewhere in his observation that it was not only Grant's recent empirical experience of the post-Culloden Highlands but also the stories and songs of the feudal Highlands that influenced and coloured her retrospective account of the Native Americans in the *Memoirs*.[427]

However, there are limitations to this argument. Using one society, such as the Mohawk, to underpin the validity of another, such as the Scottish Highlanders, does not necessarily mean that Grant was unable to discern important differences between the two. While it is important to observe how Grant marks the similarities between the Native American and Highland communities for the purpose of reinforcing a particular rhetorical framework, as McNeil observes, it is also crucially important to understand some of the ways that she differentiates between them. In a teleological sense, Grant notes one major aspect that sets them apart: the possession of property and the feudal structure of the clans. The pre-Culloden Highland Clan system was maintained upon a patrilineal transference of property and inheritance. When recounting her experience of the Native Americans in the *Memoirs*, Grant observes how, in contrast to the Scots Highland people, for the Mohawk

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[425] McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 113.
[426] McNeil. 'The Location of Empire', 207.
[427] McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 113.

> Property there was none [. . .] Territory could not be the genuine subject of contention in these thinly-peopled forests, where the ocean and the pole were the only limits of their otherwise boundless domain.[428]

Grant's phraseology here should not be interpreted as an attempt to legitimise European colonisation of Native American land as *terra nullius*, that infamous colonial concept, but simply as an acknowledgment that the nomadic existence of the people she observed adjacent to the Mohawk River contrasted with the settled habitation of the Highland clans in Scotland. Although both societies were patriarchal and both had been interpreted by four-stage theorists of the Scottish Enlightenment as being closely identifiable in terms of civil progress, Grant shows how Highland society had developed along feudal lines, and might continue thereby, while Mohawk society had not.

Aside from these differences intrinsic to culture, one of the subtler ways that Grant distinguishes between the Highlanders and the Native Americans is according to their degrees of resistance against an invasive colonising force. In Chapter One, I explored Grant's analysis of the ancient and enduring conflict between the Scots Highlanders and the English. In the *Memoirs*, Grant asserts that the Native Americans, having less experience of the threat of hegemony and colonisation than the Highland people, are more susceptible to its deceptions. She traces the negative impact of European methods on the Native Americans, starting with the strong sense that the Native Americans were initially too trusting of Europeans:

> […] these lands being first purchased for some petty consideration, from the Indians, who alone knew the landmarks of that illimitable forest. The boundaries of such large grants, when afterwards confirmed by government, were distinguished by terms used by the Indians who pointed them out; and very extraordinary marks they were.[429]

Grant gives this example of the vague manner in which land was acquired from the Native Americans, before observing how these grants were intentionally abused by some Europeans and substantially more land was appropriated: 'The only mode, then existing, of fixing those

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[428] Grant, *Memoirs*, 79.
[429] Grant, *Memoirs,* 249-250.

vague limits, was to mark large trees with the owner's name deeply cut'. But sometimes these trees were cut down, 'and others at a greater distance marked in their stead'.[430] The Highland people and the Mohawk share a common enemy in the form of the imperial British state, yet one difference that Grant highlights here is the contrasting temporal experience that these communities have of British colonisation. While the Highlanders had known their enemy for many centuries and had thus become alert to such underhanded tactics, cultural annexation by the British in the Americas was altogether less anticipated and it is perhaps as a result of this relative inexperience of the Mohawk of whom Grant writes engaged the British (at least in this scenario) in good faith. It is worth pointing out here that in acknowledging and illustrating a common Anglocentric oppressor, I do not posit a comparison between internal and external forms of colonialism with regards to which was the more morally reprehensible. Also, Grant's observations of the contrasting experience and responses to British imperialism to some extent reflect the progression of scholarly attitudes to internal and external forms of colonialism. As Kenneth McNeil asserts:

> It cannot be said that the Highlander straightforwardly occupies the position of colonial victim, given that many Highlanders themselves were active agents in the colonial project, not only the roles of settler and soldier, but in roles of administrator, business agent and investor.[431]

Yet it is important not to downplay via comparison the British imperial subjugation of the Highlands on the grounds that colonisation must necessarily be equated with racial difference and non-participation in imperial endeavours. With regard to the first criterion, racial categorisation has historically been unstable, and the Highland people were undoubtedly regarded as distinctly primitive by comparison. In relation to the question of Highland participation in empire, it must be stressed that various colonised subjects have themselves participated in imperial endeavours. One example of this is the colonised Indian soldiers who fought in British campaigns throughout Asia and Africa. In recent times, scholars, such as

[430] Grant, *Memoirs*, 250.
[431] McNeil, 'Introduction', *Scotland, Britain, Empire*, 16.

Iain MacKinnon[432] and Jim MacPherson, have emphasised the importance of 'putting the postcolonial back into Highland historiography'.[433]

A less subtle distinction made by Grant between the Mohawk and Highland people involves the different positions of women in the respective communities. In the *Memoirs*, Grant recalls seeing the dejected state of the Mohawk women at first hand:

> They were very early married: for a Mohawk had no other servant but his wife [. . .] Wherever man is a mere hunter, woman is a mere slave [. . .] the ancient Caledonians honoured the fair; but then, it is to be observed, that they were fair huntresses, and moved in the light of their beauty, to the hill of roes; and the culinary toils were entirely left to the rougher sex.[434]

In relation to Grant's account of women in traditional Highland society, there is a clear contrast between servitude and freedom. Grant had already previously discussed this topic in a note in *Poems on Various Subjects* (1803), where she used a more generally defined 'uncivilized wandering tribes' (likely the Mohawk) as a point of contrast:

> Women among uncivilized wandering tribes are generally in an abject and degraded state, and condemned to the most servile employments. Among the CELTAE this appears not to have been the case.[435]

The temporal frame of comparison is fractured and awkward here. For when Grant references the 'Celtae', she does not seem to mean the Highland world of which she had direct experience: this is, as the corollary reference to 'ancient Caledonians' suggests, the people of an earlier age in the Highlands, an age with which she was familiar only through oral tradition and literature. In attempting to draw comparisons between Native American and Highland tribes, a frame of reference must be used which splits across history. It is also

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[432] Iain MacKinnon, 'Colonialism and the Highland Clearances', *Northern Scotland* 8, no. 1 (2017): 22–23, https://doi.org/10.3366/nor.2017.0125
[433] Jim MacPherson, 'History Writing and Agency in the Scottish Highlands: Postcolonial Thought,' *Northern Scotland* 11, no. 2 (2020): 2, https://pure.uhi.ac.uk/files/14266689/2._Macpherson_History_writing_and_agency_in_the_Scottish_Highlands.pdf
[434] Grant, *Memoirs,* 71.
[435] Grant, *Poems*, 354.

important to point out here that Grant's observations relate only to one Native American culture (where women may well have played a subordinate role) but not, as she implies, to all 'uncivilized wandering tribes' without exception. Other Native American tribes such as the Huron, for example, were not patrilineal but matrilineal, and the position of women was different among them.[436] Notwithstanding such discrepancies, for Grant both Native American and Highland societies held value in a truer sense of 'society' than could be found in modern European culture. Grant's disdain is particularly focused on societies where bonds of kinship have been undermined by the disintegration of communities, the breakdown of patriarchal leadership, the process of immigration (the Europeans to the Americas and the English to Scotland), and an emphasis upon commercial development capital wealth.[437] In Grant's work, the sympathetic approach to marginalised, non-Anglophone societies relates most of all to the core concerns of Cultural Jacobitism. This led to serious impasses in her assessment of the New World.

One way that Grant championed marginalised societies retrospectively was by criticising the impact that modernity, commerce and cosmopolitanism had upon the early history of America. She begins by asserting that the very fabric of a nation such as America, founded upon mixed communities, is destined for disaster. She writes, 'With such a heterogeneous mixture a transplanted Briton of the original stock, a true old American, may live in charity, but can never assimilate'.[438] And despite the acknowledged fortitude and intellect of the founding fathers and the aspirations of individuals such as 'the deistical Franklin', and 'the melancholy Cowley', this emerging new nation could, for Grant, never recreate what she regards to be the happiness of smaller European communities.[439] Evidently writing with Scotland in mind, Grant observes of the United States:

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[436] Bruce Graham Trigger, 'Order and Freedom in Huron Society', *Anthropologica* 5 (1963): 155.
[437] 'As Womack has observed, early-nineteenth-century writers such as Grant refashioned this feudal community into 'the image of the bourgeois family, with its depoliticised domesticity, its gentility, its consciously cultivated artlessness, and its ultimate reference to patriarchal authority [...] the clan is an integral political, cultural, and racial unit [...] In contrast to historiographers like Hume and Smith, who argued that sensibility can be cultivated only in refined, commercial society, Grant follows James Macpherson and Adam Ferguson in suggesting that the material hardships encountered by primitive peoples do not preclude, but rather encourage the cultivation of refined emotion and strengthen the ties of affection'. Juliet Shields, *Sentimental Literature and Anglo-Scottish Identity, 1745–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 118–19. 'In Grant's Dutch families, as in her Highland clans and Algonquian tribes, the individual felt herself to be "one of many connected together," and the settlement was therefore free from internal rivalries and the hunger for individual status and wealth that characterised more polished society'. Keneth McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 114.
[438] Grant, *Memoirs*, 282.
[439] Grant, *Memoirs*, 283.

> Nothing, however, can be more anti-Arcadian. There no crook is seen, no pipe is heard, no lamb bleats, for the best possible reason, because there are no sheep. No pastoral strains awake the sleeping echoes [. . .] Seriously, it is not a place that can, in any instance, constitute happiness.[440]

Here Grant's anthropological considerations merge with the aesthetics of the landscape. The absence of pastoral farming in the American wilderness contributes to Grant's negative view of the terrain. While *Memoirs of an American Lady* is composed with a sense of nostalgia, this part of an otherwise sympathetic account is strikingly framed as negative, non-constitutive space and place; and given the proverbial warning 'sheep eat men' in the context of Enclosure and Clearance, this appeal to the pastoral is sharply ironic to say the least.

Literary accounts of Native American tribes were underpinned by other cultural politics: as Robbie Richardson argues in *The Savage and Modern Self*, they varied widely according to the time and place. For example, early narratives of American travel brought to Britain tended to depict Native Americans as admirable.[441] By the end of the seventeenth century, however, sympathy towards Native American cultures began to diminish in Britain and accounts of barbarity became commonplace.[442] These representations were not always neatly in tandem with depictions of Native Americans among the colonial Americans, however. Tim Fulford explains how, prior to the Seven Years War, stories of gratuitous barbarity of the Native Americans towards their captives were widely circulated.[443] Though such stories did filter through to Britain, when alliances were sought with the Native American tribes by the British to help quell the colonial American uprising, depictions of Native Americans as sadistic tormentors became less prominent. By the 1780s, a reemergence of barbaric accounts occurred in Britain, but were intertwined with accounts of masculinity and bravery, leading to an image of Native Americans as violently warlike yet virtuous.[444]

Grant's portrait of Native Americans in the *Memoirs* attempts to find a different space outside of the politically motivated narratives that emanated from the Americas and found their way

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[440] Grant, *Memoirs*, 286.
[441] Richardson, *Savage and Modern Self*, 15.
[442] Richardson, *Savage and Modern Self*, 19.
[443] Fulford, *Romantic Indians,* 50.
[444] Fulford, *Romantic Indians*, 41.

across the Atlantic and into print in Britain, while still cleaving to some of these ideas. One way in which her writing diverged from earlier patterns was in its focus on Europeans being absorbed into Native American society. The account of this phenomenon in the *Memoirs* reveals much about Grant's position on the morally superior existence she envisaged for societies outside the sphere of Anglophone influence. In the *Memoirs* we witness Grant's response to anecdotes and tales of adult Europeans being taken against their will by the Mohawks, and other stories of adults offering themselves voluntarily to Mohawk society, along with an analysis of the impact that Native American culture had on white children taken into captivity.

One example of a captivity narrative in the text takes the form of an anecdote relayed to Grant by her friend. This story centres around a man who had been kidnapped as a child and was raised into adulthood by a Native American tribe. When the man's family discovered that he was still alive 'his relations reclaimed him; and the community wished him to return and inherit his father's lands'.[445] However, perhaps to the reader's surprise, the man does not castigate or revenge himself upon his captors, the Native Americans. Instead, he casts aspersions upon the self-interested, polite, enlightened society to which he had recently been reintroduced:

> The Indians were unwilling to part with their protégé; and he was still more reluctant to return […] His abhorrence of the petty falsehoods to which custom has too well reconciled us, and of those little artifices which we occasionally practise, rose to a height fully equal to that of Gulliver. Swift and this other misanthrope, though they lived at the same time, could not have had any intercourse, else one might have supposed the invectives which he has put into the mouth of Gulliver, were borrowed from this demi-savage; whose contempt and hatred of selfishness, meanness, and duplicity were expressed in language worthy of the dean.[446]

Rather than being debased by his experience among the Native Americans, this European captive appears to be strengthened in the disdain of 'contempt and hatred of selfishness, meanness, and duplicity'; being reintroduced to European civil society, he finds his 'new'

[445] Grant, *Memoirs*, 115.
[446] Grant, *Memoirs*, 115-116.

environment to be morally lacklustre by comparison. He remains an outsider, but he now has the ethical authority of the satirist: not so much noble savage as 'savage indignation' (in the words of Swift's famous epitaph).[447] Grant then immediately turns to a point of contrast whereby, if the roles are reversed, and the Native American is initiated into European culture, the masculinity of the Native American is weakened by this exposure: 'Hunters supplied the means of commerce, and warriors those of defence; and it was questionable whether a Christian Indian would hunt or fight as well as formerly'.[448] Grant's reference to Swift when discussing this topic is pertinent here as, while he was an Anglo-Irish Tory, he extended much sympathy towards the Jacobite cause (notwithstanding the longstanding controversy about the characterisation of the Yahoos as Celts).[449] Other references to Gulliver are made elsewhere in Grant's writing; the reversibility of the frames of significance and authority of the traveller implied by Lilliput and Brobdingnag perhaps spoke to her uncertainties. But the broadening comparative frame of reference shows that while Grant's Cultural Jacobitism always concerned itself specifically with the protection of a Scots-Gaelic identity, it acknowledged that marginalised cultures around the world were also endangered by what was known in the late-eighteenth-and early-nineteenth centuries as Improvement, but what we term today 'globalism', and that unusual connections and affinities of resistance might be contingently formed and 'invectives' freely 'borrowed' between cultures.

While Grant's writing, particularly *Eighteen Hundred and Thirteen*, demonstrates some anti-French sentiment, in the *Memoirs* she does not seem to bear any prejudice against the Huron who were allied with the French. Rather she cites anecdotal accounts of them being an 'intelligent and sensible race'.[450] Her anecdotes also correlate with other accounts of Europeans who were captured by Native Americans and coerced into returning at some point. Tim Fulford affirms:

> Hunter's Memoirs had mentioned several white captives living happily as Indians, and concluded that captives almost never wished to return to white society once assimilated to Indian life. On this occasion, Hunter told Owen he had not felt so at

[447] Maurice Johnson, 'Swift and "The Greatest Epitaph in History,"' *The Review of English Studies* (1953): 820, https://www.jstor.org/stable/459801
[448] Grant, *Memoirs*,117.
[449] Davis, 'Jacobitism and Cultural Memory', 30.
[450] Grant, *Memoirs*, 221.

> home as he did with the Indian delegation since he had 'left his own people' (Hunter quoted in Drinnon, *White Savage*, 162).[451]

While perhaps not a 'captivity narrative' per se, another example of European exposure to Native American culture detailed in the *Memoirs* is that of a man of noble standing in England who voluntarily decides to reside amongst the Huron in the hope that it may cure his psychological malady. Predisposed to what Grant terms a 'hypochondriac disorder', Sir Robert D., after exhausting his other options, decides to join his brother in Canada and seek out a Native American tribe to which he may be admitted:

> He felt his melancholy daily increasing, and resolved immediately to put in execution his plan of entirely renouncing the European modes of life, and incorporating himself in some Indian tribe, hoping the novelty of the scene, and the hardships to which it would necessarily subject him might give him an entire new turn to his spirits.[452]

Sir Robert apparently put his plan to Sir William Johnson (1715-1774), a Major General in the British Army, who was renowned for 'going native'.[453] Johnson recommended Sir Robert should spend time among the Huron and used his connections to facilitate this plan of action. According to Grant, this plan 'completely succeeded' and Sir Robert, after two years among the Huron demonstrated 'invincible patience and fortitude' evidenced by letters to his friends in which he portrayed 'much good sense and just observation'.[454] Whether or not this course of action actually cured Sir Robert is left to the judgment of Grant's reader.

Maternal Bonds and Impressions

A rather different example of captivity narrative in the *Memoirs* is Grant's harrowing account of the return of European children, originally kidnapped by the Mohawks, to their biological mothers. Grant introduces her account by stressing how the gravity of this day is 'engraven in indelible characters upon my memory'. It is noteworthy that Grant, a European observer and

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[451] Fulford, *Romantic Indians*, 251.
[452] Grant, *Memoirs*, 221.
[453] Harrison W. Mark, *Sir William Johnson*, World History Encyclopedia, December 20, 2021, https://www.worldhistory.org/Sir_William_Johnson/.
[454] Grant, *Memoirs*, 221.

also herself a mother, refrains from criticising the Native Americans for taking the children. Instead, she extends sympathy to the Mohawk foster-mothers who relinquish the kidnapped children. Alongside impartiality, the distress of the Native American women is the first consideration in her narrative. The foster-mothers

> by this time were very unwilling to part with them. In the first place, because they were grown very fond of them; and again, because they thought the children would not be so happy in our manner of life.[455]

Grant proceeds to detail the anxiety and agony faced by the white families when the exchange is about to take place, with particular emphasis again on the stress experienced by women, this time the white biological mothers:

> Poor women who had travelled some hundred miles from the back settlements of Pennsylvania and New England appeared here, with anxious looks, not knowing whether their children were alive, or how exactly to identify them if they should meet them.[456]

At this point Grant turns her sympathy again to the women who were to relinquish the children:

> It was affecting to see the deep and silent sorrow of the Indian women, and of the children, who knew no other mother, and clung fondly to their bosoms, from whence they were not torn without the most piercing shrieks;[457]

The equivocality of this narrative of restoration is striking. Particularly poignant here is the ways in which the children are presented 'torn', 'shrieking', from their adoptive mothers' grasp. It is the adoptive bond, in the context of the natural community, that is the most natural source of feeling, and biological maternity, while sympathetically handled, is not as powerfully articulated in 'anxious looks' or problems of identification and meeting as in the 'deep and silent sorrow of the Indian women'. The narrator's sympathy then switches back

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[455] Grant, *Memoirs*, 230.
[456] Grant, *Memoirs*, 231.
[457] Grant, *Memoirs*, 231.

again to an emphasis upon the white mothers who, while hoping for a joyous reunion, 'were distressed beyond measure at the shyness and aversion with which these long-lost objects of their loved received their caresses'.[458] Kenneth McNeil has commented on this scene, and on Grant's refusal to condemn the Mohawk captors for taking European children as unusually magnanimous in the context of settler-colonialism;[459] it is certainly the case that Grant's writing was motivated by a wish to convey the benevolent nature of a people that had long been portrayed as sadistic and brutal.[460] Something that has not previously been identified as part of this complex scene of recognition and recovery, however, is the prospect that the sympathy extended to the captors by Grant, rather than being motivated by her affinity for Mohawk culture, can be attributed to the complex and ambivalent relationship that Grant had with her own biological mother, Catherine MacKenzie MacVicar. While Grant's oeuvre is permeated with kind memories of her father, her mother features much less, and the relationship between the two appears to have been strained. In the posthumous *Memoir and Correspondence*, Grant refers to a lack of affection in her early infancy, when her father was in America:

> I had no companion, no one fondled or caressed me, far less did anyone take the trouble of amusing me; I did not, till the sixth year of my age, possess a single toy. A child of less activity would have become torpid under the circumstances.[461]

It is significant for the *Memoirs* that Aunt Schuyler was a foster mother with no biological children with whom Grant developed a quasi-maternal relationship over a number of years.[462] In the scene of children being returned to their biological mothers (many years after witnessing the event), Grant's account is perhaps shaded by the benevolence of her own 'foster mother', in contrast to the indifference of her biological mother.

Grant's proximity to foster-mother figures returned in various ways throughout her life. After she had married and settled in the Highlands, Grant forged a relationship with a woman she refers to in her writing as 'Moome'. In *Poems on Various Subjects*, the Gaelic name is translated into English as 'a person who without being actually a mother, performs the duties

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[458] Grant, *Memoirs*, 231.
[459] McNeil, 'The Location of Empire', 212.
[460] Fulford, *Romantic Indians*, 27.
[461] Grant, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, 1: 1-2.
[462] Grant, *Memoirs*, 131.

of one'.[463] What is more, in her later years, after removing to Woodend from Laggan, Grant would become a foster mother herself. In unpublished correspondence between herself and the Scottish antiquarian George Chalmers, Grant reveals that she 'had my own eight children & two others from the West Indies whom I took under my charge from infancy to bring up'.[464] In the letter Grant goes on to request two favours from various women that Chalmers states wished to help her. The first favour relates to 'Promoting the letters and as many copies of the poems which are still on hand'. The second favour illustrates the importance that Grant invested in the process of fostering, not only for the well-being of the children, but also for her own continuing education:

> If they could possibly get me two (I would not take more) Orphan Children so young that they could have no fixed habits or attachments I would endeavour to win their affections to form their hearts and bring them up as I have done my own. They would find Nature here to teach them what we could not. Boys I should like as well as girls, my youngest now seven years old being a boy. The advantages I might derive from this tuition might be important to me.[465]

Furthermore, the trope of fostering in Grant's writing is not confined to people alone; it also extends to place. In *Memoir and Correspondence*, Grant writes that America is something she 'always looks back to as a kind of foster-mother'.[466] Even in the transfer of this parental identification there is also a tinge of Cultural Jacobitism. Chapter one discussed Grant's depictions of women from Gaelic antiquity to the eighteenth century. Drawing on interpretations of the centrality of the Ossianic figure of Malvina to 'The Highlanders' and also on Grant's configuring of Flora Macdonald as the hero of eighteenth-century Scotland, I suggest that Grant viewed women as central to both the sovereignty of Scotland and the continuance of Gaelic culture (the two fundamental concerns of political Jacobitism). Grant's version of Malvina perhaps compensates the pessimistic sentiments of Macpherson's Ossian in the same way that Flora the heroine compensates for the failure of Charles Edward Stuart. But Grant does not exclude herself from this cohort of heroic women. By insisting on her love for Scotland and advertising her own bardic credentials, in the absence of a viable

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[463] Grant, *Poems*, 272.
[464] Edinburgh University Library Heritage Collections, *La ii 357 ff. 63–68*.
[465] Edinburgh University Library Heritage Collections, *La ii 357 ff. 63–68*.
[466] Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 2: 305.

patriarch (and also the inaccuracies and misrepresentations of literary men such as Macpherson and Scott)[467] who could secure the future of Scots-Gaelic culture and the rekindling of notions about Scottish national determination, Grant positioned herself as foster-mother to the Highlands. The strands of this personification began to be gathered up in *Memoirs of an American Lady*.

Dwelling: Travel and Teleology

Like *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant's account of her time in the Americas can be regarded as travel writing, hinged on a sustained period of observation, distinguishing it from conventional temporary and transient accounts of people and places. Alisdair Pettinger has recently reviewed scholarly work that differentiates between 'horizontal' travel, where the aim of the traveller is to move from place to place, and 'vertical' travel, where the traveller remains in one place for a sustained period:

> To describe 'dwelling' as 'travel' is to transform it into something worth writing about, and vertical travel emerged in the wake of more than two decades of rapidly proliferating accounts of highly circumscribed journeys in which the author hardly travels at all, but brings to familiar surroundings a degree of curiosity normally associated with unfamiliar places encountered for the first time.[468]

This is a useful axis to add the criticism which has already acknowledged the distinctive importance of Grant's embedded account of people with whom she lived in close proximity. Critics such as Juliet Shields, Ina Ferris and Pam Perkins stress the aspects of Grant's writing that concern dwelling.[469] Grant's own estimation of herself as a stationary traveller pre-empts this assessment. In the *Memoirs*, Grant compares her own 'settled' accounts of American life with what she regards as the limited and narrow estimation of the 'voyager':

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[467] In a letter to Mrs Hook (1814) Grant observes that while Scott may paint Scotland generally in a favourable light, 'He is not, however, just to the Highlanders; and the specimens of Highland manners which he gives are not fair ones', J.P. Grant, *Memoir and Correspondence*, 1st ed., 2: 50. In chapter four of this thesis, I look at another letter where Grant points out Scott's inaccuracies around the supernatural.

[468] Alisdair Pettinger 'Vertical Travel' in *Keywords for Travel Writing Studies: A Critical Glossary* (London: Anthem Press, 2019), 277.

[469] Shields 'Highland Emigration', 773; Ferris, 'Translation from the Borders', 206; Perkins 'Grant: Gender, Genre', 230.

> Voyagers who have not their language, and merely see them [Mohawk] transiently, to wonder and be wondered at, are equally strangers to the real character of man in a social, though unpolished state.[470]

The term 'wonder' is particularly relevant to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century perceptions of travel. Carl Thompson and Nigel Leask have both explored this concept in relation to travel writing. Leask unpicks the cultural and political connotations of curiosity, stressing both the 'negative' and the 'positive' contemporary implementations of 'wonder'.[471] Conversely, Carl Thompson offers an interpretation of 'wonder' in the long eighteenth century situated in the traveller's sense of unease in response to unfamiliar customs and aesthetics.[472] It is important to highlight how, in the *Memoirs*, Grant presents 'wonder' as a distinctly negative reaction by transient observers to phenomenon they encounter but cannot understand. Grant critiques the wonderment of the 'voyager' and attempts to assert her authority, derived from her mode of integrated, sustained observation, over theirs. She does indicate another class of people who possess credentials similar to her own, however, imploring her readers to 'judge from the traders' and listen to their more authoritative observations of 'this class of social beings'.[473] One such trader may have been James Adair (1709–1783), who married a Chickasaw woman and lived among the Chickasaw tribe for two decades.[474] Adair's account of the Native American groups with whom he resided was, like Grant's, extremely detailed and at odds with the stereotypes prevalent in literature of the time.[475] The praise of traders may appear an unusual concession to commercial society in Grant's writing, given her strictures elsewhere, but here as elsewhere settlement and absorption offers an escape from the interchangeability of modern life.

In *Memoirs of an American Lady* another noteworthy line of social interpretation is Grant's reaffirmation of the Mohawk as 'social beings (for such indeed they were)'.[476] This simple sentiment complicates in the first instance any attempt to simply align Grant's attitudes with the most popular conventional stadial theories associated with the Scottish Enlightenment. Fundamentally, Grant asserts the importance of all empirical experience, including the

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[470] Grant, *Memoirs*, 51.
[471] Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel-Writing*, 4.
[472] Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 67.
[473] Grant, *Memoirs*, 51.
[474] Fulford, *Romantic Indians,* 60.
[475] Fulford, *Romantic Indians,* 60.
[476] Grant, *Memoirs*, 51.

evidence of travel, over the speculation and conjecture of the non-travelling philosopher.[477] For Grant, the process of travelling and experience of people first-hand was a requisite for anthropological discourse of any kind; this has a bearing on why her own stadial model is somewhat different to the most popular four-stage models of the Scottish Enlightenment. While it was in the *Essays* that Grant directly confronted what she believes to be the misconceived abstractions of enlightenment philosophers, it is the *Memoirs* where, in practical terms, she demonstrates the difference between the sentiments of the philosopher in their 'armchair' and the sentiments of the traveller with on the ground experience.[478] In his *Treatise on Human Nature*, David Hume (1711–1776) suggested that if a traveller were to return to Britain with an account that undermined the commonly held teleological principle that societal satisfaction increased in tandem with developments in technology, education and government, and that any (implied) primitive communities were free from any negative features whatsoever, then this traveller should perhaps not be taken seriously:

> Should a traveller, returning from a far country, bring us an account of men wholly different from any with whom we were ever acquainted, men who were entirely divested of avarice, ambition, or revenge, who knew no pleasure but friendship, generosity, and public spirit, we should immediately, from these circumstances, detect the falsehood and prove him a liar with the same certainty as if he had stuffed his narration with stories of centaurs and dragons, miracles and prodigies.[479]

While Hume had experience of travel around Europe, he had not visited the marginalised societies which excited Grant's curiosity, and of which she had experience.[480] In the *Essays*, Grant accordingly rebukes philosophers who comment upon societies of which they have no empirical knowledge as 'silly and cowardly pretenders to science'.[481] Her account in the *Memoirs* of the genuine 'friendship, generosity and public spirit' evident in Mohawk society appears here set against the position of figures of the Scottish enlightenment such as Hume.

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[477] Sutton, 'Echoes of Albany'
[478] Grant, *Memoirs*, 105.
[479] David Hume [1748] 1900, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing. First published 1748), 86.
[480] John Robertson, 'David Hume', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[481] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 42.

Perhaps it is the force of Grant's rejection of the teleological stadial theories of the likes of Hume and Adam Smith that has led her ideas about societal development to be more strongly linked in modern critical appraisal to the theories of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). For example, Andrew Tod suggests in Grant's *DNB* entry that overall thrust of her *Essays* 'would have been of great interest to those who were still fascinated by the arguments over the authenticity of Ossian or claims that highland peasants were noble savages, as suggested by disciples of Rousseau'.[482] (Peter Womack however has drawn some distinction between the 'Golden Age' of Grant and that of Rousseau.[483]) Yet Grant's understanding of the terms 'social' and 'society' put her as much at odds with the theories of Rousseau as those of Smith and Hume. For while Grant takes umbrage with the dominant Enlightenment argument that peoples like the Mohawk were culturally immature, she also objects to Rousseau's claim that 'natural man' cannot be a 'social man'. Grant's refusal to align with either of these two teleological camps reflects her rejection of a binary choice of either retaining long-held traditions and values or necessarily relinquishing them for the sake of modernity, progress and Improvement. Once again, we can identify her position, which consists of a defence of traditional virtue in the face of modern survival, without insisting on the estrangement of one from the other, as Cultural Jacobitism.

In his *Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality*, Rousseau implies that the nomadic 'natural' or 'savage' man exists as a binary opposite to settled 'social man'.[484] Rousseau uses the term 'savage' in direct reference to nomadic Native Americans, the implication being that they are a people devoid of industry, sophisticated language and intimate social connections. [485] In her *Memoirs*, Grant responds to what she regards to be groundless and abstract conjecture, with her own rhetorical yet also empirically answerable question:

> Were *they* savages who had fixed habitations; who cultivated rich fields; who built castles, (for so they called their not incommodious wooden houses, surrounded by palisades;) who planted maize and beans and showed considerable ingenuity in

[482] Andrew Todd, 'Grant [neé MacVicar], Anne', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[483] Womack, *Improvement and Romance: The Scottish Highlands in British Writing after the Forty-Five*, 228.
[484] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse Upon the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality Among Mankind*, (London: R and J Dodsley, 1761), 86.
[485] Rousseau, *Discourse*, 200.

> constructing and adorning their canoes, arms and clothing? They who had wise though unwritten laws […] they whose eloquence was bold, nervous and animated; whose language was sonorous, musical and expressive; who possessed generous and elevated sentiments, heroic fortitude and unstained probity—were these indeed savages?[486]

Fundamentally, the etymology of the term 'savage' denotes a person or group that lack the wherewithal to farm; Grant argued with empirical evidence that this was not the case for the Native Americans. (In the long run, of course, Grant was far more correct than Rousseau, not only in relation to the Iroquoian or Haudenosaunee group of peoples of whom the Mohawk formed a part, but also of the large and complex settled Mississippian civilisation and other settled cultures across pre-Columbian North America; although none of these historical examples were yet evident to most Europeans of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.)

In *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant had also suggested the reversibility of the terms 'savage' and 'civilized', readily applying the term 'savage' both to herself and the wider Highland society: 'Early accustomed to savage life, I have not the horror at it that wiser people have. As far as merely regards this world, I am not sure how much my old Mohawk friends have to gain by being civilized'![487] However, when the term 'savage' was applied to groups including both the Highlanders and Native Americans by outsiders, or those Grant deemed not qualified by immediate experience to comment upon these communities, she took considerable exception: 'it is but calling people savages, and then their blood is of no value, and their lives of no consequence'.[488] Grant's rebuttal of the conventional rhetorical use of the term 'savage', laden with negative connotations in an English context, is absolutely clear. In the passage quoted above, the question posed by Grant is at once rhetorical and literal. Rousseau had suggested that to begin thinking in a sophisticated and intelligent manner, natural man necessarily had to abandon the customs of his savage past:

> At length, these first Improvements enabled man to improve at a greater Rate. Industry grew perfect in proportion as the Mind became more enlightened. Men soon ceasing to fall asleep under the first tree or take shelter in the first Cavern, light upon

[486] Grant, *Memoirs*, 20.
[487] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 119.
[488] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 1: 85.

> some hard and sharp kinds of stone resembling Spades or Hatchets, and employed them to dig the Ground, cut down Trees, and with the branches build Huts, which they afterwards bethought themselves of plaistering over with Clay or Dirt. This was the epoch of a first Revolution [...][489]

One of the implications of this sentiment is that 'savage' or 'natural' man, prone to falling asleep at the 'first tree' or first cave he could find, was necessarily lazy and indolent. Grant, by contrast documents the Mohawk society as distinctly active and lacking any time for imputed idleness or paradisial leisure:

> We are accustomed to talk, in parrot phrase of indolent savages […] Very active and industrious, in fact, the Indians were in their original state; and when we take it into consideration, that besides these various occupations, together with their long journeys, wars and constant huntings and fishing, their leisure was not only occupied by athletic but studious games, at which they played for days together with unheard of eagerness and perseverance, it will appear that they had very little of that lounging-time for which we are so apt to give them credit.[490]

Grant's account here counters the shared romantic and sentimental notions of conjectural history by which the supposedly oppositional Rousseau, Hume, or Smith are in fact connected. It is important to reiterate the fact that none of these figures had firsthand experience of Native Americans. If there remains any doubt that Grant's teleology is at odds with Rousseau's approach, in the *Memoirs*, she responds with an indirect, coded, but absolute dismissal, which previous critics of her work have overlooked:

> […] those frisking Frenchmen who have given us the most details about them were too restless themselves to subdue their skipping spirits to the recollection that a Mohawk had no study or armchair wherein to muse and cogitate; his schemes of war and his eloquent speeches, were all like the meditations of Jacques, formed "under the greenwood tree."[491]

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[489] Rousseau, *Discourse*, 107.
[490] Grant, *Memoirs*, 104-105.
[491] Grant, *Memoirs*, 105.

Grant uses some clever wordplay here: Jean-Jacques (whose work the *Reveries of a Solitary Walker* is also sometimes called the *Meditations of a Solitary Walker* in English) is conjoined with Shakespeare's Jaques in *As You Like It*, dreaming of a carefree life in the forest.[492] Rousseau's version of the concept of the 'noble savage' was not the only model in currency at the time, and there is still a significant case for aligning Grant with the primitivist movement in general. (Juliet Shields has also distinguished Grant's interpretation of Highland development from Rousseau's ideas by linking Grant more convincingly with Macpherson and Ferguson, notably both Gaelic-speaking Scots.)[493] Yet the passages above show most of all how Grant deploys a more grounded empiricism to depart from and disrupt sweeping claims such as Rousseau's notion that peoples without property (such as the Mohawk) were necessarily devoid of 'eloquence' or an 'enlightened mind'.

Grant's broader political and colonial positioning in the *Memoirs* has proved to be more contentious. While her attempt to mediate between cultures has been credited by the modern criticism on the work, sometimes using the terms of postcolonial literary theory such as hybridity and contact zones, these mediatory qualities come with certain caveats. [494] One problem is that her attitude to British imperial authority is complex, or at least potentially inconsistent with other forms of loyalism and nationalism. Pam Perkins is by no means the only modern critic to frame Grant as a patriotic and pro-British Tory, albeit one disposed to see the British military as a corrupting influence.[495] Any such straightforward categorisation does however ignore the nuanced and fluid political considerations of Grant's politics. Elsewhere in her work, Grant had expressed that the uncertainty around her identity clearly encompasses her political outlook too; she felt that she did not fit neatly into either a liberal or conservative camp.[496]

Arguably, a more useful frame is Grant's Cultural Jacobitism, a force that motivates her criticism of an imperialist and expansionist British army in the *Memoirs of an American Lady*. Murray Pittock states that Jacobitism provided a model for subsequent anti-

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[492] William Shakespeare, *As You Like It, Complete Works of Shakespeare* (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1994), 287.
[493] Shields, 'Sentimental Literature', 119.
[494] See: Ferris 'Translation from the Borders', 204 and Shields, 'Highland Emigration', 773.
[495] 'The serpent in this American Eden […] most immediately, the British Army, something that might seem an odd move in the work of a self-proclaimed Tory who ends her book with a vehement attack on the Revolution and its leaders'. Perkins, 'Paradises Lost', 327.
[496] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 282-283.

imperialism.[497] In the *Memoirs*, Grant aligns her antipathy towards British imperialism multilaterally, incorporating Dutch influence and familial ambivalence: recalling the image of her father in his British military uniform, she remembers how 'The Scarlet coat, which I had been taught to consider as the symbol of wickedness, disgusted me in some degree.'[498] Here again retrospective layering is important: from the position of 1808, Grant is likely also expressing the aversion to uniform that had developed during her residence in the Highlands. In opposition to Grant's aversion to the red coat worn by her father and its association with the British army is Grant's reaction to the blue coat worn by 'King Hendrick' when she first encounters him:

> He was splendidly arrayed in a coat of pale blue, trimmed with silver; all the rest of his dress was the fashion of his own nation, and highly embellished with beads and ornaments.[499]

The pale blue colour worn by King Hendrick seems to evoke and echo the bonnets worn by the Jacobite soldiers who opposed British-Hanoverian forces from the mid seventeenth until the mid-eighteenth century; by the late eighteenth century the term 'bluebonnet' was virtually synonymous with Jacobitism.[500] At the very least, this seems a symbolic deposition scene of transferred sovereignty where the symbolic authority of crown and uniform is parodied.

Later in *Memoirs*, Grant goes on to take umbrage with the violent transition of power from the crown to the colonists, but her pessimism about the new United States is neither an unabashed defence of the British interest nor a simple hostility to new American sovereignties. Grant rather suggests that revolution is part of the natural forces of destiny acting on national landscape:

> A contest of sovereignty is a whirlwind that rages fiercely while it continues, and deforms the face of external nature. New houses, however, replace those it has

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[497] 'The Jacobite critique of a centralized and centralizing state and its thirst for war and Empire has its echoes in both its own time and today […] Jacobitism was the first fruit and for a long time the sole means of opposition to the British state as it developed in its modern guise after 1688'. Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 136.
[498] Grant, *Memoirs*, 193.
[499] Grant, *Memoirs*, 195.
[500] Pittock, *Material Culture and Sedition, 1688-1760: Treacherous Objects, Secret Places* (London; Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 75.

> demolished; trees grow in the place of those destroyed; the landscape laughs, the birds sing, and every thing returns to its accustomed course.[501]

Again, this violent but naturalising return to the 'accustomed' is much more clearly seen in the light of Cultural Jacobitism than of any variety of British loyalism; Tory or Whig. Another critical problem is Grant's ultimate comparative evaluation between European and Native American societies. Betty Hagglund interprets Grant's representation of King Hendrick as evidence of the writer's belief of the superiority of European culture. This interpretation is arrived at, in part, by following the orthodox connotations of Grant's terminology. Hagglund writes, 'the king, although "a princely figure" and a "generous warrior'" is defined by Grant as "a primitive monarch," and not quite genuine royalty in the European sense'.[502] Grant's Cultural Jacobitism can help here too: in the Jacobite tradition the 'princely figure', 'generous warrior', 'primitive warrior', and true king might be one and the same, the clan chieftain and national sovereign united in the figure of the Stuart monarch.[503]

Neither does Grant's comparison of the extravagance of a European monarch and the 'fashion of his own nation' of King Hendrick necessarily imply European superiority. Grant notes that King Hendrick's dwelling differed from the European palaces in that it:

> had the appearance of a good barn and was divided across by a mat hung in the Middle. King Hendrick [. . .] was sitting on the floor besides a large heap of wheat, surrounded with baskets of dried berries of different kinds;[504]

Yet the scene for Grant is authentic and pleasing; 'Had I seen royalty, properly such, invested with all the pomp of European magnificence, I should possibly have been confused and over-dazzled'.[505] Grant often uses terms such as 'polished' and 'scientific' ironically; 'properly' has a similarly hollow weight here.[506] It is not necessarily an endorsement of 'magnificence'.

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[501] Grant, *Memoirs*, 279.
[502] Hagglund '"Not absolutely a native, nor entirely a stranger,"' 46.
[503] 'The king was an absent lover, made equal to his subjects by common misfortune (there was also a tradition of the Stuarts mixing among their subjects on equal footing, one which stretched back at least to James V's supposed antics in beggar's disguise)'. Pittock, *Jacobitism,*70.
[504] Grant, *Memoirs*, 195.
[505] Grant, *Memoirs*, 195.
[506] For examples see: *Letters from the Mountains*, 1: 99 and *Essays*, 1: 150.

In her portrayal of King Hendrick, Grant presents a figure with more in common with the Highland Chieftains so revered by Grant in her *Essays*, than with contemporary European monarchs. Grant's account of Hendrick expands on the notion that he was a different kind of ruler to those in Europe, yet one she viewed as genuinely in tune with Mohawk society:

> […] the monarch smiled, clapped my head, and ordered me a little basket, very pretty, and filled by the officious kindness of his son with dried berries. Never did princely gifts, or the smile of royalty, produce more ardent admiration and profound gratitude. I went out of the royal presence overawed and delighted, and am not sure but what I have liked kings all my life the better for this happy specimen to which I was so early introduced.[507]

The personal connection between monarch and subject, where one could be close enough to a king to have their head 'clapped' was an aspect familiar to Highland society prior to the destruction of the Clan System, and a major part of the appeal of the Stuart dynasty over the more distant Hanoverian dynasty.[508] In her *Essays*, Grant claims that the Highland Chiefs were respected and loved precisely because they made their presence accessible to their subordinates, unlike conventional European monarchs who preferred to reign in aloof splendour. The Highland Chiefs, like King Hendrick, did not preside over splendid courts, and in the *Essays*, Grant compares them favourably to grander European monarchs:

> In the Highlands, they knew, or cared very little about their distant monarch. They never saw him, or wished to see him. His existence in them excited neither hopes nor fears [. . .] Everyone venerated in his chief an attached kinsman and kind protector [...] In Wales, on the contrary, the visible and personal consequence of the chiefs was diminished by the splendour of the court to which they were attached.[509]

Hagglund's conclusion that Grant viewed King Hendrick as not quite 'genuine' is therefore not the whole picture, and so neither is the implication that she viewed Native American culture more generally as 'not quite genuine in the European sense'. The evidence of the text

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[507] Grant, *Memoirs*, 195.
[508] Pittock, *Jacobitism,* 13.
[509] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 17-18.

suggests that Grant considered Hendrick not as 'lesser' in any way but rather as the epitome of 'genuine' royalty in the Jacobite sense.

The forces of nineteenth-century liberalism largely determined that Jacobite culture was backward and retrograde: this is a position that Grant challenges throughout her writing. In associating the Scottish Highlanders not only with Native Americans but also with Dutch settlers, Grant further complicates ideas of social sophistication and progress. Near the beginning of the *Memoirs*, Grant details the transfer of practical knowledge from Native American society to the Colonial Dutch community, stressing 'how well these young travellers' (Dutch boys) were 'taught by their Indian friends'.[510] Grant recalls how it was customary for these boys, married at an early age, to venture into the wilderness, accompanied by Native American guides, in order to become closer to nature and to develop a masculine independence. During this period, which lasted several weeks, the Dutch boys would learn skills such as hunting, fishing, boatbuilding, and botany:

> They were now ripened into men, and considered as active and useful members of society, possessing a stake in the common weal […] It was in this manner that the young colonist made the transition from boyhood to manhood; from the disengaged and careless bachelor, to the provident and thoughtful father of a family; and thus, was spent that period of life so critical in polished society to those whose condition exempts them from manual labour.[511]

Grant's observation here in highlighting this form of education and experience suggests that she found this crucial element of masculine development to be absent from the experience of boys existing only in 'polished society'. For Grant, the colonial Dutch experience represented a meeting point; a blend of the positive aspects of European curiosity with traditional Native American lore and knowledge of nature. The care which Grant takes to describe a temporary experience which nevertheless leads to permanent change, gainful change, is evident:

> It is utterly inconceivable, how even a single season, spent in this manner, ripened the mind, and changed the whole appearance, nay, the very character of the countenance

[510] Grant, *Memoirs*, 49.
[511] Grant, *Memoirs*, 51-52.

> of these demi-savages, for such they seem on returning from among their friends in the forests. Lofty, sedate, and collected, they seem masters of themselves, and independent of others […][512]

The term 'demi-savage' here is pivotal to the complexity of Grant's worldview in general and her own identity. While Grant admired the Native Americans, it is the Dutch settlers with whom she identifies with most in *Memoirs of an American Lady*. Grant highlights the imitative qualities of the Dutch in response to Native Americans, their 'Indian likeness'; a mimetic desire to appreciate and become part of more than one culture or society that Grant also recognised in herself:

> By this Indian likeness I do not think them by any means degraded. One must have seen these people (the Indians I mean) to know what a noble animal man is, while unsophisticated.[513]

We might call this 'cultural appropriation' but for the care that Grant takes in positioning it somewhere between the fetishisation of the 'noble animal man is' and a resistance to assumptions of deracination and degradation. On the prospect of a gain in cross-cultural knowledge more broadly, for Grant empiricism was exponentially more valuable than abstract speculation or theorisation from a distance. Aunt Schuyler personifies what Grant deems to be the superiority of natural feelings, understanding, impulse and intuition over academic branches of philosophy and science.[514]

> Her expressions, not from art and study, but from the clear perceptions of her sound and strong mind, were powerful, distinct, and exactly adapted to the occasion. You saw her thoughts as they occurred to her mind, without the usual bias rising from either a fear to offend, or a wish to please.[515]

According to Grant, the colonial Dutch shared qualities with both the Native Americans and the Scottish Highlanders, yet Grant felt that these qualities could be found in all rural

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[512] Grant, *Memoirs*, 50.
[513] Grant, *Memoirs*, 50.
[514] Grant, *Memoirs*, 50.
[515] Grant, *Memoirs*, 209.

communities, no matter their level of affluence or supposed cultural sophistication. It was the proximity to nature that was the guarantee of these values. For Grant, the population who exist in urban areas are devoid of these positive qualities (indeed they are rarely directly visible in her work). In the *Essays*, she compares the intelligence, spirit and behaviour of the poor people in rural Highland hamlets with the poor in urbanised villages and towns.[516] In the *Memoirs*, Grant makes a similar distinction between rural colonial Dutch and the urban (and implicitly European) poor:

> Their thoughts were not like those of other illiterate women [in towns], occupied by the ordinary details of the day, and the gossiping tattle of the neighbourhood […] Every individual took an interest in the general welfare, and contributed their respective shares of intelligence and sagacity, to aid plans that embraced important objects relative to the common good.[517]

Grant's conception of 'general welfare' here again hinges on the classic distinction later formulated as *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*, between the cohesive community and the society made up of individuals with competing interests. She was hardly the first writer in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to make this distinction, but it is given a particularly gendered spin, which acts as much as a reflexive critique of her current Lowland circumstances, drawn out as a viewless background. Grant refers to the Dutch women as 'unembellished females' (the word 'embellished' is given particular force in the *Memoirs*, as we will recall from the description of King Hendrick). She contrasts the rectitude and integrity of the colonial Dutch women with the 'embellished' lives and sentiments of the 'fashionable' and 'polished' women that she encountered in Glasgow as a teenager and later in Edinburgh when she was an adult.[518]

Once again, Grant attributes the superior rectitude of the Highland and Native American societies to what she deems their superior language; devoid of 'gossiping tattle'. Near the beginning of the *Memoirs* Grant compares the negative interactions between the Native Americans and the 'zealous' Christian missionaries from Britain, with the interactions

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[516] Grant observes 'a certain chivalrous dignity, and refinement of sentiment, not known to exist among the lower classes of any other country' and how 'the manners of the lower class in other countries appeared to them deficient in courtesy and civility', *Essays* 1: 12, 70.
[517] Grant, *Memoirs,* 28.
[518] Grant, *Memoirs,* 28.

between the Native Americans and the 'mild' Dutch who displayed a 'practical' approach to religion and whose dialect contributed to a tolerant philosophical outlook and moral compass.[519] Like Gaelic, the colonial Dutch language seemed to promote concepts and connotations unheard of in the Anglosphere, 'however odd the expression may appear'.[520] Another fundamental aspect that distinguished these cultures from polite and commercial societies was their ability to survive outside of a fiscal model. While money had been introduced to the fledgling region of New York a few decades before Grant was there[521], she observes how the Dutch colonists still relied upon bartering to a large degree. Like the Colonial Dutch, the Highland people also relied upon barter over money. A correlation is therefore inevitably made between the cash nexus and the inflammation of negative passions:

> Though all the necessaries of life, and some luxuries, abounded, money, as yet, was a scarce commodity. This industry was the more to be admired, as children here were indulged to a degree that in our vitiated state of society would have rendered them good for nothing. But there, where ambition, vanity, and the more turbulent passions were scarcely awakened; where pride, founded on birth, or any external pre-eminence, was hardly known, and where the affections flourished fair and vigorous, unchecked by the thorns and thistles with which our minds are cursed in a more advanced state of refinement, affection restrained parents from keeping their children at a distance and inflicting harsh punishments.[522]

Grant also asserts here that modern society interrupts the natural bonds of affection between parent and child, a curse of refinement exacerbated substantially by the introduction or imposition of a monetary system. According to Grant's particular vision of stadial progression and decline, the introduction of money and the kind of morality ushered in alongside this introduction was indicative of a lower, rather than a more advanced, stage of humanity. When Grant refers to the contemporary nineteenth century as 'a more advanced state of refinement' it is with the utmost irony. The nineteenth-century fashion of parents 'keeping their distance from their children' was not only in stark contrast to her own views

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[519] Grant, *Memoirs,* 69.
[520] Grant, *Memoirs*, 67.
[521] 'Paper money emissions began in 1709 in New Jersey and New York'. Farley Grubb, *Colonial American Paper Money and the Quantity Theory of Money: An Extension* (NBER Working Paper No. 22192, Apr. 2016), p. 190
[522] Grant, *Memoirs*, 41.

around the bonds between parents and their offspring, but was the clearest marker of societal decline. Another comparison returned to in the appraisal of the moral qualities of different societies, and somewhere else where Grant dissented from and disrupted Enlightenment narratives of stadial progression, is the re-evaluation of hunter-gathering against agriculture. Grant had already valorised the former repeatedly in writing about Scotland. In the *Memoirs*, while Grant defends the Native Americans against the application of the term 'savage' through focusing on their capacity to plant and raise crops, the Dutch seem to have more in common with the Highlanders. Grant states that 'They were in great measure obliged to depend upon their own skill in hunting and fishing, and of the hospitality of Indians.'[523]

Conclusion

Grant's narrative of American life undoubtedly imposes some generic traits upon both people and place. Many of the distinctions between rural and urban, wild and civilised, pure and corrupted, between the warmth of known community and tradition, and the coldness and self-interest of emergent modern life, are endemic to late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century thought. But the *Memoirs* is complex and layered in its mapping of these binary categories. It is also distinguishable from other accounts by colonial travellers that romanticised indigenous communities, as chivalrous, masculine and sublime while attempting to reductively package and commodify these qualities.[524] The *Memoirs* can be regarded as at once 'romantic' and 'rational' while simultaneously posing challenges to both positions. Grant's representations of landscape in the text are consonant with contemporary aesthetic concepts popular at the time, but do not follow these models mechanically or by rote, and her recording of the people that she encounters while making categorical claims also diverges markedly from the common teleology of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In reassessing some of the critical interpretations of Grant's attitudes in the *Memoirs*, I hope to demonstrate that the ideas and language she uses to describe both people and place can be reinterpreted, recontextualised and viewed as indicative of the potential for the fluidity of human principles and identity. Grant's writing shows how travel and relocation can induce changes in an individual's attitude, perceptions and philosophies towards their own society long after the physical journey has taken place, and also how an individual's anticipations and

[523] Grant, *Memoirs,* 47.
[524] Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 148-149.

preconceptions of people and place can influence their response to new worlds of experience. In examining how literary depictions of Scotland and her later experience in the Scottish Highlands informed Grant's travel writing and how she remembered and portrayed certain aspects of colonial Native American society, and conversely, by examining how her early experience was mapped onto her later life and writing in and about Scotland, it becomes apparent that any attempt to define travel solely according to the linear, physical parameters of a journey is problematic. Instead, the mental impact of travel consists both of the preconceptions of the traveller prior to the journey and their post-travel processing and rationalisation; it therefore makes most sense to understand travel as being something that the traveller has an active role in creating and, also, something that persists indefinitely, functioning not as an isolated, momentary experience, but rather a recurrent aspect of the traveller's life.

Given the overall assessment of Grant in this thesis as an ally and recoverer of marginalised social groups, it is appropriate that, in her observations of the Native Americans, her style of narration was not in keeping with other contemporary accounts that sought to dominate or silence this group. Grant's attempt at impartiality, and her balanced and mobile mediation between the Mohawk, colonial Dutch and British positions arguably endows her text with significance and force. The *inclusion* rather than *exclusion* of 'other' cultures is what makes *Memoirs of an American Lady* such a rich and unique source. Grant narrates the interactions between Native Americans, Germans, Dutch, French, Irish, Scottish and Africans in what resembles a microcosm of human encounter. Her observations, while informal and anecdotal, have often been seen as evoking nostalgia for a bygone age, or capturing a period of America's history that saw various communities and societies vying for prominence. Yet this nostalgia can also be interpreted as a reminder of the various ways in which societies functioned better prior to the machinations of Improvement, and to what they might return. In the *Memoirs*, Grant's support for the Native Americans is interwoven with her support for the Scottish Highland people in such a way that shows her preoccupation with the latter, and her Cultural Jacobitism, was not mere exclusionary nativism. Grant's advocation for the rights of marginalised societies and cultures to exist independently and to retain their own distinctive traits seems to be born out of a belief that the political overreach adopted to smooth out cultural distinctions for the sake of progress was at best foolhardy and at worst immoral.

Chapter Four: *Superstitions,* the Supernatural and Grant's Gaelic-Highland Identity

Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland (1811) was the last major text published by Grant in her lifetime (*Eighteen Hundred and Thirteen* being the last actual publication). It was her most deliberate foray into anthropological discourse pertaining to the Highlands and Highlanders. A useful starting point for introducing and defining Grant's *Essays* is to distinguish it from the earlier *Letters from the Mountains.* The two texts share much common ground in terms of subject matter, of course. Both texts record aspects of Highland-Gaelic culture, and both represent Grant's attempts at transmitting this subject matter to an Anglophone audience. However, stylistically, there are many differences. *Letters from the Mountains* was produced in a chronological, epistolary format capturing changes in Grant's interpretations of the Highlands and the Highland people over a series of decades. The reader is invited to trace the writer's gradual immersion into Highland society, the result of which is an openly subjective narrative position. *Essays*, by contrast, is Grant's concerted evaluation of Highland culture, and it documents her attitude at a particular moment rather than over decades. Where in *Letters,* Grant had presented herself as an integrated part of Highland culture, in *Essays,* she takes pains to position herself outside of the people that she records, in order to adopt a position more conducive to objective impartiality and authority.

For a thesis concerned with demonstrating Grant's proximity to Cultural Jacobitism, a chapter focussed specifically upon the supernatural aspects of her writing may appear a curious emphasis on which to conclude. Yet the manner in which Grant addresses the supernatural in her writing arguably reveals a great deal about how she viewed Gaelic-Highland culture, and also about how she viewed herself in relation to this culture. In this chapter I explore the various interpretations of what the term 'supernatural' entailed for both Grant and the Highland people, and the sense in which it conveys the writer's continued commitment to Cultural Jacobitism.

Mediating Culture and Gender through Genre

Considerations of both genre and gender are crucial for understanding the production and reception of Grant's *Essays* and its attempt to present Cultural Jacobitism in the face of some significant impediments. Dorothy McMillan suggests that the *Essays* is Grant's best-remembered work.[525] However, the contemporary reception to the text was mixed. In her essay 'Grant: Gender, Genre and Cultural Analysis', Pam Perkins has argued that Grant's gender significantly impeded the production and reception of the *Essays*: influential men of the Edinburgh literary scene did not approve Grant's abandoning of a more supposedly suitable feminine epistolary style and her attempt to intervene in what was then regarded as the male domain of empirical research.

In the opening essay of the first volume, Grant herself does not shy away from a gendered argument, alluding to a sense of compensation for the failures of men in anthropological writing. Grant initially applauds 'the very great pains taken by men of capacious mind and enlightened curiosity' in this area.[526] (It is important here to observe Grant's specific acknowledgment of the field's domination by men.) As I have explored in previous chapters, Grant's writing can be more ironic than has always been recognised; a few pages on from this apparent approbation, she insinuates that these men are anything but 'capacious' and 'enlightened', turning more sharply to the ignorance of these 'pretenders to science in omitting to acquire a language through which so much is to be known'.[527] She concludes the opening essay by suggesting that she, a woman, possesses the 'facilities of enquiry' of these men, but in addition also has the necessary 'observant curiosity' that they lack.

Along with Perkins, Kirsteen McCue has also emphasised how gender proved to be a substantial obstacle for Grant, citing an example of how chauvinism dissuaded the writer from leaving behind what was regarded as the feminine genre of epistolary writing for what was deemed the more masculine domain of empirical essay-writing. She notes how Grant's friend George Thomson (1757-1851), a collector of Scottish ballads to whom Grant had submitted songs and poems, attempted to steer her away from essay writing.[528] This aligns

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[525] Dorothy McMillan, 'Some Early Travellers' in *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, ed. Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 133.
[526] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 6.
[527] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 9.
[528] Kirsteen McCue, 'Women and Song 1750-1850' in *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, (London: Routledge, 2016), 64.

with Perkins's observations in her book chapter 'Grant: Gender, Genre and Cultural Analysis' that while Thomson admired her other writing, he 'advises Grant to represent herself as more of a native informant rather than the anthropological participant/observer figure she presents herself as in her first two essays'.[529]

In another book chapter '"Incongruous Things:" Primitivism and Professionalism in the Work of Anne Grant', Perkins states that Thomson offered feedback to Grant on proofs of the *Essays*.[530] However, Perkins demonstrates Grant's agency in the male-governed sphere of literary publication, showing how the writer evidently ignored Thomson, 'choosing to publish in essay form despite his advice'.[531] The evidence offered between Perkins's respective book chapters suggests perhaps that the manner in which the second volume concludes was in part at least owing to Thomson's attempts to induce Grant to

> mould the Essays into Letters, making half a dozen out of an Essay, and addressing them to some one of your distinguished English friends, who may be supposed desirous of an acquaintance with [sic] the character and manner of the Highlanders. (Thomson 1811: f. 201v) [532]

The fact that Grant actually did 'fill out the second volume with more of her letters', for Perkins, signals how the writer 'modestly undercuts what might have been perceived as unfeminine ambition'.[533] Undoubtedly Grant's performativity and allusions to her own artlessness are employed to placate the influential Thomson, yet the actual reasons for the conclusion of the *Essays* by way of epistles extend far beyond his advice in terms of chronology. Unpublished correspondence between Grant and Thomson dated September 1801, a decade earlier, indicates that Grant had already decided upon ending the *Essays* with a selection of letters prior to his advice:

> My favourite performance which is not finished […] was wrote six years ago during my recovery from a tedious ___ when my feelings were ____ by the removal of many poor families in where I was ___ from a neighbouring district Depopulated for sheep

[529] Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre and Cultural Analysis', 231.
[530] Perkins, '"Incongruous Things,"' 140.
[531] Perkins, 'Incongruous Things', 141.
[532] Perkins, 'Incongruous Things', 140.
[533] Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre and Cultural Analysis', 225-226.

> and contains a minute delineation of the manners of the Highland peasantry and servants over the dispersion of that very singular class of people but without a single word of satire […][534]

The text discussed by Grant here clearly suggests a plan for what would become the *Essays* in 'a minute delineation of the manners of the Highland peasantry', a serious production contrasted with the comic treatment of some of *Letters from the Mountains* and not entirely contiguous with the mode of writing of her epistles. Crucially, Grant adds in the letter that these essays 'are continued in epistles addressed to particular friends who wished to see these', highlighting the fact that she had made the decision to conclude the *Essays* with a series of letters at least ten years before Thomson had offered feedback on the proofs. While it is likely that Grant is attempting to sell the project to Thomson early on here, if we understand that this decision was Grant's own, free from prior advice or duress, then we can observe even more readily her input in the 'careful professional […] tactics' that underpinned the production of the *Essays*.[535]

George Thomson was not the only influential man in Grant's literary networks who attempted to dissuade her from breaking away from the epistolary format. Francis Jeffrey, editor of the *Edinburgh Review* and arguably the most influential person in Scottish publishing during the early nineteenth century, also took a dim view of Grant's essayistic aspirations. When Grant submitted a draft of the *Essays* to him, Jeffrey warned her against deviating from the approach that had proved successful in *Letters from the Mountains*. For Perkins, Grant demonstrated considerable resolve in not capitulating to the hostile judgments of these men, and began to articulate a mode of writing that might negotiate their hostility:

> Far from presenting herself as the artless voice from the wilderness admired by Jeffrey [in the *Letters*], Grant [with the *Essays*] attempts to create for herself a flexible and sophisticated relationship with the culture she describes.[536]

However, she argues that in opting to end the second volume of the *Essays* 'with more of her letters […] Grant modestly undercuts what might have been perceived as unfeminine

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[534] Edinburgh University Library Heritage Collections, *LA ii 357 ff.*
[535] Perkins, 'Incongruous Things', 153.
[536] Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre', 223.

ambition'.[537] Contemporary reviews of the *Essays* confirm that this was a real danger. The *Monthly Review* suggested that the *Essays* would have been more appealing with greater emphasis on the romantic aspects of Gaelic culture such as ghosts and fairies rather than language, history, and cultural teleology. The reviewer expressed disappointment at what he perceives as the absence of anything remotely resembling a supernatural anecdote in the text:

> We are presented with some nicely-trimmed sentences on particular stages in the progress of human society, and with something like the good lady's displeasure at philosophers and men of science, for neglecting the delightful occupation of studying the Erse language: but not a single ghost or fairy even beckons in the distance.[538]

The review is perhaps a little unfair to Grant here, given the multiple references to fairies, ghosts and elves in the *Essays*. But the bigger issue was clearly that Grant did not address these figures with an eye to readerly amusement, enchantment or mystification; this was a serious topic to be seriously handled. A major theme in Enlightenment thinking relates to superstition, sometimes with the dangerous implication that organised religion itself could (or should) be regarded as a branch of the supernatural;[539] Grant's *Essays* is much occupied by the divisions within Christianity and an exploration of what it meant for her to be a Christian. The initial and perhaps the main point here, however, is that this review confirms that the male-dominated arena of literary publication in early nineteenth century Edinburgh tended to sneer at the prospect of a woman like Grant claiming a degree of anthropological authority.

The reception of Grant's *Essays* was not entirely characterised by this sort of response, however. While Jeffrey initially advised Grant against abandoning the epistolary format, his review of the text suggests a change of heart. The *Edinburgh Review* had ignored both Grant's *Letters from the Mountains* and her *Poems,* as they did with a great deal of other 'merely' literary writing in the period. Jeffrey did review the *Essays*, however. In the review, he acknowledged the silence on Grant's earlier publications:

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[537] Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre', 226.
[538] *Monthly Review* 69 (September–December 1812): 251.
[539] '[Hume] finds all historical reports of miracles unsafe, and thus, by implication, the biblical reports: the sources were unsophisticated, superstitious, uncorroborated and untested, and the documentation comes after private interest and other defects of human nature have intervened'. M. A. Stewart, "Religion and Rational Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Alex Broadie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 42.

> Our neglect of this lady's former productions should acquit us, we think, forever, of all imputation to nationality […] though the only Highlander, and almost the only Scotch woman, who has graced our native literature during this period, we have heroically abstained from all mention of her name; and allowed her to fight her way to distinction, without any countenance from our compatriot fraternity.[540]

Much of Jeffrey's review is focussed on the material substance of the claims made by Grant in support of Highland culture. From the outset, Jeffrey accepts the premises of her position:

> We agree perfectly in her censure of the incurious indifference with which [the Highlanders] have been hitherto regarded by the very same philosophers who think themselves well employed in collecting uncertain notes of far less interesting and less accessible nations.[541]

Jeffrey does not seem to object to Grant's positioning of herself as a collector or authority on Highland customs and national identity. He goes on to endorse Grant's moral and aesthetic judgements regarding social structure, oral tradition, and innate poetic capacity:

> We think it may be asserted, without any great extravagance, that this universal pride of family […] with such a species of poetry as has been described, must have communicated to the Highland tribes a degree of both polish and of elevation, which we would look for in vain among the more luxurious commonalty of the South.[542]

Even on the sensitive issue of the Highland Clearances, Jeffrey notes that Grant's observations are in keeping with the *Edinburgh*-approved authorities:

> In our review of Lord Selkirk's work on Emigration, we gave a very full detail of the circumstances which have led to this partial depopulation, and of the plans that have

[540] Jeffrey, 'Review of the *Essays',* 480.
[541] Jeffrey, 'Review of the *Essays',* 483.
[542] Jeffrey, 'Review of the *Essays'*, 494.

> been suggested to soften the necessary sufferings by which it is attended. Mrs. Grant speaks very feelingly, and very sensibly on the subject.[543]

While the terms 'feelingly' and 'sensibly' may suggest that Jeffrey is judging Grant's work according to her gender, the fact that he weighs her opinions alongside those of Lord Selkirk suggests that Jeffrey at least partially acknowledged Grant's authority here.

The *Critical Review* also approved of Grant's transition from epistolary writing to essays:

> Mrs. Grant, in her 'Letters from the Mountains', drew an outline of that picture, which she is now filling up; and now, while conversant with the busy scenes of Edinburgh, she casts her eyes back on those solitary scenes with which she was once so intimately acquainted, and we promise our readers that her reminisces are not of a very ordinary nature.[544]

Rather than a sense of something to be 'nicely-trimmed' or else falling away from ideals of feminine writing, this review credits the work of the larger project by suggesting that through the move to essay writing, Grant might be able to fill out important foreground context *against* the demands of the merely picturesque 'beckoning distance'. The *Essays* might substantiate the 'outline' of the earlier publication, 'filling up' and expanding upon previously tentative assertions. However, the reviewer here also seemed slightly disappointed by the lack of emphasis on superstition.[545]

While authorial gender played a major role in the reception of Grant's *Essays*, so too did culture. By 1811, the Highland Clearances were in full effect, and many Anglophone depictions and interpretations of the Highlands as a bastion of squalor, misery and barbarity had contributed to a view that depopulation was the only remedy.[546] Earlier images of this indigence were still

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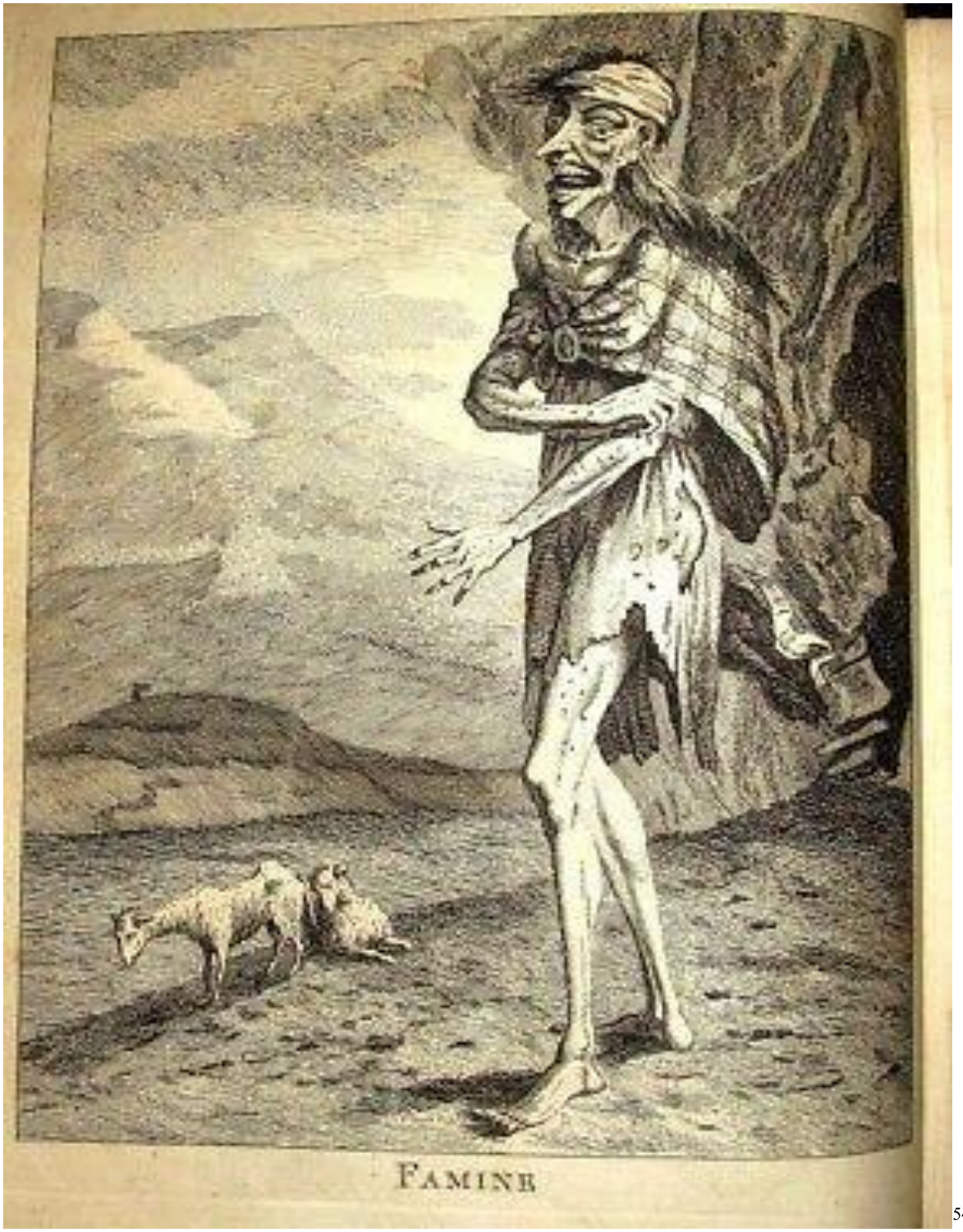
[543] Jeffrey, 'Review of the *Essays'*, 503.
[544] 'Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland', *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature* 1, no. 5 (London: R. Baldwin, 1812): 498.
[545] *The Critical Review,* 'Now it will appear strange, but it is true, that neither the superstitions themselves, the origin of them, nor their tendency are in any way noticed in this same essay […]', 499.
[546] Sutherland was relatively late in the sequence, after 1810 […] Sutherland and her very wealthy, but undemonstrative English husband […] decided to revolutionise the administration, occupation and land use of its great territories. It was a staggering piece of economic and social engineering previously unseen in the Highlands […] The Sutherland management believed that this would benefit everyone—and most of all, the

very much at the forefront of the imagery and memories of readers. The frontispiece of Charles Churchill's (1732-1764) influential *The Prophecy of Famine* (1763) gives an indication of contemporary English attitudes towards the Highlanders:

people would be jolted out of their traditionally slovenly and pauperised conditions. Eric Richards, 'Debating the Highland Clearances', in *The Age of Clearance* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 55.



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Images and figures such as this also 'beckoned in the distance' in the minds of the reviewers. The article in the *Monthly Review*, claiming that Grant's *Essays* failed to continue her previous

[547] Charles Churchill, *The Prophecy of Famine: A Scots Pastoral*, 4th ed. (London: G. Kearsly, 1763).

successful account of Highland society, and that she would have been better off abandoning her project, can be read as reflecting a broadly stereotypical bias against the realistic (as opposed to sentimental and picturesque) presentation of the reality of Highland life under assault; a bias against Grant's Cultural Jacobitism as much as against her gender.[548] The general topic might be seen as squalid and barbarous, unworthy of attentions; superstition and a belief in the supernatural could be seen as simply indicative of a want of education in the Highlands, and, besides their rough manners and inability to provide for themselves, the beliefs of Highland people could be regarded as simply yet another reason to banish them to the margins of modern Britain, or outside it altogether. In the *Essays* however, Grant time and again makes her stand on the intelligence and aptitude of the Highland people: 'We feel all the comparative consciousness, that we can think deeper, and express ourselves better; yet making the due allowances, we wonder how they think so soundly, and speak so well'.[549] In her book *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, Martha McGill cites Grants *Essays* (both volumes) to underpin the notion that 'By the nineteenth century, ghosts were still described as having a "higher moral purpose"'.[550] It is clear that with the *Essays* Grant's intent was not to exploit curious tales of spectres simply for the ghoulish curiosity of an Anglophone audience; rather the purpose of the text was to analyse aspects of Gaelic culture that had been dismissed by English-speaking outsiders as mere 'superstition' and reconcile these aspects with the 'neglect of pretenders to science' and to claim an advanced morality of a people whose religion and education was regarded by many as actively deficient.[551]

The Rational Highlander

The sentimentality of other forms of Jacobitism is undoubtedly linked to how Highland culture was perceived through the lens of literary discourse imbued with the rational pragmatism of Anglophone Enlightenment commentators. In the aftermath of Culloden, part of the suppression of the Gaelic Highland had been a cultural purge of all remnants of supernatural discourse (besides of course Christianity) and a generally coercive embrace of ideas of cultural enlightenment and societal maturation.[552] The residue of pre-Christian Celtic

[548] Gallagher, 'Anne MacVicar Grant', 155.
[549] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 5.
[550] Martha McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2018), 83.
[551] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 9.
[552] Newton, *Warriors,* 73.

beliefs and customs in the Highlands was generally presented as superstitious and nonsensical by contemporary philosophers and political commentators, and the contentions around James Macpherson's Ossianic texts arguably reflected bad on Highland beliefs and customs in general. For example Murray Pittock intimates James Boswell's recording of David Hume's juxtaposition between the 'starving, thieving, credulous' Highland people and 'the civil English, who "would not be so ready to support such a story" as Ossian'.[553] It is not clear whether Hume's "such a story" is an objection to the presentation of the poems as genuine fragments from antiquity, or rather to the theological, Pagan aspects of Highland culture that they are formed around; but in Enlightenment discourse of the late eighteenth century, the term "credulity" was frequently linked to debates around superstition and religion.[554] Thus, the latter interpretation is every bit as likely and not mutually exclusive of the former. On the other hand, many of these same beliefs were documented and incorporated into fictional texts by successive Romantic writers. But neither the philosophical tracts nor the authentic lore tended to reach ordinary people, Grant felt. One reason for this is perhaps owing to the local confines of folklore. McGill observes how 'The folklore of the early nineteenth century was much more likely to be associated with particular geographical locations. Even the ghosts themselves were often rooted to, and defined through, aspects of scenery: Anne MacVicar Grant described the "mountain ghosts"'.[555] In her vision of the Highlands, the landscape could retain and reflect its memories and imagination. But those subjected to coerced emigration were 'robbed of ghosts and dreams and waking visions and wonderous voices, which are much too local to follow them beyond the Grampians'.[556]

While Grant's attitude to topics such as the Gaelic language, the Jacobite rebellions, the House of Stuart, and the Highland Clearances all serve to demonstrate her overt empathy with the plight of Highland people (while also serving the purpose of demonstrating her own Gaelic-Highland credentials), an examination of her relationship with the supernatural affords a subtler, yet, arguably more revealing example of her proximity to Jacobitism and also gives insight into some of the conflicting aspects of her identity. In many regards the supernatural

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[553] Pittock, 'Historiography', 269.
[554] 'What these debates are about is not just questions of truth, but the even more fundamental question of belief, or, to give it its more derogatory and secular equivalent, credulity. Whereas orthodox Protestantism defended belief against the credulity of those who were deceived by fanaticism and superstition, deists denounced the credulity of all Christians'. Jeffrey Hopes, 'The Age of Credulity: Believing the Unbelievable in the Century of Enlightenment', *XVII-XVIII*, HS3 (2013), para. 6, https://doi.org/10.4000/1718.686
[555] McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, 149.
[556] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 155.

aspects of Gaelic-Highland culture defined the people against their English-speaking counterparts south of the Gàidhealtachd.[557] I have discussed already how, despite the modern sense that 'Highland' and 'Gaelic' are not absolutely synonymous, for Grant this equation largely held true, in her sense of the supernatural elements of Highland culture, as elsewhere. But another important binary here is that of the rational, civilised mind against what is understood as primitive or uneducated.[558] In what could be read as a concession to rational pragmatism, and geographical determinism, in the eighth essay of the work, Grant positions a 'romantic scene' of 'fancy':

> It did not require a belief in fairies to look round for them in this romantic scene. If one had merely heard of them, an involuntary operation of fancy would summon them to a place so suited for their habitation.[559]

Grant then heightens the specificity of her scene, noting that it is 'scarce approachable by human foot':

> The screaming of the birds of prey on the summit, the roaring of petty waterfalls down its sides, and the frequent falls of shivered stone from the surface, made a melancholy confusion of sounds, very awful and incomprehensible to the travellers below.[560]

Grant's reference to the confusion of 'travellers' in the Highlands reflects her position on the limits of perception of travellers as opposed to natives or dwellers, previously discussed in Chapter Three. She intimates both fear and sublimity and a countervailing voice of authoritative and calm familiarity: the writer of these pages was well acquainted with the scenery. Effectively Grant personifies a meeting of rational and superstitious minds: but she, the Highlander is the former, and the frit Anglophone reader-traveller is the latter. In Grant's presentation, a priori knowledge or aesthetic assumptions from outside (and a certain amount of superstitious fear) capitulates to a posteriori knowledge of a rationally processed

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[557] Jason Marc, Harris, 'Perilous Shores: The Unfathomable Supernaturalism of Water in 19th-Century Scottish Folklore' *Mythlore* 28, no. 1 (2009): 5.
[558] Harris, 'Perilous Shores', 6.
[559] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 268.
[560] Grant *Essays*, 1: 267.

experience of the landscape understood from within. In general, this combination defines Grant's thinking about the capacity to comprehend or perceive the Highland supernatural.

Respecting the Supernatural

At the time Grant compiled her *Essays,* accounts of supernatural occurrences in the Highlands of Scotland, while looked upon as having a romantic and culturally quaint appeal, had largely been dismissed by the dominant rationalist Anglophone intelligentsia in Britain. Even in works of literary fiction that dealt with supernatural phenomenon in Scotland, writers tended to produce rational explanations for the supernatural, undermining the validity of folk beliefs and essentially reinforcing, rather than offering a counterbalance, to Enlightenment philosophy. For example, Alan Ramsay's *The Gentle Shepherd*, Robert Burns's *Tam o' Shanter* and Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* all ultimately can be said to mock the presence of the supernatural and sit closer to Enlightenment attitudes to the phenomena they explore. What is more, in Grant's time a correlation between belief in the supernatural and gender was commonly observed. As Stroh intimates, from Scott through to Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), representations of the fundamental unreliability of Celtic beliefs and customs, and a connection between Celtic culture and the perceived irrationality of women had become commonplace.[561] It was not until James Hogg that Scottish literary fiction offered a destabilising representation of the orthodox Enlightenment approach to the supernatural.[562] *Hogg's Kilmeny* (1813), *The Brownie of Bodsbeck* (1818), *Winter Evening Tales* (1820) *The Three Perils of Man* (1822) and *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824) all leave room for a supernatural presence. Hogg had published poems before Grant's *Essays* in 1811, but these did not deal with the supernatural in any meaningful way.

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[561] Stroh, 'Racist Reversals', 226.

[562] 'Even more importantly, the Gothic does not offer Hogg an outlet for the supernatural, at least not for the kind of supernatural that fascinated him. Hogg's supernatural came from folk tradition: stories of fairies, ghosts and the devil […] Other Gothic novels (e.g., Anne Radcliffe) feature apparently supernatural phenomena, only to explain them away. This strategy does not work for Hogg, who habitually writes as though the supernatural is real, an aspect of common life'. Graham Tulloch, 'Hogg and the Novel', in *The Edinburgh Companion to James Hogg*, ed. Ian Duncan and Douglas S. Mack (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 124.

The influence of early-to-mid-eighteenth-century enlightenment philosophers over following generations of literary writers and a general attitude towards Celticism should not be underestimated.[563] As Colin Kidd has highlighted:

> In the works of Scotland's enlightened historical sociologists, such as William Robertson (1721-93), the values of her Highland Gaelic culture came to be detached from any special national or ethnic significance, and were instead reinterpreted within a temporal framework of human civilization as symptoms of social backwardness […] The Highlands were an embarrassing anachronism, and as a retarded primitive society should be regarded by the literati of Scotland's improving Lowlands with as much attention as they would give to the tribal societies of North American Indians.[564]

The term 'superstition' for an early-nineteenth century audience (as indicated by the *OED*), often denoted irrational credulity embodied in a certain group of people, and diminished any sense of more profound and deeply held spiritual beliefs of those people.[565] Yet Grant does not wield the term 'superstition' in this way. Though the title of her *Essays* foregrounds the term, Grant often ironically reverses perceived terminology (such as the terms 'savage' and 'scientific') to mean the opposite. In the *Essays*, she used this gambit alongside a more cautious acknowledgement where she anticipated ridicule for disputing the orthodox interpretation of the term:

> When I venture to insinuate, that superstition such as theirs, in the twilight of knowledge, and in the most total absence of coercive power and legal restriction, was a benefit rather than a disadvantage, I have no doubt of exciting astonishment and displeasure:[566]

Grant intentionally aligns herself with an aspect of Highland culture that was subject to intense ridicule. In defending rather than dismissing the plausibility (or at least the 'benefit') of supernatural stories, beliefs, and customs of the Highlands, Grant's *Essays* goes against the

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[563] Pittock. 'Historiography', 262.
[564] Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity, 1689–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 107–115.
[565] 'Irrational, unfounded, or erroneous belief other than that based on religion or the supernatural; an unreasonable, groundless, or mistaken notion – 1771'. Oxford University Press. "Superstition." In *Oxford English Dictionary*. Accessed December 23, 2025. https://www.oed.com/dictionary/superstition_n.
[566] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 54.

grain of a popular inclination to mock or ironise superstition: not the word but the supernatural experience as such. It is the people who carelessly or speculatively dismiss the supernatural aspects of Gaelic culture who Grant herself mocks in the *Essays*. Some of Grant's contemporaries recognised that in some ways this was the central preoccupation of the text. Christian Isobel Johnstone suggested that Grant's:

> imagination has painted her native prejudices in colours so delightfully warm, that it is difficult to say whether her philosophy or her first faith be strongest, and whether her work would not have been better entitled 'An Apology for the Second Sight'.[567]

Perkins sees in Johnstone's statement a distinct quandary for Grant and her desire to be recognised as an impartial observer in the *Essays*:

> Gallingly enough, perhaps what Johnstone does here is to dismiss Grant in precisely the same terms that Grant uses to deny that somebody who was fully a native could write about the culture.[568]

Johnstone suggests that by declaring her Gaelic credentials, Grant forfeits her claims to reliability or impartiality. It is worth pointing out that Grant herself was aware of and working with this dynamic: 'To nationality and, even to fond partiality, I plead guilty'.[569] Perhaps what is most interesting about Johnstone's remark, however, is the fact that while the responses of male contemporaries to the *Essays* disparaged Grant's attempt at detachment, Johnstone positioned Grant as doing precisely the opposite. However, in the text Grant arguably exhibits a greater degree of scepticism about the Celtic supernatural than belief in it. Each anecdote is judged separately, and she does not refrain from out of hand dismissal where she sees fit. Hilda Ellis acknowledges this balance, stating that Grant (in the context of other historical folklorists) 'is neither over credulous nor over sceptical in her recordings of her beliefs of supernatural happenings.'[570] An unwillingness to commit is perhaps to be expected from a writer characterised by the liminality seen elsewhere in her writing. Yet the important difference between Grant and the detractors of Highland belief from outside the

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[567] Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre', 231.
[568] Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre', 231.
[569] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 181.
[570] Hilda Ellis, 'Anne Grant', in *Women and Tradition: A Neglected Group of Folklorists* edited by Hilda Ellis, (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2001), 24.

Highlands is that when she applies a sceptical lens, she does so without derision and insult: her treatment of supernatural belief and custom in the Highlands is above all respectful.

Prior to covering the *Essays*' position on the supernatural, and by extension Gaelic culture as a whole, it is useful to return to *Letters from the Mountains*, for the development of Grant's thinking on this topic in particular (before and during the period of immersion and acculturation already discussed). An important shift can be seen in Grant's apparent change of heart around a very specific supernatural phenomenon first broached in her *Letters* and revisited later in the *Essays*. This was the apparent belief in the Highlands that by singing to the cows, the milkmaids would ensure a much higher quality yield of milk. In correspondence with her friend Mrs. Brown, dated 23rd July 1793, Grant handles this with a playful, yet slightly condescending mockery:

> For instance, t'other day, my dairy-maid, who has been above seven years in the house, and is a pious maiden, and a perfect treasury of local and traditionary anecdote, told me a story, which I am going to translate literally for your behoof, and which I was forced to hear with a face of belief […] our dairy-maids always speak very wisely to the cows, though it is only in rare instances, like this, that the cows answer them […] Now this fine story gains ample credit, and it would be thought impiety to doubt it.—Could you have believed, that there existed manners and opinions so primitive as those which are still preserved in the parish of Laggan?[571]

However, eighteen years later, in the more formal and authoritative *Essays* (or five years later, in terms of the gap between the two publications) Grant revisits a similar episode and the topic of maids and cows is this time devoid of any condescension of a 'fine story'. Crucially, she now also demonstrates a willingness to believe in the plausibility of the phenomenon herself:

> the dairy maids sing some appropriate tune all the time they are milking, to which said cows listen with much complacence having very early acquired a taste for music, and shewing a decided preference to the tune they are most accustomed to […] Now I know I am preaching to the winds, for you do not believe a word I say. Go, however,

[571] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 310-311.

> to the highlands, and convince yourself that our calves are not a whit behind Lorenzo's colts.[572]

The allusion here is to *The Merchant of Venice*, and Lorenzo's speech (V. 1) on natural and 'attentive' responsiveness. Grant was now also prepared to 'mark the music' more seriously, whether she believed in the supernatural effects or not. Grant's apparent change of heart regarding the hypnotic prowess of the Highland milkmaids is on one level simply empirical: it seems to work on the cows, and can be credited as such. The dynamics of reportage to her potentially sceptical Lowland reader or interlocutor are broadly similar, but a subtle shift of allegiance, identification and rhetoric has taken place: essentially Grant goes from asking, 'Can you believe what *they* believe?', to asking, 'Can you believe what *I* believe?'

The Christian Highlander

The possible inclusion of organised religion under the umbrella term 'supernatural' opens up a larger contention in Grant's work between the Christianity of the Highlands and the Christianity of English-speaking Britain in the context of Scottish Enlightenment thinking. In his writing on miracles, David Hume (1711-1776) suggested that Christianity itself could be considered as an expression of superstition.[573] Nevertheless, this was a controversial position, to say the least, and Christianity remained the dominant orthodoxy on spirituality, with philosophers such as Thomas Reid (1710-1796) and James Beattie (1735-1803) among many other Christian apologists mounting intricate arguments in its support. By contrast, Gaelic belief had no such defenders and was seen as paganism entirely incompatible with an orthodox Christian worldview. But in the Highlands, remnants of pre-Christian traditions of belief remained, despite centuries of Christianity and the efforts of ministers and missionaries to extinguish them, and in the eighteenth century the relationship between these two modes of culture and spirituality would come to a head: Macpherson's Ossianic texts were again an important precursor for Grant. Grant was undoubtedly an orthodox Christian in most respects, but her fierce devotion to Ossianic authenticity exerted a powerful countermanding pull.

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[572] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 354-355.

[573] '[…] he [Hume] finds all historical reports of miracles unsafe, and thus, by implication, the biblical reports: the sources were unsophisticated, superstitious, uncorroborated and untested, and the documentation comes after private interest and other defects of human nature have intervened'. M. A. Stewart, 'Religion and rational theology' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment,* ed. Alex Broadie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 42.

Dorothy MacMillan observes the contemporary remark that had Grant, 'been obliged to relinquish belief in either Ossian or the Lord, it would have been a near-run thing, which given her well-known piety, is a strong comment'.[574] The comment reveals a tension that can be seen in volatile shifts of thinking between the accepted miracles of organised religion and what were regarded to be the 'superstitions' of Gaelic tradition, a tension that often worked itself out in literary representation, as it had over many centuries in the harmonisation of Christian belief with the Gaelic roots of the Ossianic legendary, long before Macpherson's intervention:

> Medieval Gaelic scholars found a way to accommodate pagan lore within Christian society by the creation of such literature as the song-dialogues of Ossian and Saint Patrick […] Songs such as those recalling how the Fian had withstood the scorn of Patrick and the onslaught of the Vikings were vessels which carried cultural identity and the message of self-worth from generation to generation.[575]

By the early nineteenth century orthodox British Christianity in general, and the Scottish Kirk specifically, had largely succeeded in supressing Gaelic traditions and certain spiritual beliefs in the Highlands.[576] It was precisely for this reason that the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge was formed in the eighteenth century.[577] Christian missionaries from this organisation were sent into the Highlands to convert and indoctrinate a people who had in fact identified as Christian for over 1200 years. The pretext offered by Christian missionaries to the Highlands was that the Christianity there was tainted by a residual Pagan culture, and that this could not be eradicated without linguistic hegemony.[578]

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[574] Dorothy McMillan, 'Some Early Travelers' in *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, ed. Douglas Gifford (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 141.
[575] Newton, *Warriors*, 2-3.
[576] The effects of education and evangelicisation have also been cited as destructive, with schoolmasters and ministers being implicated in the eradication of Highland lore. Dorson insists, "First the minister and then the schoolmaster had descended on the Highland and Island villages to stifle the old story-tellers." Also, in reference to the activities of Alexander Carmichael, and important Hebridean folk scholar, "He grieved, as all folklorists must grieve, at the heartless suppression of *ceilidhs* by clergymen and schoolmasters."'. Deborah Davis, 'Contexts of Ambivalence: The Folkloristic Activities of Nineteenth Century Scottish Highland Ministers', *Folklore* 103, no. 2 (1992): 207.
[577] Kenneth McNeil, 'Introduction', *Scotland, Britain, Empire*, *Writing the Highlands 1760–1860* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 13.
[578] The ideology underpinning the initial approach of the SSPCK was summarised by a royal commission in 1716 as 'reducing these Countries to order [...] and making them useful to the Commonwealth [...] teaching them their duty to God [...] and rooting out their Irish language'." Charles Jones and Wilson McLeod, 'Standards and Differences: Language in Scotland, 1707–1918,' in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Volume Two: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1919)*, ed. Susan Manning, Ian Brown, Thomas Clancy, and Murray Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 23.

Grant's objections to the erosion of both the Gaelic language and Gaelic traditional culture were straightforward enough. However, the issue of religion would prove to be a more complex area, being herself a Christian and married to a Christian minister. Straddling the divisions between Gaelic folklore and Christian scripture was not unheard of, however. Deborah Davis observes that many members of the Presbyterian clergy in Scotland took it upon themselves to document and preserve religious and supernatural aspects of Gaelic-Highland culture.[579] Davis usefully delineates four positions in the handling of Gaelic 'superstition'; in the ministration of these writers: 'Antipathy, Morality, Hierophany, and Scientific (Professional)'. She categorises Grant as one of those writers that, in spite of her being a minister's wife, 'projects a sympathetic interest in Highland beliefs': certainly not antipathetic.[580] Grant is contrasted with writers such as Sir John Grahame Dalyell, and his *Darker Superstitions of Scotland: Illustrated from History and Practice* (1835); Davis attributes the contrast to how Dalyell 'culled his materials from written sources while the more sympathetic Mrs. Grant went among the people collecting orally'.[581] Doubtless again Grant's position having been embedded in a community distinguished her from other commentators, as we have seen it did in many other aspects of her thinking and writing.

Ultimately, however, Grant had two choices; either she could concur that the Christianity of the Highlands was flawed and idolatrous, expressing a more openly orthodox judgment, or she could argue that Highland religion, inclusive of its supernatural peculiarities, was in accordance with the will of a Christian God. She opted to do the latter, a syncretic compromise that was to become increasingly widespread in other cultural contexts through the nineteenth century. For example, Scottish Christian missionaries such as John Wilson (1804-1875), John Stevenson (1798-1858) and John Murray Mitchell (1815-1904) integrated aspects of Hinduism into their propagation of religion in India.[582] Perhaps more relevant to Grant, however, is how the similar process took place in theological discussions regarding the Indians of the Americas:

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[579] Davis, 'Contexts of Ambivalence' 209.
[580] Davis, 'Contexts of Ambivalence', 212.
[581] Davis, 'Contexts of Ambivalence', 212.
[582] Mitch Numark, 'Translating Dharma: Scottish Missionary-Orientalists and the Politics of Religious Understanding in Nineteenth-Century Bombay', *Journal of Asian Studies* 70, no. 2 (May 2011): 472

> Hearne's [Samuel] discussions piqued British interest in Indian spirituality: the radical intellectuals and poets of the 1790s, as they searched for alternatives to the perverted dogma and corrupt priests of the contemporary Christian church, became fascinated by Indians' understanding of the relationship between natural and supernatural, body and soul—precisely because Indians seemed to have little notion of the rigid divide between the two that had become axiomatic in European thought […] Wordsworth was one of those impressed by Indians' different understanding of the mind–body relationship: he developed from Hearne a poem investigating the power of belief and exploring a non-European attitude to the natural world.[583]

In her opening essay of the second volume, Grant's sympathy is palpable as she criticises the prejudice levied against the Highland people by outside representatives of Christianity. She does this with the implication that God's plan for the Highland people may be different to his plan for the people and cities of the plains:

> Much is granted to us that was withheld from those who were but in the novitiate of instruction: And how can we be certain that the Fatherly compassion that watches over all, did not indulge them with some privileges withheld from us?[584]

Grant certainly denies the notion that God necessarily favours the Anglophone British over the less 'instructed', but perhaps more naturally 'privileged', beliefs of the Gaelic Highlanders. Once again, the use of the word 'privileges' here has a certain stamp of irony, and scepticism is turned back in a rhetorical question on those who question the validity of a 'grant' from God. Later in the text, Grant uses similar irony about the hypocrisy of the Church that seeks to mock Highland beliefs yet inadvertently gives them credence. In one anecdote, she relates a minister's attempts to dispel local belief in a previously dormant spectre (the *Caillich Rua*), via an exorcism:

> Nothing could have more shocked him than to have it supposed, that he assumed to himself the functions of immediate inspiration, or, that by using means to banish a

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[583] Tim Fulford, *Romantic Indians: Native Americans, British Literature, and Transatlantic Culture, 1756–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 'Travellers' Tales and Traders' Memoirs', 80–81.
[584] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 59.

> fancied apparition, he should have given sanction to the belief of its previous appearance.[585]

The minister's exorcism results not in the spectre being vanquished, but rather in the rekindling of its local popularity; Grant observes how this tendency in the Protestant clergy to seek 'to root up the old belief in such a rough and contemptuous manner', served 'rather to exasperate than convince'.[586]

Grant's notion that pagan traditions and customs antecedent to Christianity in the Highland region were preferable to no form of spirituality at all, is part of a broader assertion that it is the Highlanders who are closest to the Christian ideal, in terms of their innate morals and manners:

> And we find, by comparison of their sacred poetry, of early date, which still exists, with their present religious, that though their imperfect instruction, their want of literature, and the defect in their language, which I have already noticed, have kept them ignorant of many speculative points, yet there are no people, on whose minds the great leading truths of Christianity are more deeply impressed, or none who have greater aptitude to devotional feeling.[587]

Dorothy McMillan perceives *Essays* as positioning 'superstition as a civilising and religion-inducing force'.[588] Indeed, it is at this point that Grant inverts her lens, observing the contrasting impact of Christianity in nations considered more civilised than the Highlands:

> The very imperfect Christianity which but dimly enlightened the clans, anterior to the last century, and the salutary dread of being haunted by the spirit of the deceased, did more to prevent secret assassination, than regular laws, and a nominal form of religion, have ever attained to, in wealthier countries, considered as more enlightened.[589]

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[585] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 275.
[586] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 258.
[587] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 157.
[588] Macmillan, 'Some Early Travelers', 133
[589] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 128.

After this characteristic deprecation of the claims to morality of 'wealthier' and more 'enlightened' societies, Grant suggests how the Highlanders' belief in ghosts and agency after death was a major deterrent to crime and immorality, not only acting as a substitute for Christianity until its arrival, but continuing to act as a force of moral restraint for the Highland people even after the introduction of Christianity:

> It may appear somewhat paradoxical to affirm, that even in the period of which I speak, the belief in spectral appearances had, upon the whole, a good moral tendency: and this notwithstanding the bewildering effects which, in some instances, it might produce.[590]

Even at the time Grant was writing, she was able to describe paganism as a still-existing belief system in the Highlands, with some instances and locations retaining a strong foothold. The crux of her argument is that the Highland people were never, have never been, and would never be entirely 'godless'. Grant argues for a continued belief in a higher power across competing Highland spiritualities, and that in the form of superstitions and ghosts, this belief could indeed serve as a continued and continuing moral compass for the Highlands.

Grant's Divided Self: Enlightened and Savage

According to Grant, local superstitions were indicative of a people's distinctive local culture. Grant was undoubtedly working against a conjectural Enlightenment rationale that viewed local ghosts as obsolete not only in terms of their scientific irrationality, but also because of their antiquated parochialism. Arguably however, as McGill points out, both Grant and James Macpherson were opposed by a particular strand of antiquarianism:

> Moreover, not all of the antiquarians were concerned with the Scottishness of the ghosts they discussed: MacCulloch declared that the Highlanders did not have 'any particular claims on their own tales and superstitions', but that similar beliefs could be found throughout Europe. Nevertheless Macpherson had popularised the vision of a misty, haunted Scottish landscape, and the nineteenth-century antiquarian movement

[590] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 162.

> tended to reinforce this reputation. Anne MacVicar Grant correlated the supposed superstitious imaginations of the Highlanders with the wildness of the scenery.[591]

Grant frequently intimates that, where a society is purged of its native customs, there will be correlative loss of soul in the form of honour, creativity, masculinity and identity. In the *Essays*, Grant addresses a specific Lowland disdain for the peculiarities of Highland beliefs, and also polarised views of the Highland people. She notes how:

> The austere peasants of the country bordering upon the highlands, looked upon these mountaineers, with their dreams, their omens, their ghosts, and their fairies, as little better than heathens.[592]

Moreover, the Lowland disdain for the Highlanders superstition is a rejection which is responsible for and leads to a cultural and subsequent political polarisation:

> The highlanders, again, branded the impiety of the lowlanders, who tempted providence by going out alone at midnight […] With an appellation of comprehensive reproach, they called them *Whigs.* This was by no means among them solely appropriated to political difference. [593]

It is here that Grant traces her particular understanding of the etymology of the term, 'Whig', not in the conventional political understanding, as per the Oxford English Dictionary entry[594] but to a moment of cultural *faux pax* where established and long-held Highland beliefs are ignored. While the actual etymology of the term is still disputed and uncertain, and probably involved disparagement of the rural unsophisticated by the urban, and while it eventually came to indicate the 'adherents of King William' (whom Grant refers to as 'the greatest caitiff in the list of Highland delinquency'[595]), Grant positions it specifically as a Highland appellation for Lowlander inability to heed the just piety and providence of the Highlands. It was not just that the Lowlander who 'had neither ear for music, nor taste for poetry' or who

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[591] McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, 151-2.
[592] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 137-138.
[593] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 138.
[594] 1657– *Scottish*. A nickname for: an adherent or supporter of the National Covenant of 1638; a Covenanter; (more generally) an adherent of the Presbyterian cause in Scotland, esp. in the 17th cent.; (later also) a strict or extreme Presbyterian. Cf. whiggamore *n.* 1, www.OED.com.
[595] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 138.

'merely studied for conveniency' would miss out on the aesthetic and moral grandeur of the Highlands; they might not see the auguries of danger or opportunity in 'second sight', or even truly comprehend the supernatural at all.[596]

Grant's triangulation of the supernatural, culture and politics adds something to the politics of Scottish identities in the period. Again, it must be seen under the sign of Cultural Jacobitism. Writers such as Murray Pittock and Gerard Carruthers have taken pains to demonstrate how, in a political sense, by the mid-eighteenth century, some Highland clans were aligned with the Hanoverian-Whig forces in their struggle against the Jacobites.[597] Grant's claim of a distinctive Highland-Lowland cut off point for Whig support is not necessarily undermined by such modern interpretations, as her claim is that the term 'whig', in its original context applied to cultural rather than political affiliation ('A Whig, in short, was what all highlanders cordially hated,-a cold, selfish, formal character').[598] Grant's framing of the term Whig in the context of a particular form of disbelief means that Gaelic individuals and clans who may have sided with the Hanoverian dynasty leading up to Culloden could still claim affinity with Cultural Jacobitism in the post-Culloden age, provided they embodied virtues associated with what Grant regarded to be genuine Highland culture; provided they 'kept the faith', as it were.

While Grant's position almost always wants to take the perspective of the Highlander, there are points where she switches this perspective, expressing an (unironic) alignment with her English or Lowland Anglophone reader. This is perhaps most prominent, when, discussing the topic of death in the *Essays*, she incorporates the pronoun 'we':

> We avoid speaking of the dead, to save our feelings. They speak of them intimately to indulge theirs. We consider it as shocking, coarse, and unfeeling to speak to any one of his own death, or anticipate what shall be done, when that which necessarily happens to all men happens to him. On the contrary, the highlanders, to this day, speak very frequently and familiarly of their own death, and that of their friends. When I say *familiarly,* I do not mean to imply levity or carelessness. They speak with

[596] Grant. *Essays*, 1: 138.
[597] See: Carruthers 'Jacobite Unionism' and Pittock, *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*.
[598] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 139.

> solemnity, but not with horror. It does not seem to awaken gloomy images with them, but those of a calm and chastened awe.[599]

This form of familiar veneration of the dead marks out an important line of difference between Gaelic and Anglophone culture. While Grant maintains, for the most part, that the Highlanders are a Christian people who have simply retained the most admirable pagan customs, here they seem to offer something more than mere conventional faith:

> They have been so habituated to believe, that no ties are broken by death, except that which holds together the undying spirit, and its perishing associate, that they feel continued existence, not merely as an article of pious faith, of rational belief, but with that sensible conviction with which we think of the moon and stars, meteors and clouds, which, though out of our reach, are yet obvious to our senses.[600]

'The undying spirit' and 'continued existence' are careful terms here, which (as well as signifying the enduring nature of Cultural Jacobitism) do not depart from Christian orthodoxy, in skirting round a traditional belief that the spirits of the deceased might remain on Earth, and emphasising a consequent lack of fear of death that might be at once evidence of pagan heroic valour and stoic Christian fortitude. Yet any belief that the spirit might remain on Earth after death still pointed towards a belief that was closer to either Pagan beliefs or even the possibility of Catholic purgatory than was comfortable for the wife of a Protestant minister to hold. [601] Here sometimes Grant had to depart from defending wholesale Highland beliefs.

Grant's unwillingness to move from what 'they' believed to what 'we' could, and the rare sight of an allowed distance between herself and Highland culture, perhaps stems from the fact that her own life was permeated with painful losses. In 1801 she lost her husband, after having already suffered the deaths of several of her children, with only one of her twelve children outliving her.[602] In *Letters from the Mountains*, in a letter to her friend Mrs. Smith,

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[599] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 99-100.
[600] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 101.
[601] Though Martha McGill has recently challenged the 'simplified explanation' that protestants identified two possible destinations after death, and catholics three'. Martha McGill, 'A Protestant Purgatory? Visions of an Intermediate State in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', *Scottish Historical Review* 97, no. 2 (2018): 153–86, 153.
[602] Todd, 'Grant [née MacVicar], Anne'.

dated May 16, 1789, Grant's correspondence shows how she struggled to maintain what she regards to be an appropriate Christian response to the death of her four-year-old son, John:

> the hand of God hath touched me; touched me to the very quick, and that in a manner so utterly unexpected, I feel still like a person stunned by a thunder-bolt, beginning to pant for breath, and look about to see what I have left, and to feel for what I have lost.—I know I need not have recourse to declamation to interest your tenderest sympathy. You knew that the dear creature, it has pleased the Almighty to deprive me of, was my pride and my delight.[603]

Where Grant as an author observes in the *Essays* that the Highland people do not fear death as they believe that 'no ties are broken', and that the spirits of their loved ones remain as visible from Earth as the moon, stars, and clouds, it is evident that Grant as a human being could not entirely bring herself to believe in the 'sensible conviction' of 'continued existence' in the face of this loss. Yet Grant's grief also led her to question the relief of Christian faith:

> I know the vanity of these fond, foolish recollections. I know how well it becomes a Christian to render his own gifts meekly to the Divine Giver when demanded […] but, alas! my efforts to seek this relief are, like my dear child, cold, dead, inanimate!—the heart speaks not, moves not, under the oppressive weight.[604]

Elsewhere in her writing, Grant's attempts to adhere to conventional Christian belief also seem to exacerbate feelings of immense stress and anxiety.[605] Here Grant's attempt to repress her emotions in alignment with Christian decorum, reproaching herself for the 'vanity' (i.e. *vanitas vanitatum*) of simply remembering her child, seems clearly detrimental to her emotional and mental wellbeing. Perhaps this was one of the most powerful wellsprings of an undoubtedly genuine but also intensely desired identification with a Highland culture, which she could defend on almost all other grounds of realism, yet whose philosophical freedom was not quite permitted to her in this aspect, her identity as the wife of a Christian minister being too deeply ingrained to escape into this particular spiritual landscape of habituation.

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[603] Grant, *Letters*, 3: 127-128.
[604] Grant, *Letters*, 2nd ed., 2: 146.
[605] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 100.

While death in the physical sense puts Grant somewhat at odds with Highland belief, she was more easily able to align herself with another form of immortality celebrated in the Highlands: immortality through song. Grant stressed this as another form of 'continuing':

> They do not fear death entirely as "a wrench from all we love—from all we are;" conscious as they are, that they will continue to live in the songs, the conversation, the dreams and meditations of all whom they loved on earth.[606]

In the *Essays,* Grant expresses the hope that she too will be remembered after her death because of her poetry, including 'The Highlanders'. To return to a quotation included earlier:

> Arcadian images would please more, but verisimilitude will please longer. Misses will not put my book in their work bag; but as longevity is the portion of truth, it may work its way into light, and lie on the tables of their grandsons; and this not as a fine poem, but a correct drawing.[607]

While Grant may not be able to align herself fully with the Highland beliefs about the afterlife, she could at least place hope in the prospects of being remembered posthumously for her bardic prowess, a position in Highland tradition usually reserved for men, or probably more realistically by her career in 1811, in the light of the shift from fashionable poetry to empirical documentation, truth rather than embellishment. Either way, the focus on 'continuing', on one form of survival in the face of the odds, combines the general interest in 'cultures of posterity' in the early nineteenth century with the form of Grant's Cultural Jacobitism: survival against the odds, even unto death.[608]

Gothic vs Gaelic Spectres

In the *Essays,* Grant witnesses some ghosts with her own eyes:

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[606] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 102-103.
[607] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 271-272.
[608] 'The Romantic appeal to posterity becomes increasingly central as a justification for artistic production itself, and this justification folds back into the act of writing, to the extent that the function of writing itself is bound up with reception in posterity'. Andrew Bennett, *Romantic Poets and the Culture of Posterity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 37.

> Sometimes I […] catch with complacence the cold blast from Caledonia, and I think I see it waving the amber locks of my dear boy, or bending the trees planted by his still dearer father round our once happy dwelling'.[609]

The 'dear boy' here is Grant's son John, who died from measles at the age of four.[610] We cannot tell if Grant believes that she is literally seeing a ghost, or conjuring one imaginatively, or to whatever extent this is figurative or metaphorical writing. But what seems clear here is that while she had previously fought the urge to dwell upon the loss of loved ones, some sort of guilt-ridden piety is blown away by the Caledonian blast, and she draws closer to a scene 'with solemnity, but not with horror […] a calm and chastened awe'. In literary terms, Grant drew on a powerful sense that Highland culture offered a resource to talk about spectres in a way that was unavailable to English writers (or at least English writers since Shakespeare) for creating a genuine sense of fear or sublimity in their work. In the *Essays*, Grant is dismissive of the Gothic modes of fictive sensation she associates with Horace Walpole and his generic inheritors:

> This castle builder had various claims to attention […] yet, though it was read, and wondered at, it did not excite sufficient admiration to gratify the ambition of the author […] The "cold reasoning age," which had not been sufficiently dazzled by his performance, would, he hoped, be succeeded by one more fanciful and enthusiastic […] he became the leader of a pompous, if not powerful band of magicians, whose wands conjured up forms more elegant and aerial than their prototype had summoned! Bells rung, owls shrieked, and chains rattled in all directions; our circulating libraries swarmed with homebred apparitions. [611]

McGill explains how the latter half of the Eighteenth century 'was a period when ghost believers were ridiculed and satirised as never before' but that did not detract from the extent of their popularity 'even among the satirists'. McGill observes a distinct duplicity here on the part of such satirists who exhibited 'an element here of trying to have your cake and eat it' and acknowledges that in response, Grant's critique of the gothic enthusiast was scathing.'[612]

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[609] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 323.
[610] Grant, *Letters*, 1: 232.
[611] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 299-300.
[612] McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, 156.

This deprecation of the Gothic as a contrived and artificial stimulation was not unusual at all in the period, although the Burkean ring of Grant's 'cold reasoning age' is an interesting historicising touch for reading this mode of cultural representation, and it is perhaps to be expected from a writer with a very distinctive sense of the overabundant virtues of a particular marginalised strand of British history (the Gaelic) that she might be competitive about cultural forms with a rather different sense of usable pasts, often aligned with the vestigial beliefs and force of continental Europe rather than Highland Scotland.

Shakespeare was a very different matter. Like other writers in the period (for example Goethe),[613] Grant was somewhat preoccupied with the question of Shakespeare's own belief in the reality of the supernatural, superstitious or not; her reading focused on the dramatic and psychological power his writing could summon via these means:

> one feels an indefinable satisfaction in listening to narrations, whether true or not, which are supposed to be so by the reciter. Perhaps Shakespeare did not believe in the truth of any of his supernatural beings, with the exception of the weird women of Macbeth […] yet that he did, in common with his contemporaries, believe in the possibility of such appearances, scarce admits doubt […] A man, in such a case, cannot make others fear, without first being afraid himself.[614]

It is interesting here that exception to a largely secular argument is granted via a specifically Scottish example, the weird sisters of the Scottish play. Here if nowhere else the 'possibility of such appearances' not only survived but 'scarce admits doubt'. But after this there was a falling away: in the two centuries since, contemporary modern English writers seemed unable to convey an authentic sense of the supernatural:

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[613] 'The eye, the most facile of our organs of receptivity, may well be called the clearest of the senses; but the inner sense is still clearer, and to it by means of words belongs the most sensitive and clear receptivity. This is particularly obvious when what we apprehend with the eye seems alien and unimpressive considered in and for itself. But Shakespeare speaks always to our inner sense. Through this, the picture-world of imagination becomes animated, and a complete effect results, of which we can give no reckoning. Precisely here lies the ground for the illusion that everything is taking place before our eyes. But if we study the works of Shakespeare enough, we find that they contain much more of spiritual truth than of spectacular action. He makes happen what can easily be conceived by the imagination, indeed what can be better imagined than seen. Hamlet's ghost, Macbeth's witches, many fearful incidents, get their value only through the power of the imagination, and many of the minor scenes get their force from the same source'. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethe's Literary Essays*, ed. Joel Elias Spingarn (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921), 176.
[614] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 252-254.

> Yet amidst the broad effulgence of light, which has since flowed in upon us, we must shrink a little from the presumption of those of our contemporaries who expect to awaken all those emotions which Shakespeare and others, including even* blind Harry, had at command, by conjuring the shadows of these shades. In vain do they spin their narratives into immoderate length […][615]

The effulgent candle of the Enlightenment had melted away this power: its light had cast away 'the shadow of these shades' (the flickering instability of the value of light and dark is suggestive in this passage, especially with Blind Harry entering too in the background). As Enlightenment influence had not entirely encroached upon the Gaelic Highlands, the narratives spun in the cobwebby corners here might retain more than merely 'vain' power.

Blind Harry in particular is the token of another significance here: traditionally, blindness in Scottish literary culture, as in many bardic traditions going back to Homer, was associated with both bardic prowess and also the propensity for 'second sight'; the other figure utmost in Grant's imagination here being of course Blind Ossian. *The Wallace* features various supernatural scenes (it is a ghost that reveals to William Wallace his destiny) yet, these scenes were not titillating entertainment like the Gothic stage-show. Ghosts in Scottish literature and oral tradition, in contradistinction to any Gothic tradition and even the largely admonitory spectres of Shakespeare, can be comforting to the reader or audience.[616] Grant will have been well aware of the fact that the ghost in *The Wallace* has a very different character to the ghost in *Macbeth*. Perhaps more specifically, McGill observes in Grant's writing a further differentiation between ghosts within and without the Highlands:

> While some ghosts returned to cause mischief, ghosts also came back to condemn excessive grieving, because they had been murdered, to resolve unfinished business, to guard against body-snatching, or to help the living. Anne MacVicar Grant argued that Highland ghosts were generally "conjured up by affection," and appeared "like 'angels sent on errands of love', to warn or soothe the survivors"'.[617]

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[615] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 295.
[616] Dale Townshend illustrates how the 'invoking' of spiritual beings occurs frequently throughout Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* (1760) and that the spirits called upon are usually 'welcomed more as the source of comfort and consolation than as a Gothic figure of terrific sublimity'. Dale Townshend, 'Shakespeare, Ossian and the problem of the "Scottish Gothic"', *Gothic Renaissance: A Reassessment,* ed. Elisabeth Bronfen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 233.
[617] McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, 180.

In any case, all the older literatures have value in their power to 'awaken emotions' rather than to merely provoke fright. Finally, it is suggestive and characteristic that Grant makes no real distinction of literary quality or fame between Shakespeare and Blind Harry: a bolder move even in the early nineteenth century than now to assert the parity of Scottish national literature with anything produced by the English.

Grant and Scott on Folklore and Belief

Grant's *Essays* can in some ways be regarded as a precursor to Walter Scott's more commercially successful and more acclaimed, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft* (1830). In the year in which Scott's text was published, Grant sent a letter to Mrs. Smith (November 1830) revealing how she had already begun to observe inaccuracies in Scott's claims. On the topic of witches specifically, Grant states 'I knew personally the granddaughter of a reputed witch who was burnt at Inverness at a later period that which Sir Walter Scott mentions as the latest'.[618] Grant's access to empirical Highland information, then, owing to her long-term integration, allowed her to correct Scott's misinformation on this point. Nevertheless, Scott's *Letters* is not confined to an analysis of witchcraft, as it deals fairly centrally with the status of the supernatural in Scotland. As Dale Townshend suggests, both works were read primarily as anthropological observation:

> Anne Grant's *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland* (1811) and Walter Scott's *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft* (1830) demonstrate that what was ostensibly at stake in Scotland's relationship with spectrality was the matter of cultural anthropology, an interest in exploring the nation's ghostly heritage, documenting it and conserving its rich superstitions.[619]

Yet these two texts are very different in construction and effect. In his book, Scott is dismissive of credence being given to any form of miracle attributed to the supernatural. In the part of the text, written as an epistle to his son-in-law John Lockhart, Scott takes a quasi-

[618] J. P. Grant (ed.), 1st ed., *Memoir and Correspondence*, 3: 186-187.
[619] Townshend 'Shakespeare, Ossian and "Scottish Gothic"', 238.

medical approach, lining up supernatural experience as a psychological phenomenon induced by intoxication, general insanity, or specific mechanisms of auditory and visual hallucination:

> Thus, in regard to the ear, the next organ in importance to the eye, we are repeatedly deceived by such sounds as are imperfectly gathered up and erroneously apprehended. From the false impressions received from this organ also arise consequences similar to those derived from erroneous reports made by the organs of sight. A whole class of superstitious observances arise, and are grounded upon inaccurate and imperfect hearing.[620]

In dismissing any possibility of supernatural occurrences, Scott was dismissing credence being given to the culture that Grant, in her *Essays,* seeks to validate. Where Scott's text seems determined from the outset to undermine evidence of the supernatural, Grant's text is more open to the prospect of the supernatural generally, or is not, at least, as openly hostile. Once again, a key fault line was translation, and access to oral tradition. Grant leant heavily on her access to first-hand accounts of the supernatural in the Gaelic language. While both books were produced from literary Edinburgh, this was Scott's world much more than it was Grant's. Scott tacitly admitted this difference in consulting Grant for information and perhaps also inspiration, even styling characters upon members of Grant's family.[621] Evan Gottlieb notes the general influence that Grant's *Essays* had upon Scott's writing:

> Publicly, Scott returned her compliments; the famous "Postscript that should have been a Preface" of Waverley acknowledges the influence of Grant's recent *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland* (1811) and praises its author as "respectable" and "ingenious."[622]

However, Gottlieb adds that while Scott may have been grateful for the information in the *Essays* or even reliant on it for folkloric episodes or points of colour in his writing, his scepticism put him at odds with Grant's general stance on the belief in the supernatural:

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[620] Walter Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft,* (London: George Routledge and sons, 1887), 40.
[621] Gallagher, 'Anne MacVicar Grant', 155.
[622] Gottlieb, 'Blameless Empires', 253.

> Scott first applauds Grant's *Essays* as 'lively spirited & enthusiastic', then acidly observes that 'her imagination however sometimes runs off with her from the region of humble fact into that of sentimental romance'.[623]

It is curious how Scott sought to invert a difference that was clear enough elsewhere in the work of these two writers to their contemporaries and which worked well enough in his favour in other contexts: where he was the imaginative genius of romance and she was the doggedly prosy factual commentator. Scott's own rhetoric here elides real differences in regional identity with a gendered division of fact and imagination. This was exactly the division that Grant herself sought to maintain by keeping her nose closer to the linguistic ground of Gaelic source-work. Kenneth McNeil reminds us of the difference maintained elsewhere:

> In contrast to Scott, for example, who is careful to announce the limitations of his own access to Highland culture—particularly as he did not know the language—Grant grounds her assertion that she is an authority on her subject, on her own firsthand experience of living in the highlands and speaking Gaelic. As she proclaims in the *Letters,* Highlanders "are a people never to be known unless you live among them, and learn their language."[624]

In any case, later comparison of the two works as equivalent commentaries on 'Scottish' belief have conflated the Highland-Lowland divide that Grant worked so hard to uphold; for her, this had a crucial impact on the forms in which the respective communities arrived at their accounts of supernatural phenomena and also the nature of the supernatural phenomenon itself.

Grant's decision to leave scope in her text for credence and plausibility in relation to the supernatural, where Scott clearly 'closed down' any such scope, draws on several main strands: genuine personal belief, her project to defend, justify and vindicate Gaelic culture, and a combination of the two. [625] What is clear in the *Essays* is that Grant attempts to

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[623] Gottlieb, 'Blameless Empires', 254.
[624] McNeil, '"Not Absolutely a Native nor Entirely a Stranger,"' 151.
[625] Townshend, 'Shakespeare, Ossian and the "Scottish Gothic,"' 238.

foreground and trust firsthand accounts of phenomena that defy rational explanation.[626] In one example Grant recounts testimony about spectres from what she presents as a reliable and trustworthy source. Following the repeated sightings of floating orbs in a church graveyard, attested by his parishioners, a Presbyterian pastor witnesses two of these orbs hovering over a grave and appearing to sink below into the ground.[627] Grant reassures her readers of the plausibility of this account, even if supernatural explanation can be discounted:

> This story he told to my old friend, from whom I heard it; and I am much more willing to suppose that he was deceived by an ignis fatuus, than to think either could be guilty of falsehood.[628]

The term *ignis fatuus* (often called a will-o'-the-wisp in Scotland) refers to a flickering of light in remote locations that is recorded in many folkloric traditions as a spectre or spirit; it may be identifiable as ball lightning or as spontaneous combustion of marsh gas rising from decomposing matter; possible chemical and meteorological explanations have been debated since at least the eighteenth century (Grant may have known of these).[629] Earlier in the text however, Grant's description of another similar account seems to err on the potential for a supernatural explanation for this type of phenomena. Grant details an anecdote whereby 'six bright lights, followed by a small greenish one' represented the souls of deceased children that would rise from the grave and congregate around their mother's bed each night.[630] Following the anecdote Grant issues a defence of the both the style of narration and the narrative itself; 'I have given the discourse as literally as possible, that it might convey some idea of the mode of expression among those people, whom it would be most unjust to stile rustic'.[631] The expression 'unjust to stile rustic' can be read not only as a defence of the dialect, but also of the belief itself. Grant's *Essays* evidently holds different perspectives in balance, as story, at second hand, yet with a judicious sense of possible mechanisms of

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[626] Gallagher, 'Anne MacVicar Grant', 159.
[627] 'The good old pastor to whom I allude […] saw two small lights rise from a spot within, where there was no stone, no memorial of any kind'. Grant, *Essays*, 1: 259-260.
[628] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 261.
[629] R. C. Maclagan draws upon anecdotal and empirical accounts of ignis fatuus from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and finds that 'Even with persons scientifically inclined, the *ignis fatuus* still passes for an external reality. Thus the Century Dictionary defines the word: "A meteoric light that sometimes appears in summer and autumn nights […] it is generally supposed to be produced by the spontaneous combustion of small jets of gas (carburetted or phosphuretted hydrogen) […]". R. C. Maclagan, 'Ghost Lights of the West Highlands., *Folklore* 8, no. 3 (1897): 42.
[630] *The soul of a stillborn child. Grant, *Essays*, 1: 193.
[631] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 195.

'deception' as against 'falsehood'; ultimately, the phenomenon is seen as genuine, whatever its cause. The case remains open, including for supernatural resolution. No testimony is dismissed as indicative of primitive superstition. Elsewhere she notes witnesses of similar phenomena or records from observers who are both sceptical and yet not averse to supernatural explanation of particular beliefs:

> I knew a man of great worth […] As a devout and rigid Presbyterian, he thought it his duty to war against superstition in all its forms. Yet he still kept a corner of his mind for one darling idol […] This was second sight […][632]

There is something of a reflection of Grant's own position here, cool, but keeping a corner of her mind available and open especially for beliefs seen as important to Highland identity. As Peter Womack has already observed, Grant's argument around the Highland people's propensity for second sight rather than being suggestive of their unworldliness, serves to exemplify their superior creativity and 'refined sensibility'.[633]

Another example, again carefully framed with reference to testimony and witnesses, intertwines the supernatural with Jacobite politics, the aftermath of Culloden being the catalyst. Two former soldiers, referred to by their initials R and B, witness the ghost of R's deceased wife. Grant prefaces this anecdote with a lengthy asseveration of the honour of the two men which is clearly meant to reflect the honour of Highland culture and the 'spirit' of the Jacobite cause more broadly. She recounts speaking with the descendants of these two 'persons of worth and undoubted veracity' who, after the '45, endeavoured to conceal the whereabouts of their clan chief, proscribed and hunted for nine years by the British military. Jacobite sentiments come to the fore in this anecdote as the supernatural plays second fiddle to the 'great honour and probity' of the Jacobite soldiers, whose resilience and quick thinking in concealing their chief for so long means that they, contrary to stereotypical notions of Highland primitives, 'could scarce be classed among the idle and solitary dreamers, who from seeing very little of this world, are apt to fancy themselves glimpses of the other'.[634] Open-mindedness about supernatural phenomena is aligned with and grounded in the

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[632] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 257.
[633] Womack, *Improvement and Romance: The Scottish Highlands in British Writing after the Forty-Five*, 137.
[634] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 222.

credence given to such 'important and sapient personages'.[635] Whereas Scott's enlightened scepticism stresses the fact that the Highlands are the location not of 'humble fact' but 'sentimental fancy' (including perhaps his own fictional as well as folkloric productions), Grant's examples are always grounded in *believing the past*; in giving credibility to the survivals, and survivors, of Highland belief, even those that might struggle for survival in the wake of the experience of defeat. Viewed in this light, Grant's treatment of the supernatural is charged with Cultural Jacobitism.

Yet it is important that credence is not credulousness: Grant is careful and judicious in her approach to the supernatural and often frames her anecdotes with an open-ended suspension of disbelief, sometimes plainly stating when she believes that purportedly supernatural phenomena have a rational explanation. In one example Grant relates the case of a man who thought he was doing combat with evil spirits in a dark cave at precisely the same time each night. First, he would hear their thunderous racket, and then violence would be visited upon him, evidenced the next day by his bruises and abrasions. After failing to deter the man from repeating this encounter night after night, his family members decided to accompany him covertly. They discovered that what the man was actually encountering at the same time each night was cattle being driven through the cave by thieves, trampling him in the process.[636] The narrative is still vivid enough to excite anecdotal interest: this is Grant's own version of the Gothic 'exploded supernatural'.

A counterpoint to the tension between Grant's openness to belief in the supernatural and Scott's scepticism is a letter where Grant detailed her own ability and describing Scott as 'in a limited sense a believer':

> I shall tell you what I shall never tell another […] I saw the spectral appearance in full daylight passing my door towards the West Church I actually saw two persons well known to me who […] they seemed to vanish near the door of a ____ widow […] Now dear Sir when others tell of unearthly sights & sounds you may safely tell you knew one who is neither fool nor coward, neither merryous nor whimsical, who fears

[635] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 216.
[636] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 252.

> God and fears him only, who in broad daylight on a public street saw the sights I have most faithfully described to you […][637]

Indeed, Grant also references this power in her *Essays* (albeit partly whimsically and ironically) when anticipating the reception of her publication and the likelihood of subsequent editions.[638] The personal and avowedly subjective nature of psychological and spiritual experience is admitted here, as is the interesting repeated word 'idol', used by Grant as a positive marker of identity and her own desire to believe:

> Of the second sight […] the legends of the visionary must appear so like shadows of shades to those who have no local knowledge of the people and their customs, that I shall tread no farther over this hollow ground, where one perpetually hears reverberated echoes, without being able to trace the original voice.[639]

It is of course significant and not altogether surprising that Grant claims to possess the gift 'cherished by all true highlanders'. It is clear across almost all of her writing that Grant wished for nothing more than to be considered a native Highlander. She styled herself as such, in spite of her insecurities about not having been born in the Highlands. Asserting her capacity for second sight, was the final trump card of authority over Scott when it came to empirical knowledge of the supernatural beliefs within the Gàidhealtachd.

The Omnipotent Highland Presence

Various writers have cited the general influence of Macpherson's Ossian poems upon Grant, and this has been previously discussed in this thesis.[640] Yet thinking about supernatural power is a useful point of contrast between Macpherson and Grant. Fiona Stafford has observed how Grant's articulation of Highland beliefs and culture lent weight and credence to Macpherson's translation after the fact, linking the 'discovered' text with features of the orally transmitted ballads and more apparently prosaic Gaelic-Highland story-telling:

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[637] National Library of Scotland, MS 3907, ff. 350–54.
[638] 'I have second sight enough to see a second edition in dim and distant prospect'. Grant, *Essays*, 2: 361.
[639] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 261-262.
[640] See: McCue, *Women's Travel Writings in Scotland*, xxxiii and McNeil, 'Memory on the Margins', 104.

> Mrs. Grant's quotation from *Ossian* shows that she saw distinct similarities between the old Highland storytellers and Macpherson's portrait of the Celtic bard. It is not unlikely that when Macpherson came to develop the character of Ossian, he was recalling the old men he had known since his childhood, such as Finlay Macpherson, who lived at Lynaberack, and spent his days and nights reciting Ossianic poetry to friends and neighbours.[641]

On one level, Grant added ordinary ballast to Ossian's sometimes abstract invocations. Yet an important strand of Grant's writing, discussed earlier in this chapter, was her view of the pre-Christian spirituality (or what remnants persisted of it in the nineteenth century) of the Gaelic Highlanders, a spirituality reflective of an animistic, polytheistic worldview. In the *Essays*, Grant's handling of theism carefully mediates between the biblical orthodoxy of a single omnipotent deity and the possibility of the Highlanders perceiving more local and individual subdivisions of wind and thunder gods in their natural environment, typically in the individual's

> devout, though unregulated feeling […] to some operation of the all-controuling Power which he awfully acknowledges in every good that is bestowed, and in every evil that is permitted – whose breath he feels propitious in the genial gale, and whose voice he hears terrific in the passing thunder.[642]

Stafford's assessment of Macpherson's appeal to a pre-Christian and largely non-theistic setting is in interesting tension with Grant's own version of a tangible 'all-controuling Power' in pre-Christian Highland culture. Stafford notes specifically the appeal of the 'godless' in *Ossian*.[643] For her, the presence of an omnipotent figure is absent in Macpherson's text:

> Rise winds of autumn, rise; blow upon the dark heath! Streams of the mountains roar! Howl, ye tempests, in the top of the oak! Walk through broken clouds, O moon! Show by intervals thy pale face! Bring to my mind that sad night, when all my children fell;

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[641] Stafford, *Sublime Savage,* 14.
[642] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 56.
[643] Stafford, *Sublime Savage*, 107.

> when Arindel the mighty fell; when Daura the lovely failed; when all my children died.[644]

Stafford notes that Macpherson 'avoided any discussion of the Celtic theology', while noting his echoes of, and yet divergence from, the Old Testament, arriving at the conclusion:[645]

> While the anthropomorphism of the Old Testament suggests the prophets' deep awareness of the presence of God, the effect in Macpherson's work is very different […] Macpherson's Highland landscape is an uncontrolled and godless place […] The image of the isolated speaker, pouring out a torrent of emotion to an empty landscape is perhaps the most memorable aspect of the *Fragments.*[646]

Grant's understanding of Highland culture, and very probably her reading of Ossian too, was very different, and persistently reintroduces a single presence of omnipotence in her writing. Grant's explanation in the *Essays* of how an omnipotent presence in the Highlands is indicated by natural phenomena such as wind and thunder resolves ultimately quite clearly into one 'all-controlling' and is not 'uncontrolled'. In this respect it was more orthodox than Macpherson's, even as it addressed a similar supernatural power perceived in the Highland landscapes. Grant took other things from Macpherson. Stafford notes a particular theme in the Ossian poems,

> The theme of the parent outliving the child, which was to be an important feature of *Ossian,* has much in common with the image of the active man losing his strength, or indeed, with the death of young lovers.[647]

This theme, whether from Ossian or found in the wider folkloric culture of the Highlands, must have been another powerful although discomforting influence on Grant's sense of what it was to be an Ossianic 'presence' herself. Outliving eleven of her twelve children, Grant seemed to fulfil this Gaelic-Highland prophecy of ill fate; her desired Highland identity, in a way, may have been morbidly cemented by the loss of her children.

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[644] James Macpherson, *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and Translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language*, (Edinburgh: G. Hamilton and J. Balfour, 1760), 50.
[645] Stafford, *Sublime Savage,* 156.
[646] Stafford, *Sublime Savage*, 107.
[647] Stafford, *Sublime Savage*, 51.

Conclusion

Whether or not Grant herself truly believed in supernatural phenomena is open to interpretation. What is beyond doubt is that she believed in the importance of the preservation of the supernatural beliefs of the Highland people both prior to, and, later in parallel with, the official Christianity of Scotland, giving credence to the adherents of Highland faith and identity. While there are occasions in the *Essays* that are suggestive of Grant's willingness to believe in supernatural phenomena more or less directly, what is more easily demonstrable is the notion that she believed in the Highland people's right to distinguish themselves from the rest of Britain by their unique cultural traits; one of the most important of which, was their proximity to, and, belief in, possible supernatural occurrence, but also their inhabiting of a natural landscape through which the omnipotence of a Christian god could be seen to flow. In order to maintain the survival of the supernatural, Grant felt that her homeland must be protected from the encroachment of outside values, among them secular scepticism and modernity. In this regard, Grant's attitude towards the Highland people and her instinctive desire to defend them from hostile incredulity was to all intents and purposes, also a defence of her own identity. Yet the fragility of her identity, highlighted by the instability of an impartial narrative stance in the *Essays*, was also an important part of her determined and unbowed spirit of cultural defence. While Grant had managed to construct for herself a Highland identity, she had worked hard for it.[648] She may always have felt that her identity as a Highland native was incomplete owing to her birth and childhood outside the Highlands. The aspect that Grant seems to overlook when presenting herself as a reliable observer here is that occupying a liminal position likely rendered her *more,* rather than *less,* susceptible to the charge of partiality. For Grant's perspective was not stationary, finely balanced between the two modes of observance; rather, by the time she had relocated to Edinburgh in 1810, she was in a perpetual (perhaps futile) and performative race to draw herself closer to the Gaelic Highlands and distance herself from Anglophone Britain.

Essentially, many of her contemporaries felt that because of the conflicting demands of partiality and impartiality, as well as those factors of generic and gendered instability Grant

[648] Gallagher, 'Anne MacVicar Grant', 155.

failed in her main objective, which was to deliver a resounding defence of the Highland people which could also be a disinterested anthropological record of their traditions and customs. While the *Essays* was Grant's attempt at an objective assessment of Highland culture, her desire to validate herself hinged upon the validation of this same culture, inclusive of its beliefs in the supernatural, and her perceptions of these phenomena are coloured by her desire to believe, in various ways. Thus, the *Essays* was also a study in the psyche of the writer herself, and her place in the world. Pam Perkins observes: 'No matter how much Grant attempted to establish her own claims to speak as an observer of her society, her readers insisted upon seeing her as an unselfconscious embodiment of it'.[649] Though the *Essays* may have been constructed by Grant as a conscious attempt to temporarily distance herself from the Highland people in order to observe and record their culture; intrinsically, her priority in constructing a Gaelic identity for herself means that, it is *she,* and *her* expressions of Cultural Jacobitism, that (for the reader at least) becomes the primary subject of inquiry, and ultimately of continuing historical interest, in her final major work.

[649] Perkins, 'Grant: Gender, Genre', 231.

Conclusion

The aims of this thesis in presenting Grant's Cultural Jacobitism, and recuperating her work, share their foundations in the modern critical responses to her. Part of the process of recuperation of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women's literature entails an examination of the manner in which the authors were subject to 'silencing'.[650] While other Scottish women writers such as Christian Isobel Johnstone, Susan Ferrier, Mary Brunton and Elizabeth Hamilton have been subject to significant recuperation attempts, the same cannot be said of Anne Grant. It is clear that issues around Grant's identity such as her attitude to gender, politics, national allegiance, and linguistic and cultural determinism or essentialism undoubtedly played a role in her fall from favour, in the twentieth century if not in her own time; modern cosmopolitan morals and ideals, the very forces which Grant set her mind and pen against, have perhaps prevented a thorough reassessment of her life and work.

One factor that may have inhibited the reappraisal of Grant, perhaps above all, is her nationalism, which is overt and pronounced. The term 'nationalism' today carries with it connotations of jingoism, aggression, prejudice, and even racism. Yet clearly the nationalistic element of Grant's Cultural Jacobitism was mobilised on behalf of marginalised and minority cultures; it sought to elevate these cultures and protect their distinguishing features from the intentions of hegemonic national identities whose motivation was largely to smooth them out. In this, Grant's Cultural Jacobitism shares common ground with the kind of 'Jacobite nationalism' defined by Murray Pittock as the movement's 'enduring legacy':

> Jacobitism has an enduring legacy which surpasses the misrepresentational sentiment under the guise of which it is so often presented to the world. Jacobite nationalism, ecumenism, defence of minorities and opposition to the structural modernizing of an agricultural economy through which many (lastly and most markedly in the Highland Clearances) suffered, were all features of the outlook of pro-Stuart activism.[651]

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[650] Susan Sniader Lanser, *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice*, (London: Cornell University Press, 1992), 23.
[651] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 136.

Grant's writing presents sentiments that are not always in accordance with nor aligned with the theoretical positions or inclinations of many modern scholars who undertake recuperative critical attempts. A degree of subjectivity and modern political and cultural priorities will inevitably be involved in such a process. For example, Grant's writing generally extends sympathy towards the rights of indigenous ethnic groups, and, upon initial consideration, this appears to underpin modern, progressive, liberal notions around marginalised identities. However, contention arises with Grant's claim that in order to protect a particularly marginalised culture, we must inevitably acknowledge how the features we use to define that culture necessarily differentiate it from other cultures. Grant's essentialism is very definitely not strategic and contingent, but permanent. Her expression of sympathy for marginalised cultures, by necessity conflicts with emergent nineteenth century notions of liberalism, cosmopolitanism and (by extension) modern aspirations of multiculturalism. Indeed, Grant's analysis of America as the primary canvas where various cultures come into contact with one another is underpinned by her acidic characterisation of it as tattered a patchwork:

> To those enlarged minds, who have got far beyond the petty consideration of country and kindred, to embrace the whole human race, a land, whose population is like Joseph's coat, of many colours, must be a peculiarly suitable abode. For in the endless variety of patchwork, of which society is composed, a liberal, philosophic mind might meet with the specimens of all those tongues and nations which he comprehends in the wide circle of his enlarged philanthropy.[652]

Also unavoidably contentious are the ways that Grant advocated for the parallel preservation of the isolation of Native American tribes, and of white European Highland people. In *Essays*, one of the requisites upon which the cultural preservation of the Gaelic-Scots stands is the cessation of other cultures entering the Highlands: 'strangers were prevented from residing among a people, whose language was so difficult to learn, and whose customs, while they drew them closer to each other than any other people, were to a stranger altogether incomprehensible'.[653] In insisting upon boundaries and division to protect and preserve the uniqueness of different communities, Grant's writing runs counter to modern liberal principles such as universalism, mobility and cultural integration. Yet modern liberal

[652] Grant, *Memoirs*, 282.
[653] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 69-70.

principles have their foundation in the liberal politics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which, as Michael Connolly asserts, were motivated not by kindness, but rather by commercial interests disguised as the faux philanthropy to which Grant alludes.[654] In contrast, Grant's Cultural Jacobitism expressed genuine concern for the well-being and cultural preservation of marginalised communities. Her 'non-liberal' pursuit of 'disordered' particularism squares with broader analyses of the political fate of Jacobitism in later American political settlements and values.[655] The crux of this analysis is that, in much the same way that Enlightenment figures from Scotland have been seen to influence the liberal policies and economic system of America from the revolution onwards, the opposition to this emergent philosophical and economic outlook came in the form, not of conservative liberals, but of non-liberal conservatives: in plainer terms, of Cultural Jacobites.

For the most part, modern scholarship has positioned Grant as a Tory.[656] Yet in doing so, it cannot reconcile important and contradictory elements of Grant's outlook, including her own stated positions.[657] Unlike the identification of the writer's linguistic and cultural liminality, generally regarded as something positive that facilitates an interpretation of her as an ally of the oppressed and marginalised in the face of an Anglocentric hegemony, Grant's deviations from conservative ideals[658] have by and large been interpreted not as conscious decisions to form independent opinions outside of the contemporary Tory-Whig dichotomy, but rather as simple inconsistencies or flaws. Yet, the content of a letter included in the *Essays* perhaps strikes closer to how she regarded her own determined consistency on such matters: 'Whatever casual decorations fancy may scatter over my subjects, I always write from my fixed principles and genuine feelings'.[659]

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[654] 'Southern slave holders were among the most liberal actors in the country. In the South capital owned a significant portion of labour and was dependent upon an international economy of free trade. Capital was more powerful in the Old South than in any part of the country. As a practical matter, the antebellum South is a poor place to look for non-liberal American conservatism'. Connolly, *Jacobitism in Britain and the United States*, xii.
[655] 'New England was a good deal more complex and supplied America with a bevy of important non-liberal conservatives who believed American history was not the pursuit of an egalitarian democratic "more perfect union" but the emergence of an ugly disordered imperfect one. New England was a Jacobite enclave'. Connolly, *Jacobitism in Britain and the United States*, xii.
[656] However Kirsten Daly has argued that Grant upheld a distinctly Whiggish outlook on certain issues.
[657] See: Perkins, '"Incongruous Things,"' 203 and Shields, 'Highland Emigration', 776
[658] Examples already cited in this thesis include Grant's positive attitude to the assertive role of women in ancient Highland society (Chapter Four: *Essays*), her rebuttal of contemporary criticisms of women (Introduction: *Letters*), and her objection to the presence of the British military in America (Chapter Three: *Memoirs*).
[659] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 283.

We do not have to view Grant strictly as liberal or conservative, either in the modern or in the early-nineteenth-century understanding of these terms: instead, this thesis has argued that we should look to Grant's Cultural Jacobitism as a mediatory position, or even as an independent third position. In a letter to an anonymous recipient in the *Essays* Grant explains the divided influence of her father and mother. She writes, 'Know then, that of all Whigs my father was the bluest and taught me to look up to the reigning [Hanoverian] family as somewhat sublime and celestial'.[660] On the other hand, Grant's mother was connected to the Stuart Dynasty by blood and an implicit Jacobite. Grant recalls:

> I do not know that my mother expressed the word politics in her life. She however feelingly lamented the ruin of the family she was connected with, and melted my heart with sad tales of the tragical fate of many of her Stuart relations, some of them truly valuable characters.[661]

She goes on in the letter to recall how, 'From this harmonious discord arose in my mind a strange mixture of Whig opinions and Tory feelings'. But it is worth considering Grant's choice of words here when describing the two contrasting dynastic identifications. As discussed in Chapter Three, Grant's idea of royalty in the genuine sense comprised monarchs who were accessible persons rather than aloof and removed. While Grant's father attempted to instil in her respect for the Hanoverian monarch, it was clearly the Stuarts who had her heart.

In weighing up evidence such as this, it becomes clear that Grant adhered to Cultural Jacobitism as a philosophy of personal identity, somewhat subsumed political allegiance, and most importantly as cultural survival: as revolutionary preservation of traditional values. Rather than merely straddling a middle ground between Whig and Tory politics, Jacobitism, was as F.J. Mclynn has shown, an original political ideology, detached from Toryism in that it was only really 'conservative in a nostalgic sense, locating the "Golden Age" in the past'. It believed in an Ancient Constitution and

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[660] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 282.
[661] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 282.

> Its targets were the regime of money introduced since 1688, the increase of power of the executive, the corruption and patronage made possible by the Protestant succession to financial institutions like the National Debt [...][662]

Grant's ideology was different from that of Tories and Whigs primarily because she believed that modern society and both of these political ideologies were in a distinct phase of decline from what she herself refers to as the 'Golden Age', or the second stage in her teleological model.[663] Grant presents Improvement and Clearance as malevolently synonymous. Illustrative of her determination to set herself against these forces is the warning in the *Essays* that she endeavours to 'put down' the 'lovers of innovation and promoters of depopulation'.[664]

While Jacobitism has been largely relegated to the position of a flawed and defeated political revolt, I have examined the many aspects of Cultural Jacobitism evident in Grant's writing that resist historical confines, nostalgia and romance. For her, not only was the Scottish nation of the past indelibly tied to Jacobitism, but so too was the preservation of Highland genealogy and the concept of Highland indigeneity in the future. Contemporaneous with Grant was the Lowland poet Thomas Campbell (1777-1844). In 1802, Campbell composed a pro-Jacobite poem entitled 'Lochiel's Warning' where a connection between Jacobitism, the Highland landscape and the blood of the Highland people is made. Refusing to acknowledge the Wizard's prophecy of defeat at Culloden, Lochiel exclaims:

> False wizard, avaunt! I have marshalled my clan,
> Their swords are a thousand, their bosoms are one!
> They are true to the last of their blood and their breath,
> And like reapers descend to the harvest of death.[665]

References to clanship, a united 'bosom', 'blood', and the process of harvesting, demonstrate how Jacobitism sought to continue to mobilise potent images of common blood, culture and homeland. These images are no less potent now, if dangerously so, than they ever were

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[662] McLynn, F. J. 'The Ideology of Jacobitism, Part Two', *History of European Ideas* 6, no. 2 (1982): 173.
[663] Grant, *Poems*, 358.
[664] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 161.
[665] Thomas Campbell, *Lochiel's Warning*, *The Literary Ballad Archive*, accessed August 27, 2025, https://literaryballadarchive.com/wp-content/uploads/Campbell_6_Lochiel_s_Warning_ff.pdf

simply as part of a nostalgic past. My positioning of Grant as a Cultural Jacobite ties together much of the subject matter expressed in her work, including the Highland Clearances, the tribulations and trauma of displacement, cultural memory and post-emigration nostalgia, the destruction of the local landscape, the demise of the Highland Clan system, the eradication of Scots-Gaelic language, and the culture and the fate of the Stuart dynasty. To return to the letter sent by Grant to the anonymous male recipient in the *Essays*: here Grant seemingly anticipates the majority of modern interpretations that would position her as conservative, with the acknowledgment that her affinity for the Stuart dynasty specifically reflected the Jacobite aspect of herself. Anticipating too the question of identity from her recipient, Grant writes: 'You will wish to know how I steered through between the yawning Scylla of my Whig principles, and the whirling Charybdis of Jacobite sympathies'.[666] The two mythical images denote the tensions in her identity, further coloured by Grant's acknowledgment that she has come to find liberalism and Whiggism 'ugly' and reprehensible (Scylla was a deceitful and ugly monster that disguised itself as a thing of beauty), while Jacobitism, like Charybdis, was something captivating yet a dangerous trap that she took care to skirt. It was perhaps simply the still-present political and professional dangers of being badged a Jacobite that prevented Grant from explicitly declaring her allegiance; and her refusal in her writing to capitulate to the inevitability of Improvement, and her determined position in relation to the perils of modernity, undoubtedly made her easy to view as a figure of the past. Communicating to an Anglophone audience, however politely, the great rifts of violence and dispossession that ran through the solutions offered by the supposedly predetermined Whig futurity of Britain, was another dangerous obstacle that Grant consistently strove to negotiate in her writing. However her concerns around the transformation of the Highland landscape, the threat to the eradication of Highland culture, her attitude to safeguarding the Gaelic language, her condemnation of the ill-treatment of the Scots-Highland people and of the forced depopulation of the Highlands, and her allusions to future Scottish political determination, inclusive of the cultural revitalisation of the Gàidhealtachd, all implied that Cultural Jacobitism in one form or another might remain as a viable alternative future for Scotland.

[666] Grant, *Essays*, 2: 285-286.

Coda: *The Stuart Cause*

To encapsulate the connotations of Cultural Jacobitism as presented in the main chapters of this thesis and also to enunciate Grant's personal connections to actual Jacobite figures, I would like to offer a brief analysis of some posthumously published correspondence which, while outside the main body of Grant's work, goes some way to illuminating and consolidating this project. In this collection Grant's hesitancy in establishing herself within Jacobite circles is absent and the coded or veiled Jacobite sympathies evident throughout the rest of her writing give way to a more explicit allegiance. While this coda remains analytical, Grant's own writing, thus voice, has more of a platform due to the inclusion of substantial quotations from the text in question.

In 1806, Grant sent and received a series of letters to various people connected with Jacobitism. These letters were eventually published in 1896, around sixty years after her death, under the title *Letters Written by Mrs. Grant of Laggan Concerning Highland Affairs and Persons Connected to the Stuart Cause*. This publication is relatively short, consisting of around one hundred pages in total. It is presented as a historical work on the Jacobite cause up until 1747, but the extent of its historiographic significance is questionable. The editor, James Robert Nicolson Macphail (1858-1933), did not help its status by taking a decidedly derisive attitude towards Grant's factual inaccuracies. This was perhaps unfair to Grant, who, as she does in the introductory pages of the *Memoirs*, takes care to reiterate the uncertainty of details drawn from memory.[667] Macphail had the benefit of a further century of historical work on Jacobitism which he used either to corroborate or dismiss Grant's information as matters of fact. As a literary work, and as part of Grant's oeuvre, it has received very little attention. Yet it is an important coda to the project of Cultural Jacobitism which cuts across her life and work, and which this thesis has described.

While Grant was living at Woodend, her neighbour, Sir Henry Steuart (1759-1836), understanding her connection to the Stuart dynasty and her knowledge regarding the Jacobite cause, asked her to recall and document as much as she could about the anecdotes she had been told by people present during the '45. The core subject matter of the letters between

[667] 'Now I am so confus'd, and the materials crowded into my lumber garret of a memory so disarranged , that I could not without some such finger-posts find my way thro' my own recollection'. Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 289.

Grant and Steuart focuses upon two prominent Jacobite advisors to Charles Edward Stuart; Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat (1667-1747) and Donald Cameron of Lochiel (1695-1748). In the *Stuart Cause*, Grant explores the nature and temperament of these two figures, but also uses their family histories and backstories as inroads to discuss the wider issues of Highland history and culture. In this way, the text resembles Grant's *Essays* to some degree, something that the writer herself was evidently conscious of, as she explains in a letter to Henry Steuart (Feb 11, 1808):

> DEAR SIR,—The high praises with which you grace efforts so broken and imperfect as mine, if not merited, are at least encouraging, and have produc'd a discovery entirely new to me […] it appears that I have been unconsciously philosophising, for I never suspected that the depth of my reflections entitl'd them to be accounted Philosophical.[668]

Grant seemed fully aware that the antiquarian or historical nature of her enterprise was another new direction. Kenneth McNeil has observed the *Stuart Cause* to be something of a precursor or practice run for her essay writing.[669] What distinguishes the text from the *Essays,* however, is Grant's more obvious partiality towards political Jacobitism and the Stuart dynasty in Highland culture. While the *Essays* is not without partiality, in that text Grant at least attempts a rhetoric of disinterestedness, in order to stay within the parameters of anthropological discourse. In the *Stuart Cause*, this seems not to be a concern. She also picks sides among her historical protagonists with a surface reading of the text, at least, suggesting a considerable bias on the part of the narrator for Lochiel over Lovat. However, once again the text is the product of mediation between partialities, where Cultural Jacobitism offers something of a third position.

Though compiled in the epistolary format, this text differs from Grant's other collections of letters in two important ways. Unlike Grant's other published correspondence (*Letters from the Mountains* and *Memoir and Correspondence*) the *Stuart Cause* includes letters from Grant's recipients. This adds alternative narrative voices to the text absent from any of her other writing. This was also the only text, apart from the posthumous *Memoir and*

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[668] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 284.
[669] McNeil 'Memory on the Margins', 96.

Correspondence published by her son, over which Grant had no control, and the editor's keenness to rebut her claims tends to interrupt the narrative. Macphail seems eager to admonish Grant whenever he gets the chance, calling into question her credibility as a historian.[670] However Grant herself preemptively 'avows' the unreliability of the *Stuart Letters*, expressing

> much regret that the indistinctness of my recollection, and the inaccuracy of my orthography, will occasion you so much trouble in arranging the facts I send you.[671]

However in a recent study of the text, Pam Perkins urges us bear in mind that though Grant's 'own memory might be faulty or not extend back far enough' she is nevertheless 'able to draw upon her social connections to correct or amplify it'.[672] Some of the book does smack of rhetorical conjecture, and Macphail does indeed show that some of 'the facts' that Grant claims are not entirely that. As a narrative of Cultural Jacobitism, however, it is nevertheless a revealing and interesting work that yields additional useful context to her oeuvre.

In keeping with the bardic tradition, Grant recounts the histories of the lineage of both Lovat and Lochiel. As so often in her work, this opens out on wider issues pertinent to Scottish nationalism and Highland culture. In the opening letter to Steuart, dated January 21, 1808, Grant concedes an inherent partiality when she states that she will 'detail the anecdotes of Lochiel '*con amore*'' [with love].[673] Lovat, conversely, owing to his shifting allegiance to the Hanoverian enemy, is described by Grant from the outset of the text as a 'caitiff' who 'began his career of wickedness very early in a manner that would have expelled any other person from society'.[674] Lovat was the last person executed by beheading at the Tower of London as a Jacobite traitor. Yet Grant's assessment covers rather more than this, detailing his negotiations with the British government, and how he was widely regarded as a 'spy' in the Highlands.[675] In a letter to Steuart conveying Lovat's misdeeds, Grant draws a distinct correlation between Jacobitism and the Scottish Highlands, stressing how 'The English in

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[670] This is noted by McNeil in the limited existing work on this text. McNeil 'Memory on the Margins', 96.
[671] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 271.
[672] Pam Perkins, 'Anne Grant and the Social Networks of Jacobitism', in *Shaping Jacobitism, 1688 to the Present: Memory, Culture, Networks*, ed. Leith Davis and Kevin J. James (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2025), 150-151.
[673] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 251.
[674] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 255.
[675] Grant, *Stuart Cause,* 258.

those days were shamefully ignorant of everything relative to the Highlands of Scotland'.[676] Further suggestions of her sense of the innate association between Jacobitism and the Highland region (more covert or discreet in her other texts) are presented a few pages on in the same letter where she states:

> Tho' the probability of success was greatly against the highlanders, they were somehow infatuated with the most sanguine expectations, all but the Prince and his veteran counsellors, who saw too well the enemies' superior advantage.[677]

Grant uses the terms 'Jacobite' and 'Highlander' here interchangeably and synonymously. Though Lowland and English Jacobites were present during Charles Stuart's campaign, Grant refers to the Prince's forces specifically as 'Highlanders' in this letter.

However, included in the *Stuart Cause* is an alternative voice that contests Grant's intimation that Jacobitism was primarily driven by concerns that emanated from within the Highlands. While on a visit to her publishers in London, Grant wrote to Steuart in June 1808 with a 'Memoir of the Family of Lochiel', which she had obtained while visiting a Highland Rector working in London. In this memoir a distinction is made between the Highland Jacobites and their English-speaking counterparts, who had different but equally weighted goals. This division, according to the memoir that Grant cites, is based upon their contrasting priorities in the division of the British crown into the pre-union three crown policy:

> To restore their ancient race of monarchs to the separate crown of Scotland was their fondest wish. This visionary project was never adopt'd by the Jacobites at large, who were too well inform'd to suppose it either practicable or eligible, but it served as an engine to excite the zeal of bards and sennachies, who were still numerous in the Highlands and in whose poetry strong traces of this very project may still be found.[678]

The sentiments expressed in this memoir seem to marginalise Highland Jacobitism, suggesting that its aims were not in tandem with the aims of mainstream Jacobitism. The memoir is presented by Grant without comment as independent evidence, despite its

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[676] Grant, *Stuart Cause,* 258.
[677] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 264.
[678] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 322-323.

sentiments suggesting the romanticisation of a Highland Jacobitism which was merely an over-optimistic faction of the overall movement. This sentiment contrasts markedly with Grant's reckoning of the actual power of Highland Jacobitism, exemplified by her claim of how a single Highland chief was regarded by the Hanoverians as 'one these monsters they least knew and most dreaded'.[679] Supplementing and reinforcing the actual military potential of the Highland Jacobites here in Grant's example is the symbolism of a people that were tenacious to the point of terrible sublimity. Interesting too, is the suggestion in this memoir that the separation of the crowns was not a major concern for Jacobites outside of the Highlands, further marginalising Highland Jacobitism. Murray Pittock notes however, that, for the Stuart monarchs at least, the separation of the crowns in the aftermath of a Jacobite victory was a likely prospect.[680] While the benefit of hindsight suggests that Grant's interpretation was arguably the more accurate one, she certainly does not suppress or omit this opposing position.

The most notable eyewitness account of the 'fatal day of Culloden' in the text is given by Fraser's daughter, now a woman but, at the time, was a ten-year-old child.[681] Lovat had invited this child to Castle Clunie to oversee the imminent battle. As with Grant's memories in her *Memoirs*, this was an historical account of events across a substantial gulf in time, and also filtered through a child's limited vantage point – literally so:

> The house soon filled with people, breathless with anxiety for tidings of their friends who were engaged. The little girl was consider'd as an encumbrance and ordered into a closet where she continued a little while an unwilling prisoner'.[682]

Perkins correctly points out that Grant's verbatim retelling of events and dialogue that occurred decades earlier—and second-hand, through the eyes of a child—is not the most historically compelling aspect of the *Stuart Cause.*[683] What enriches the child's, or rather the later woman's, account, however, is the way she imaginatively fills in the omissions in her field of vision.She describes for Grant the outside of Lovat's home; the degree to which

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[679] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 258.
[680] Pittock, *The Myth of the Jacobite Clans*, 142.
[681] Perkins, 'Anne Grant and the Social Networks of Jacobitism', 152.
[682] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 264.
[683] Perkins, 'Anne Grant and the Social Networks of Jacobitism', 152.

Grant added to this description is uncertain, but it is interesting again that credence depends again on a demarcation of belief and popular superstition:

> Below the house was a large marshy plain, in the centre of which was a small lake that in winter overflow'd it but was now nearly dry. This spot the superstitious believed to be a rendevouz of the Fairies.[684]

The immediate cessation of the 'tumultuous noise' that had previously filled the house (likely due to the intelligence that the battle had been lost) induces the little girl to venture out of the closet, where she finds Lovat alone contemplating the result of the battle. After observing Lovat, she goes outside where she witnesses the aftermath of the battle and

> Looking down she saw above a thousand people in one ghastly crowd in the plain below. Struck with the sudden shifting of the scene and the appearance of this multitude, she thought it was a visionary show of fairies which would immediately disappear. She was soon, however, undeceive'd by the mournful cries of women who were tearing of their handkerchiefs for bandages to the wounded.[685]

After initially interpreting the scene as a supernatural 'show of fairies', the reality of the tragedy sets in, and the supernatural immediately dissipates, 'undeceiv'd' into the realities of surviving and living on. This may be an important origin scene for the *Essays*: Grant's penchant for this form of writing seems to have emerged from the project of gathering information for Steuart. After collating her sources, Grant understood that the information she was privy to, and the extensive connections that she had, placed her in a position of authority. In the second letter to Steuart, Grant proceeds to represent her proximity to the Lochiels:

> The present Fassfern, whom I knew very well, is nephew to Donald of Lochiel, and knows all that can be known of his own family. But then he communicated many interesting particulars to John Hume, and was, I believe, very much displeas'd at the manner in which that writer garbl'd the intelligence entrusted to him.[686]

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[684] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 264.
[685] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 265.
[686] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 278.

Grant is conscious as ever of the fact that folklore and anecdotes are precarious, and that they need to be handled with care. Nevertheless, her sharp words on the failings of existing historiographical writing on Culloden and the Jacobite cause, and her confidence in redressing 'garbled' 'intelligence' are striking for someone in her position. In detailing her connection to another prominent figure with information about Culloden, Grant refers to Sir Eneas Macpherson, whose sister she had been friends with when living at Fort Augustus. She asserts that

> this major Macpherson is the person of all others of whom I could best depend on for ability and inclination to furnish me with anecdotes regularly dated in chronological order.[687]

Indeed, the inclusion of letters sent to Grant by Eneas Macpherson provides another alternative voice in the text, and shows that even early in Grant's Highland life, and somewhat at odds with the sentiments she expresses at the beginning of *Letters from the Mountains*, she was not always isolated from important social networks. The friendship also lasted: Grant notes, 'When I was in London last, he came up from Colchester and saw me very frequently'.[688] She then highlights her first-hand relationships with family members of Lochiel:

> I knew well two granddaughters of Lochiel's, sisters of the late Clunie, who were our next neighbours at Laggan. I was very intimate, too, with Miss Margaret, daughter of the unfortunate Dr. Cameron, Lochiel's brother.[689]

Furthermore, she informs Steuart how her knowledge is complemented by anecdotes imparted by her mother, who 'remembers much of the Lochiels, whose memory she adores'.[690] Not neglecting to demonstrate the extent of her authority concerning Lovat, Grant informs Steuart that 'Macpherson of Benchar, who knew the whole race [of Lovat's] was my particular acquaintance'.[691] This anecdotal chain is supplemented by information accessible by way of Grant's mother-in-law who 'was nearly related to lady Lovat, and saw her often after her

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[687] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 279.
[688] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 278.
[689] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 278.
[690] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 279.
[691] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 285.

marriage'.[692] Perhaps however, the potential pièce de resistance in Grant's intelligence concerning both the Lochiels and the Lovats is James Macpherson's son, of whom Grant states 'if I saw him I could draw much out of him, but he is far too lazy to write'.[693] Though connected with the still-living witness and authorities, Grant notes in the *Stuart Cause* that the simple human failings of procrastination and lack of interest may be two obstacles to her antiquarian project. These are perhaps the failings that prompted Grant to highlight in the *Essays* the danger that modern Highland men might become too ignorant and indolent to be bothered with the prospect of documenting and preserving Highland culture, and drove some of her most determined efforts as a woman writer committed to its preservation and defence. Indeed, Peter Womack observes in Grant's work an insistence that 'half a century after Macpherson a living Gaelic tradition could have been recovered if its amateurs had tried harder'.[694] Dilatoriness is a major problem for an antiquarian project; the fragile and perishable nature of primary source is another:

> He is, however, in possession of a treasure that will perish with him if not soon rescued from his hands. He has a great quantity of papers by him, the materials of a great work which his father [James Macpherson] had in contemplation; on his favourite subject.[695]

The fragility of a broader Gaelic cultural legacy—dependent upon information that is redeemable but not for long—is conveyed here.

From the outset Lovat is depicted as something of a tyrannical Highland Clan chief, which in the *Essays* Grant had insisted was a rare phenomenon.[696] Yet though his qualities in leadership are lacking, Grant observes how he had at least aimed at presenting himself as a chief who cared about the common people:

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[692] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 285.
[693] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 285.
[694] Womack, *Improvement and Romance: The Scottish Highlands in British Writing after the Forty-Five*, 169.
[695] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 285.
[696] Grant, *Essays*, 1: 209.

> Tho' his most valuable possessions and his family were in Aird, the true centre of his power and popularity was in Stratheric […] There he contrived to be really belov'd by the common people, and there he was both popular and patriotic.[697]

As discussed in Chapter Three, Grant opined that familiarity and approachability were necessary requirements for a Highland chief and that the Highland people measured a leader by the extent of their compassion and familiarity with their followers. Grant claims that Lovat took pains to be viewed in this way, noting how he would often:

> walk alone on the road and whenever he met a peasant, examine him with regard to the number of his children and state of his welfare […] But the old women of all others were those he was most at pains to win even in the lowest ranks.[698]

Grant's argument is that Lovat was aware that women possessed considerable influence when it came to a Highland clan chief's reputation and consequently, he treated even women of 'the lowest ranks' with care. However, her narration of the reality of Lovat's domestic life also suggests a somewhat duplicitous man, far removed from the spirit of Cultural Jacobitism and its chivalric elements. In the first place in the treatment of his wives: 'He married a daughter of the Laird of Grant (about the year '22) […] to this lady, whose modest virtues, and pious resignation deserv'd a better fate, he made a harsh and negligent husband.[699] Grant also stresses that Lovat neglected to feed his servants, with a comic anecdote of guests having their plates snatched away before they had finished their food so that the servants might feed on the leftovers.[700] But it was primarily Lovat's influence over Charles Edward and the subsequent failure of the Jacobite Rebellion for which Grant holds him accountable, implying that Lovat endangered the life of Charles Edward in the immediate aftermath of Culloden. She describes how the Prince and some followers had visited Lovat at his home where Lovat had attempted to persuade the Prince not to abandon the military struggle, citing the victory of 'your great ancestor Robert Bruce, who lost eleven battles and won Scotland by the

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[697] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 259.
[698] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 259.
[699] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 261-2.
[700] This was a preoccupation: in an unpublished letter of 1834 to the Scottish author and politician Mackintosh Mackay (1793-1873), Grant accuses Mackay of the same thing, and suggests that his own failure to feed his servants had earned him a bad reputation throughout the Highlands.) Anne Grant, *Letter 17 to Macintosh Mackay*, in *Letters from Anne Grant Mainly to Macintosh Mackay*, University of St Andrews Library, MS PR4728.G16M3.

Twelfth'.[701] While Lovat's advice may or may not have been foolhardy, and would have perhaps led to the Prince's capture, his rhetoric around Robert the Bruce sounded a distinct echo between Jacobitism and the longer history of the Scottish nation. However, Grant observes how the same patriotism in Lovat's remonstrances was absent when he himself is captured by the Hanoverian forces:

> When the party from Fort Augustus came to seize him there, he affected to mistake them for a detachment from the Rebel forces, started up on his knees and drew his sword, crying 'Traitors, you need not hope to bring me to your purpose, I will draw my sword for my lawful sovereign King George as long as I live'.[702]

Grant presents Lovat as having displayed rashness both in entreating the Prince to commence the insurrection prematurely and later by disregarding the Prince's wellbeing in imploring him to continue fighting. When it comes to his own welfare, Grant's version of Lovat is the epitome of selfishness, one who possesses none of the honourable qualities that she associates with a Highland chief. In many ways Grant's apparent aversion to Lovat is because he was not in-keeping with her ideals of what an authentic Highland man should be. (In Chapter One I noted how, in *Letters from the Mountains*, Grant was keen to show her aversion to a man she described as 'Smelfungus' because he appeared to betray a temperament out of kilter with that of a Highlander.) Lovat is not only improper here, but perverts the figure of the Highland chief, in Grant's mind. Read in this way, Lovat simply does not align with what she regards to be the ideals of Cultural Jacobitism. Grant's conclusion on Lovat does however hint at a degree of redemption. She notes how, during his final days as a prisoner in the Tower of London, in keeping with Highland traditions,

> All he wished was, as he expressed it 'to end his days in his own country', and to attain what all his life he had most desired, the honour of being buried with his brave ancestors, of having all his clan in tears following the funeral and the *Coronach* of the old women of the country over his grave.[703]

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[701] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 265.
[702] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 265.
[703] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 267.

(In Chapter One, I discussed how Grant centred the topic of burial in the Highlands in her treatment of death and belonging.) Her final remark here laments wasted potential:

> Thus died Simon Lord Lovat, in his eightieth year, always formidable, yet always contemptible, who, had he been sincere and consistent with the same address and ability might have been despotic among his own connections, might have sway'd the whole North with unbounded influence, and finally, might have liv'd esteem'd and honour'd, and died belov'd and lamented.[704]

Notable here is Grant's use of the term 'despotic' as something almost admirable. Despotic in literal terms means 'anti-democratic'. While the trajectory of Whig influence upon culture and politics has led to autocratic forms of governance being automatically associated with a lack of freedom and dismissed as retrograde in the modern age, the Highland Clan system and Cultural Jacobitism are presented by Grant as possible alternatives to democracy here, and throughout her writing (although potentially also 'contemptible' and easily 'sway'd'). Ultimately, Grant suggests that the outcome of the Jacobite attempt to restore the Stuarts may have been different if the personal qualities of leaders had aligned with the Highland values she sought to promote.

In the section concerning Lochiel, Grant's thinking again anticipates later themes in the *Essays*. The opening letter begins:

> It is in tracing the history of Man when he has ceas'd to be a savage, and when his faculties, by a certain degree of moral culture, amid the benefits of social order, have begun to unfold. In short, it is in the patriarchal ages, before the coercion of laws and the tyranny of customs have transform'd him into an artificial being, that we can study nature undebas'd by ferocity, and undisguis'd by refinement.[705]

For Grant, Lochiel is partly a figure of another time who has 'ceas'd to be a savage' but has not quite capitulated his freedom to the 'coercion of laws', and as such is not an 'artificial being'. There are two ways of reading this passage. One could be that Lochiel is *only* a man

[704] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 268.
[705] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 298.

of the past, and it is primarily in 'the history of man' that Grant insists figures like him can be found. However, for Grant it is the values of the present that are defined as absent, and in need of the resurgent past values. For her, superfluity and artifice have consumed mainstream Anglophone societies, and they threaten to encroach and consume the Highlands. This can be read in contrast to Scott's *Waverley*, where another man of the past, Fergus McIvor, functions as a noble but necessary sacrifice paving the way to modernity, union and ultimately, the replacement of militant Jacobitism with a more sanitised, sentimental strain.[706] For Grant, on the other hand Lochiel is not a relic of the past, but rather a defender of tradition in the face of corruption. It is society that must conform to Lochiel and not, as in the case of Fergus McIvor, the other way around.

Grant again insists that the moral codes of kinship developed in the age of patriarchal feudalism and brought to fruition in Cultural Jacobitism as a limitation of royal prerogative are an alternative tradition to that of the modern forms of a more distant constitutional monarchy:

> A chieftain might be cruel to his enemies, but never to his friends. To their own people they were invariably clement and indulgent. Nor were these paternal rulers in any sense so despotic as they have been represented; so far otherwise, that of all the monarchs they were the most limited, not being permitted to take a step of the least importance without consulting their friends. By this expression was meant the leaders of their tribe, including relations so distant, that in any other country, they would not be recognis'd as such.[707]

By using the term 'friends' as interchangeable with the word 'relations' here, Grant is opposing the dichotomy promoted in Enlightenment philosophy by men like Adam Smith whereby friendship was seen as a positive alternative to kinship.[708] In contrast to Lovat, who did all in his power to hasten a premature insurrection, in Grant's account the Lochiel family are cautious, loyal to Jacobitism and the Stuarts but insistent that the Rising should not commence until the support of the French and the Jacobites in England could be confirmed:

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[706] Davis, *Jacobitism and Cultural Memory*, 73.
[707] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 300.
[708] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982), Part VI, Section II, Chapter I, 220–21.

> John Lochiel [Donald's exiled father] had look'd too near into the court of France to depend much upon it; and to the sound judgment of his son it seem'd obvious that an attempt unsupported by powerful aid from abroad would be unavailing. Indeed it was evident that without foreign aid, and the hearty co-operation of the English Jacobites, any further attempts to reinstate the exil'd Prince would only end, as the former had done, in a desperate display of unavailing courage and fidelity, and the utter ruin of his Scotch adherents […]
>
> In this state of matters he was appris'd of an intended descent on Scotland, which was to be powerfully supported by the French, and no less effectually seconded by the English Jacobites. It was necessary to be well assur'd of this before any steps could be taken in a country aw'd by garrisons and known to be disaffected.[709]

In the hindsight of defeat, Grant's presentation of Lochiel's approach is that of the rational party; her account positions him as the measured but tragically overruled counterbalance to Lovat's hasty desire for conflict:

> Lochiel strongly express'd his sorrow and concern at seeing him so ill provided, and so slenderly attended. He strongly dissuaded him from showing himself till more suitable preparation should be made for his reception, and till a force should arrive on the coast strong enough to encourage and support.[710]

Ultimately, however it was the advice of Lovat that prevailed:

> Full of the ardour of youth and presumption of sanguine hope, the Prince remain'd unmov'd by the chieftain's arguments, and began to reproach him with a circumspection incompatible with genuine attachment, and which tended to damp the zeal of his more courageous followers.[711]

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[709] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 324-325.
[710] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 325.
[711] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 325.

Perhaps the most sentimental, rhetorical passage of Grant's oeuvre follows this revelation. Here Lochiel's greatness is measured by the resolve he displays following the Prince's decision, even though he knew it meant almost certain catastrophe:

> Seeing no persuasion could deter the leader from prosecuting this rash adventure, he arranged his papers and affairs, as a man setting out on a journey from whence he was not to return, and with ominous sadness collected all his force, and having once embark'd in this perilous enterprise, he exerted himself with as much determin'd courage and eager perseverance as if it had been undertaken with his entire approbation.[712]

Another distinction between the two men arises here. Lovat's disability had prevented him from engaging in fighting and while Grant does not explicitly associate him with cowardice, the allusion is never far from the surface. Aside from stressing Lochiel as possessing superior judgment to Lovat, he is also portrayed as physically brave, loyal and prepared to sacrifice his life in battle, even though he is aware that the odds are heavily against him.

In an initial reading of the *Letters concerning the Stuart Cause*, then, it is Lochiel that can be seen as a personification of the kind of Cultural Jacobitism characteristic of the ideals that Grant's writing promotes. While brave, loyal and stalwart in support of the restoration of the Stuarts, he nevertheless understood that the greater cause was the protection of the culture upon which he, the other chiefs, and their adherents had based their society. By contrast, Lovat demonstrates his duplicity by working for the Hanoverians as a spy, but also, in his treatment of his vassals, and ultimately by attempting to switch sides (again) upon being captured, displays conduct generally unbecoming of a Highland chief. The problem with this interpretation is that the death of Lochiel in the text signifies a finality that is more conducive to the sentimental Jacobitism of Scott rather than the emphasis on survival (and superiority) underpinning Grant's Cultural Jacobitism. There is an alternative reading of Grant's narrative that might see Lovat rather than Lochiel as the central figure. In the aftermath of the defeat at Culloden, Grant explains how 'Lochiel's followers were ravaged with unsparing cruelty'.[713] For all his superior morals and principles, Lochiel's conduct in life could not ensure the

[712] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 326.
[713] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 328.

safety of his people after his death. Despite the bravery and loyalty that he displayed towards his clan and his monarch, the British did not reward these qualities nor respect his conduct:

> From this time Lochiel's health began to decline. Exile terrible to all was to him embittered by a separation from vassals so faithful and attached, and friends so numerous and so worthy as fell not to the lot of any other man.[714]

Lochiel's legacy was not enhanced by his willingness to follow Charles Edward and the loyalty and bravery that he displayed in the Rising. (Indeed, modern historians such as Murray Pittock have observed Lochiel's military strategy as antithetical to the thrust of the requirements for a stealthy and relentless march on London.[715]) Lovat may have been executed, but Lochiel's exile is presented by Grant as a fate worse than death. The narrative of the duplicitous Lovat and the patriotic Lochiel is complicated further by the paths their sons would take. It is through Lovat's inheritors rather than Lochiel's that the permanence of Cultural Jacobitism in Grant's writing becomes clearer.

Grant's narrative ends with an account of Lochiel's son Charles Cameron of Lochiel as a 'landless laird', 'cherish'd with enthusiasm […] as the representative of their ancient chiefs' but lost to the compromises of Hanoverian loyalism and imperial expansion. The 'friends' of the younger Lochiel 'gave him a very good education, and at an early period procur'd for him a commission in the British army', and he was then, in 1776, at the outset of revolution,

> offered a company in General Fraser's regiment, the 71st, provided he could raise it among his clan. This he soon and easily did, and march'd to Glasgow at the head of it, in order to embark on board some vessels then lying at Greenock under orders to sail for America.[716]

Survival here entailed accepting Union, military enrolment, and emigration, as for many Scots before and since (there may be some resonance here with Grant's ambivalence about her father's own similar military career). But the lost leader is the central concern here:

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[714] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 328.
[715] Pittock, *Jacobitism*, 98.
[716] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 330.

> Government being […] engag'd in levying men for the American War, found it convenient to use the agency of the attainted Chiefs for that purpose. They, notwithstanding their poverty and privations, retaining an unbounded influence over the minds of their clans.[717]

Lochiel's son was such an 'attainted chief' for Grant, this legal enactment represented a sense of cultural forfeiture. Grant's narrative emphasises more the bond of loyalty of the subordinate clansmen: when the younger Lochiel falls ill, ultimately to die before his departure for America, his clansmen

> positively refus'd to stir, asserting that they had not engag'd with King George but Lochiel, that they would follow him wherever he went, but would obey no other leader. Finally, in the Green of Glasgow, they made a circle round the adjutant, laid down their arms, and they positively refus'd to take them up again till order'd by their chief.[718]

Though the British military viewed the influence of the chief over his clan as an invaluable in the enlistment, to all intents and purposes, this shift in allegiance from loyalty to chief to loyalty to the British government cut the traditional bond between the chief and his clan. Donald Lochiel's loyalty to his leader, Charles Stuart, was transferred to the next generation, but fatally comprised in their chief's acceptance of unionism and British imperial goals, no longer loyalty as such but compliance to the forces committed to the destruction of Highland Jacobitism rather than its preservation. As for the clansmen, according to Grant 'most of this devoted company perish'd in the contest which follow'd.'.[719]

For this reason, it is ultimately the Lovats who resonate more readily with Grant's Cultural Jacobitism and prevent her narrative from becoming one of ultimate capitulation and defeat. In contrast to the loyalist conformity of the junior Lochiels, Grant observes how Lovat's son Alexander

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[717] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 329.
[718] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 330.
[719] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 330.

> could not endure to go abroad again, and had too much honour to take the oaths to Government, which would have in that case employ'd him. With much truth, honour and humanity, he inherited his father's wit and self-possession with a vein of keen satire which he indulg'd in bitter epigrams against the enemies of his family.[720]

In reality, Lovat's eldest son Simon Fraser of Lovat (1726-1782) followed a similar trajectory of rehabilitation into the British establishment as Charles Cameron of Lochiel (and indeed the older Lochiel brothers, whom Grant does not mention). Although imprisoned after Culloden, Simon would also serve in the British military in America, as the colonel of the 78th regiment of foot (adjacent to Duncan Macvicar's regiment, the 77th, and raised and posted to America for the Seven Years War in the same year, 1757).[721] His brother Archibald's career was not entirely dissimilar. But they do not figure in Grant's account. Like his father, a cultural, literary inheritance is stressed: 'Were Gaelic wit and humour (of all things the most volatile and evanescent) translatable, the good things said by or to Lovat would furnish a little jest-book.' The rest 'is really better consigned to oblivion'.[722]

It is worth finally revisiting the passage where Grant relays Lovat's attempts to spur on Charles Edward by invoking the names of his ancestor Robert the Bruce, and concluding on what this anecdote reveals about her Cultural Jacobitism. Essentially Grant uses Lovat and Lochiel to play off and reflect the virtues of Scotland's archetypal hero, Charles Edward. In Lochiel, we are given the side of Charles Edward that is loyal to the nation, protective of its people, yet willing to compromise in order to secure their safety. In Lovat we have the side of Charles Stuart that is a little reckless and selfish yet, which is unwilling to compromise. Murray Pittock identifies two themes linked to the Jacobite ballad. The first theme is where Scotland takes the form of a maiden awaiting the return of the absent monarch as a 'messianic deliverer'. However:

> A second theme, linked to the first, presents the absent monarch as a social bandit, a criminal hero or lord of misrule who is able to reverse the cultural categories of the Whig state and restore customary rights.[723]

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[720] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 270.
[721] Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Frasers of Lovat, with Genealogies of the Principal Families of the Name, to Which Is Added Those of Dunballoch and Prophecy* (Inverness: A. & W. Mackenzie, 1896), 489.
[722] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 271.
[723] Pittock, *Scottish Song*, 107.

If the term 'lord of misrule' is applicable to anyone in Grant's writing, it is Lovat, both the father and the only one of his sons she describes. Both father and son represent a wily patriotism that does not observe rules and is willing to do anything to survive. Read in this way, her Cultural Jacobitism is not necessarily rigid or particularly respectable. It is not, in fact, best represented by the compliance of Lochiel, but the craftiness of Lovat. Neither will it simply march to its own death if commanded to, as did Lochiel's son and the soldiers that he commanded. Grant's treatment of the deaths of the two lairds bears this out:

> It is hard to say what could particularly exasperate the conquerors at a character so distinguished for mildness and probity as that of Lochiel, yet his blood seemed to be sought after with the most rancorous perseverance.[724]

Grant suggests here, somewhat counterintuitively, that Lochiel's capacity as an adversary was limited; the British wanted Lochiel dead because they imagined his death would symbolise the death of Jacobitism. Lovat, in contrast, was captured and executed. His request for a Highland burial (again a preoccupation for Grant) was denied:

> The Ministry, who seemed still to smart from the wounds of the Highland claymore, appeared to consider Lovat as terrible even in death, and dreaded the influence his bones might have on his countrymen should they return to native soil.[725]

It is worth briefly noting the sense of injustice that connects Lovat's Scottishness with his trial and death sentence. Mackenzie details how Lovat had requested some form of 'counsel or solicitors to cross-examine those produced on behalf of the crown' and that 'if he had been tried in Scotland […] he would have been allowed this privilege; but the rules of English law' prevented this.[726]. Ultimately, though, it is the power of symbolic commitment to the ground of native culture and custom that represents the 'terrible' and 'dreaded' (for its enemies) influence of Jacobite survival. In this way, Grant's Cultural Jacobitism draws on the spirit of Lovat as much as that of Lochiel; conscious of its possible future influence even in death or oblivion and possessing an indestructible and indomitable spirit, it sought to be unruly and

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[724] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 327.
[725] Grant, *Stuart Cause*, 268.
[726] Mackenzie, *History of the Frasers of Lovat*, 1896, 437.

disruptive in the face of the Hanoverian-Whig dynastic ascendancy, English and Lowland Scots hegemony over the Highlands, and the progressive abstractions of Scottish Enlightenment philosophy, all of which might be made to 'smart from the wounds of the Highland claymore'. This Coda then, founded upon letters that were kept private until after Grant's death, overtly illustrates what the previous chapters, constructed around texts edited by Grant in her lifetime, collectively insinuate: Grant's Cultural Jacobitism would do what it could to endure and survive, ensuring that the interests of the Highland people and way of life, expressed in Gaelic forms caught from the 'volatile and evanescent' present, came before the interests of dynastic loyalism. Through Grant's philosophical lens, then, Jacobitism encompassed much more than the support for a particular family line. Where the Hanoverian Accession may have signalled the demise of Jacobitism for some, neither a change of dynasty nor the constitutional reforms that ensued could dispel the wider ambition of Grant's version. Rather than accepting nostalgically and sentimentally the past as only the past, Grant's Cultural Jacobitism would go on fighting to preserve its own future.

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