

Political Sentiments in Disguise: Scottish Jacobite Songs between 1700 and 1750

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Abstract

This thesis examines the ways in which the Jacobites disguised and conveyed political sentiments in their songs. Music and songs have been crucial mechanisms for expressing the ideas of the Jacobite movement in eighteenth-century Scotland. There has been scholarly debate on the contemporaneity of Jacobite songs. In this thesis, I argue that Jacobite lyrics and songs should be read as texts contemporaneous with the events they describe and that they should be seen as valuable sources of information on the views of the middle and lower classes on the social and political situations at the time, instead of the perspective of the elite that has been conserved in historical accounts and writings. Chapter 1 presents a brief history of the Jacobites and the political situation in eighteenth-century Scotland and discusses the key concepts of this thesis. Chapter 2 discusses three case studies of three Jacobite songs that could be categorized as aggressive, sacred and erotic and presents how Jacobite poets addressed their political problems through symbolism in songs, often disguised as love songs. These songs were printed for distribution on the streets, in pubs, at home and at private parties. Jacobite songs prove to be remarkable reflections of the eighteenth-century underdogs of Scottish society.

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Introduction

When today one is asked about Scottish music, the answer usually comes down to bagpipes and fiddles. Even though this is not wrong, the general views on Scottish music tend to be somewhat simplified.¹ Music scholarship has tended to focus on continental and at most English classical music of the eighteenth century; however, some significant features in the Scottish song tradition of the eighteenth century have been overlooked. Scottish songs, especially songs from the Jacobite movement, are remarkable sources that reflect on society and the social and political situation in the eighteenth century from the perspective of a suppressed movement in that age.

In this thesis I will explore in which ways political sentiments were conveyed through *erotic*, *aggressive* and *sacred* Jacobite songs in the period between 1700 and 1750. In doing this, I focus on a case study for each of these categories. These categories were defined by Murray G. H. Pittock in his book *The Invention of Scotland* and have been subsequently used by scholars in Jacobite studies.²

In the first chapter I present the theoretical framework and relevant concepts for my discussions of the selected case studies. The chapter begins with a brief introduction of the historical circumstances that led to the creation and dissemination of this repertoire in the period between 1700 and 1750. Then, I will examine what has been said from a literary point of view about these lyrics, and for this, I rely on Murray G. H. Pittock, Phillip V. Bohlman and Elise Bickford Jorgens. In the end, I will explain my approach to the relation between music and texts in my analysis of the case studies and I shall also look at the symbolism that has been used in Jacobite lyrics in relation to concepts, such as ‘national identity’ and the ‘woman-nation’.

Chapter two discusses three case studies and the research question will be answered with the help of three sub-questions, namely: how is the sentiment of loyalty towards the Stuarts and explicitly to the absent monarch expressed in Jacobite songs? In which ways were Christian and

¹ Grove Music Online, s.v. “Scotland,” by Kenneth Elliott, Francis Collinson and Peggy Duesenberry, accessed November 12, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.library.uu.nl/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/0mo-9781561592630-e-0000040113>.

² Murray G. H. Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1991), 46.

pagan themes used to address the contemporary socio-political and cultural problems in Scotland after the Act of Union from 1707? How was fellow-rebel imagery used to strengthen the support of the Jacobites for the Stuart king? The case studies come from *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland (Second Series)*, by James Hogg. This work was published in 1821 and remains the standard edition for this repertoire.³

In my analysis of the case studies “The Blackbird”, “What Ails Thee, Poor Shepherd?” and “Geordie Sits in Charlie’s Chair”, I will show how political messages are disguised and conveyed through Jacobite songs and I will examine how the music uses what scholars have identified as *Scottish* musical characteristics, such as pentatonic modes and the use of strophic songs.⁴ These characteristics represent evidence of how the music emphasizes certain keywords in the lyrics, such as references to the political sentiments through common symbols and metaphors known at the time in Scotland. In doing this, I aim to strengthen the position of Jacobite songs in musicology, specifically regarding the issues of cultural and national identity.

³ For this study, I will use the edition republished by the Edinburgh University Press and edited by Murray Pittock (republished in 2003). The editorial notes in this edition provide further information on the history of the songs, which are still considered plausible, and their context. According to Hogg, these pieces of evidence that he collected and put together confirm that these songs were written in the eighteenth century.

⁴ Grove Music Online, s.v “Scotland,” by Elliott, Collinson and Duesenberry, accessed November 12, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.library.uu.nl/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/0-mo-9781561592630-e-0000040113>.

Chapter 1: Jacobite Songs as Historical Documents

In the eighteenth century, Scottish poetry and songs were mainly Jacobite. Murray G. H. Pittock argues that the Jacobite movement identified with Scotland as a domestic nation and its languages; Scots, Scottish Gaelic and Scottish English.⁵ The Jacobites were supporters of the Scottish Stuart dynasty and believed that the members of this dynasty were the true rulers of Scotland. In 1688, the Catholic king James Stuart VII/II (r. 1685-1688) was overthrown by the Protestant king William of Orange during the “Glorious Revolution” in 1688.⁶ The Jacobite movement tried to reclaim the crown from the oppressors, William of Orange and his successors, during the three Jacobite uprisings in 1689-90, 1715 and 1745-46. The uprisings and subsequent political and social circumstances became the subjects of the Jacobite songs. These songs were sung in Gaelic, Scots and English and could be heard on the streets where printed works were distributed, but also in pubs, clubs and at private parties.⁷

The political situation in Scotland after the last Jacobite uprising has been addressed extensively in the field of history. For example, Eric Richards has claimed that “the Clearances stand for much more than a sheep invasion: they become emblematic of landlords versus the people, of aristocratic power versus the rights of the community, and, in extreme versions, of one civilization against another. On the outer limits there is a suggestion of genocide and ethnic

⁵ Pittock, “Scottish Song and the Jacobite Cause,” in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707 – 1918)*, ed. Ian Brown and Susan Manning (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), 105; Wendy J. Anderson, “Introduction,” in *Language in Scotland: Corpus-Based Studies*, ed. Wendy J. Anderson (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2013), 13.

⁶ From here on I will not use the term “Glorious” anymore as the Revolution was not “glorious” for anyone other than the victors of this political development. The term was used as such in history writings before the twentieth century as the Revolution was supposedly “bloodless”. This Revolution took place in England in 1688-89 when Protestant Dutch stadtholder William of Orange took over the English throne and became sovereign of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. For more on this, see James R. Hertzler, “Who Dubbed It ‘The Glorious Revolution?’” *Albion* 19, no. 4 (Winter, 1987).

⁷ Pittock, “Scottish song and the Jacobite Cause,” 108; Many Jacobite songs in Gaelic exist, see for example Mairghread Nighean Lachlainn, *Mairghread Nighean Lachlainn: song-maker of Mull: An Edition and Study of the Extant Corpus of her Verse in Praise of the Jacobite Maclean Leaders of her Time*, ed. Colm Ó Baoill (Edinburgh, Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 2009), but I did not use it in writing this thesis. Songs in Scottish English and English would reach a bigger audience as these languages were more widespread.

cleansing, the elimination of a ‘race’ at the hands of a ruthless enemy.”⁸ The reign of the ‘cold-blooded’ enemy that the Jacobites were afraid of had become reality after the last uprising.

The scholarship on Jacobite songs to this day has been dominated by Murray G. H. Pittock, who published extensively in the last three decades on Jacobite songs and their relationship with the political issues in Scotland in the eighteenth century. Other authors, such as Anne McKee Stapleton and Neil Guthrie, have relied heavily on his discussions of primary sources, findings and conclusions, but the majority had very little to add.⁹ For this reason, I will look primarily at Pittock’s publications. It is hoped that more scholars will see musicological value of Jacobite songs so that research will be broadened, especially from the perspective of national identity and music consumption in Scotland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

An important aspect for my discussion is Pittock’s categorization of Jacobite songs. In songs, the Jacobites found a manner of expressing political sentiment and criticism towards the oppressing rulers without being obvious to people outside the movement and specifically the oppressor, the English. Jacobite lyricists addressed their subjects through various literary, biblical and mythological themes such as the woman-nation and different forms of the absent monarch, but also through classical analogies in which they portrayed the Stuarts as Greek and Roman heroes, and Christian saints.¹⁰ In his influential study, *The Invention of Scotland*, Pittock proposes a convincing method to categorize these Jacobite songs thematically. “I shall suggest a basic method of categorizing the songs themselves, the better to understand the thrust of their arguments. One of the features which shows Jacobite song as ideological rather than occasional, and thus an element in a political argument, is the patterning present in its analyses.”¹¹ Indeed, it is the patterns that can be identified in these songs that make us understand how they might have been consumed by the audiences at the time. Pittock distinguishes three major types of songs: the

⁸ Eric Richards, *Debating the Highland Clearances* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 7.

⁹ Anne McKee Stapleton, *Pointed Encounters: Dance in Post-Culloden Scottish Literature* (Amsterdam and New York, Rodopi, 2014); Neil Guthrie, *The Material Culture of the Jacobites* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁰ Pittock, “Scottish Song and Jacobite Cause,” 107.

¹¹ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 46.

aggressive, the erotic, and the sacred.¹² He argues that by means of these categories the meaning of the sentiments transmitted in the songs are more understandable to modern audiences and more accessible for critical discussion to scholars. While it is helpful for modern scholars to think retrospectively when classifying Jacobite songs, it is important to consider that the eighteenth-century audience did not perceive them in categories.

Pittock defines aggressive Jacobite songs as explicitly ideological songs.¹³ The subjects of these songs often are battles or a call to arms, such as “Geordie Sits in Charlie’s Chair”, which I address in chapter 2. The title of this song is very straightforward, one knows exactly what the song is about from the title alone. The text is full of explicit attacks on the Hanoverian rulers, comparing them to Satan and the “deil”.¹⁴ Aggressive songs might have well functioned as propaganda in that they rally the Jacobite soldiers. Propaganda in relation to the Jacobite cause has been addressed in historical and literary scholarship by authors such as Thomas E. Kaiser and Paul Kléber Monod, and especially Monod explained convincingly that propaganda worked as “the vital heart of Jacobite culture.”¹⁵

Battles are mentioned often in aggressive Jacobite songs, but also names of enemies.¹⁶ Frequently, the songs tell how the Jacobites would punish their enemies, described in an explicit and brutal manner, which is typical of aggressive songs. Pittock stresses that these aggressive songs make no use of symbolism and metaphors and often very little imagery: they simply “tell the tale” as Pittock presents them.¹⁷

The sacred Jacobite song is explicit in another way and usually deals with biblical imagery.¹⁸ Sacred Jacobite song is similar to the erotic Jacobite song because they both portray Scotland as abandoned land. In sacred songs, Scotland is the deprived and desolated Israel, in

¹² Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 46.

¹³ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 46.

¹⁴ The Hanoverian rulers being William of Orange and his officials.

¹⁵ Paul Kléber Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688-1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 91; Thomas E. Kaiser, “The Drama of Charles Edward Stuart, Jacobite Propaganda, and French Political Protest, 1745-1750” in *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 30, no. 4 (Summer 1997): 367.

¹⁶ Such as the Duke of Cumberland in “Geordie Sits in Charlie’s Chair”.

¹⁷ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 46.

¹⁸ Sometimes in combination with themes of Roman mythology.

erotic songs, Scotland is the abandoned and lonely “lassie”.¹⁹ A characteristic of sacred song is the theme of renewal in rural areas, which allowed the poets to address contemporary political problems explicitly. For instance, these referred to political matters such as the malt tax, the inflicted imperial economy that substituted their domestic one at the beginning of the eighteenth century.²⁰ Another characteristic in sacred songs are the biblical references and themes of liberty that were often used to express criticism on the outcomes of the Revolution for the Scottish people. “The sacred Jacobite lyric had no doubts that the Revolution had brought little liberty: only the language of freedom with the practice of oppression.”²¹

Of all three categories, political sentiment is most concealed in erotic songs. Pittock borrowed the label ‘erotic’ from an old tradition: “of the use of erotic metaphors for sacred relationships, dating back to the Bible itself.”²² ‘Erotic’ here is applicable to the relationship between the nation and the monarch. Erotic Jacobite song “had always existed by kidnapping traditional airs and words to express political sentiments. It could thus, however flimsily, disguise its subject as a conventional love song.”²³ In erotic song, Charles Stuart is the ‘lover’ whose absence is mourned by his partner, which is represented as the woman-nation, who is not always named as such. Due to the sophisticated level of disguising that this type of song allowed, the erotic song was favored by many Jacobite lyricists and probably was one that circulated most (aggressive and sacred songs might have created problems for performers in public spaces).²⁴

The popularity of these songs caused later generations of poets to compose new songs in the Jacobite tradition. This development created a distance between the new audiences and the

¹⁹ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 46.

²⁰ In the second half of the eighteenth century, these themes were references to the exile of the Scottish people and the Highland Clearances. For more on this, see Murray G. H. Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1991).

²¹ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 47; The criticism towards the government in these songs already reveal the down side of the Revolution of 1688, a matter that became subject of research in historical scholarship not earlier than the 1980s. For more on this, see Lois G. Schworer, *The Revolution of 1688-89: Changing Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Alasdair Raffe, “Propaganda, Religious Controversy and the Williamite Revolution in Scotland” in *Dutch Crossing* 29, no. 1 (2005): 21-42.

²² Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 46.

²³ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 46.

²⁴ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 46; Paula McDowell, “‘The Manufacture and Lingua-facture of Ballad-Making’: Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth-Century Ballad Discourse,” *The Eighteenth Century* 47, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 156.

events described in the songs which were invariably those of the eighteenth century, resulting in a schism in the scholarly world during the twentieth century when scholars dismissed the idea of contemporaneity of Jacobite songs. Scholars such as David Johnson and William Donaldson argue that most Jacobite songs considered of the eighteenth century cannot be contemporary to the events they describe, and Donaldson even labels them as “brilliant fakes” in the sense that they were not composed by Jacobite composers but by later composers.²⁵ In his claim, Donaldson only considers twelve songs that were composed after 1780 and states that “most Jacobite songs died with the events that gave them birth”.²⁶ It seems that Donaldson has not considered manuscripts such as the NLS MS. 19.3.44, which contains Jacobite songs from the early eighteenth-century.²⁷ Evidence like this dismisses Donaldson’s claim.

An in-between position in the field is given by David Daiches, who claims that the aggressive Jacobite songs are indeed contemporary with the historical events they refer to, but the erotic and sacred songs are not as they are of better aesthetic quality.²⁸ I disagree with Donaldson, Johnson and Daiches as they have not considered the evidence that is present in the manuscripts. Pittock has written several articles and books in which he demonstrates using evidence from *A Full Collection of All Poems upon Charles, Princes of Wales* from 1745, Hogg’s *Jacobite Relics of Scotland*, and several manuscripts, that the Jacobite songs in all three categories were closely contemporaneous with the events they refer to.²⁹ I agree with Pittock because I am convinced by textual evidence that many Jacobite songs originated between 1688 and 1746, and are thus contemporaneous with the events they specify. For my argument, I chose Jacobite songs from all three categories identified by Pittock and originated in the first half of the eighteenth century based on textual evidence from manuscripts such as NLS MS. 19.3.44, AUL

²⁵ Pittock, “Sources and Dates for the Jacobite Lyric,” *Archives* xx, no. 89 (April 1993): 25.

²⁶ William Donaldson, *The Jacobite Song: Political Myth and National Identity* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), 4.

²⁷ “Collection of Scottish Poems and Jacobite Songs,” National Library of Scotland, accessed January 1, 2019, <http://manuscripts.nls.uk/repositories/2/resources/15322>.

²⁸ David Daiches, “Robert Burns and Jacobite Song,” in *Critical Essays on Robert Burns*, ed. Donald A. Low (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), 138.

²⁹ For more on this, see Murray G. H. Pittock, “New Jacobite songs of the Forty-five,” in *Studies in Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 267 (1989); Murray G. H. Pittock, “Sources and Dates for the Jacobite Lyric,” *Archives* xx, no. 89 (April 1993): 25-29.

MS. 2740/4/18/2 and AUL MS. 2222, and which were contemporary to the events they describe.³⁰

A key concept that I will address in my discussion is the ‘woman-nation’. The woman-nation theme dominates songs in the erotic category. In Jacobite songs this is similar to the Irish poetic tradition of *aisling*. Bernard O’Donoghue defines *aisling* as “a vision poem in which a woman representing Ireland appears to the dreaming narrator and offers some insight or prophecy, usually about the fate of Ireland.”³¹ In the Irish tradition there is always a male poet giving an account of the woman prophesying. Similarly, in the Scottish tradition, the woman-nation speaks in the first person to the audience, but there is no male poetic narrator re-telling her words to the audience.³² The woman speaking in *aisling* is not part of the nobility nor a figure from classic mythology, she is solely the personification of the nation.³³

Kirsten Stirling claims that “one of the most obvious and visible ways of gendering the nation is the familiar practice of representing the nation itself in the form of a woman, a symbol which is ingrained in European tradition and, judging by its widespread use, has a great deal of attraction.”³⁴ Throughout history, the female body has been a symbol of justice, beauty and truth.³⁵ Stirling points out that: “the female body is also associated with the land itself, both aesthetically and in metaphors of fertility. Thanks to these associations, the female body can represent both the physical, geographical existence of the nation ... and also the more abstract idea or essence of the nation, which is more difficult to illustrate.”³⁶ These exact associations can

³⁰ Pittock, “Sources and Dates for the Jacobite Lyric,” 26-27.

³¹ Bernard O’Donoghue, “The Aisling,” in *A Companion to the Poetic Genre*, ed. Erik Martiny (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 420.

³² Pittock, “Scottish Song and Jacobite Cause,” 106-107.

³³ O’Donoghue, “The Aisling,” 421.

³⁴ Kirsten Stirling, *Bella Caledonia: Woman, Nation, Text* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), 11.

³⁵ For example: Persephone and Demeter in Greek Mythology, and the personification of Mother Earth in certain parts of the world. For more on this, see James J. Preston, *Mother Worship: Theme and Variations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982); Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 24.

³⁶ Stirling, *Bella Caledonia*, 16.

be found in Jacobite songs in that not only the land but also the nation is represented by the image of a woman.³⁷

In the same book, Stirling claims that the woman-nation theme almost never occurred in Scotland before the twentieth century and that it is challenging to find more than a few examples.³⁸ This is striking, and I disagree if I consider that the theme of the woman-nation occurs in nearly all erotic type of Jacobite songs in eighteenth-century Scotland, and knowing that eighteenth-century Scottish poetry was primarily Jacobite. I argue that Stirling's framework for the theme of woman-nation and how this was present in literary texts from Scotland can be applied to erotic Jacobite songs no matter if she was unaware of their existence when she completed her book. I consider in particular how she defines the woman-nation and her body as a metaphor for both the land and the people of the nation.

Elise Bickford Jorgens traces the musical developments in the conventions of setting a poetic text to music in Jacobean and Carolean England (1603-1714).³⁹ These conventions are the musical techniques used by the composer to signify the interpretations of poetry and the use of important elements such as rhythm, harmony, the organization of sound patterns and ornaments.⁴⁰ Jorgens does so by first identifying and explaining "the aspects of poetry that can be interpreted musically (both the mechanics of poetic composition and the words themselves – their literal meaning and their rhetoric and thematic implications)".⁴¹ She then discusses in detail in which ways music is able to provide poetic interpretation. For example, drama and tension can be represented by harmony and textural contrast (in polyphonic music) and the spirit or mood of the poem can be mirrored by the harmonic and rhythmic language in the musical setting.⁴²

³⁷ The theme of fertility of the land often occurs in sacred Jacobite song and the abandoned nation/ "lassie" often is the central theme in erotic Jacobite songs.

³⁸ Stirling, *Bella Caledonia*, 19.

³⁹ Elise Bickford Jorgens, *Well Tun'd Word: Musical Interpretations of English Poetry, 1597-1651* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 3.

⁴⁰ Jorgens, *Well Tun'd Word*, 13.

⁴¹ Jorgens, 6.

⁴² Jorgens, 13.

Although this work focuses on English poetry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the method of analysis Jorgens provides is applicable to the selected case studies as the techniques she outlines are present.

Jorgens provides a method for the analysis of the formal structure and the relation between music and poetry, and shows how syllabic linear structure and the rhyming couplets are displayed in the musical structure.⁴³ She describes the phenomena of strophic musical setting, which is also the case in all three of the case studies I discuss in the next chapter: “the formalizing effect of the setting, combined with the musical repetition of a strophic song, reinforces the repetitive formal structure and emphasizes that these are parallel statements on a single topic.”⁴⁴ Jorgens’s method for analysis of text-music relations is significant for understanding in which ways the music can emphasize the lyrics in Jacobite songs.

Jacobite songs carry traces of nationalism and anti-union sentiments. Similar to what happened at the same time in English poetry, Scotland was portrayed as a nationhood distinct in territory, culture and time in Scottish poetry.⁴⁵ As mentioned before, Scottish poetry and songs were mainly Jacobite in the eighteenth century. Therefore, it can be considered as ‘national music’. Philip V. Bohlman defines national music as the music that “reflects the image of the nation so that those living in the nation recognize themselves in basic, but crucial ways.”⁴⁶ Nationalist music deals with defending cultural borders more heavily and this too is applicable to Jacobite music. By referring to their cultural traits in Jacobite songs, Scotland would be able to distinguish itself from England during and after the Union. Both national and nationalist music connect history to the nation and use it as a narrative. Symbols of national identity that are present in many aggressive songs is the Highlander as the true patriot, but also the Highland dress, pipes and words in Scots such as *Geordie, philabeg* and *laddie*.⁴⁷

⁴³ Jorgens, *Well Tun'd Word*, 60.

⁴⁴ Jorgens, 66.

⁴⁵ Andrew Escobedo, *Nationalism and Historical Loss in Renaissance England: Foxe, Dee, Spenser and Milton* (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2004), 145.

⁴⁶ Philip V. Bohlman, “National Music,” in *Music of European Nationalism: Cultural Identity and Modern History*, ed. Philip V. Bohlman and Michael B. Bakan (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 82-83.

⁴⁷ For example, “Geordie Sits in Charlie’s Chair”: stanza 4, poetic line 5 and “What Ails Thee, Poor Shepherd?”: stanza 4, poetic line 3.

An example of national identity is the Jacobite poetry of Allan Ramsay in the first half of the eighteenth century.⁴⁸ “His espousal of the Highland plaid as one of the main symbols of Scotland and Scottishness directly connects to the Jacobite analysis of the Highlander as a patriot which enabled the pro-Stuart faction to identify Scotland as a predominantly Celtic nation.”⁴⁹ Ramsay’s frequent use of national symbols shows how poets intergraded sentiments of nationalism in their works with the aim to position Scotland as distinct nation with its own cultural background. In addition to Pittock’s findings, I find it important to mention that Ramsay was one of the first Jacobite poets who saw that literary and musical material could unite people, especially the lower classes.⁵⁰ An example of these elements of national identity in poetry is the poem *Tartana: or the Plaid* in Ramsay’s collection *Poems* from 1720. This poem is evidently a homage to Scottish culture.⁵¹ Ramsay’s poetry will not be discussed in this thesis any further, but his work is significant evidence for nationalism in Jacobite poetry and thus is included in this chapter.

I do not engage with issues of nationalism in this thesis as the discussion of nationalism in music and poetry at the time is rather complex, but it is important to note that elements of national culture are present in these songs and were meant to be perceived as such by the audience. Jacobite songs functioned as mechanisms to express political sentiment and thus offer insight into the Jacobite perspective of the Union and subsequent political developments that have not been subject of research as much as the English side. This thesis is positioned on the scholarly side that argues to read the Jacobite songs as contemporaneous historical documents.

⁴⁸ Allan Ramsay (1686-1758) was a Jacobite poet who supported the Stuart cause throughout his works. He was founder of the Easy Club, a club with nationalist and Jacobite sympathies that had its birth right before the Union in 1707. For more on this, see Steve Newman, “The Scots Songs of Allan Ramsay: “Lyrick” Transformation, Popular Culture, and the Boundaries of the Scottish Enlightenment,” *MLQ* 63 (2002): 277-314.

⁴⁹ Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 55.

⁵⁰ Matthew Gelbart, “Allan Ramsay, the Idea of ‘Scottish Music’ and the Beginnings of ‘National Music’ in Europe,” in *Eighteenth-Century Music* 9, no. 1 (2012): 83.

⁵¹ Allan Ramsay, *Poems* (Edinburgh, 1720), 40, <https://archive.org/details/poemsbyallanrams00rams/page/40>.

Chapter 2: Love Songs and Political Propaganda

This chapter considers three songs for a case study, all believed to have been composed between approximately 1700 and 1730, and how they address the issues of loyalty, ideology, political sentiments, national identity and the theme of the woman-nation.

“The Blackbird”

“The Blackbird” was one of the most popular Jacobite songs, many versions circulated in Scotland from the 1640s on and this anonymously composed song is believed to be of Irish origin.⁵² As can be seen in example 2.1, the musical scale used is a G major pentatonic scale and the time signature is 3/4.⁵³ The song counts eight melodic phrases that coincide with the eight poetic lines of each stanza; the song has three stanzas and is strophic, meaning that the melody of the first strophe is repeated for the next two strophes.⁵⁴ The song is entirely syllabic, meaning that there are no melismas, just some grace notes and at most two notes for a single syllable. The music is divided into two sections by a double bar line after the fourth melodic phrase. In a formal scheme the song is divided in the middle and looks like this:

|| A A A A || B C D A||

In the first section, the first melodic phrase A is heard four times. The first two measures of the second section suggest the start of a fifth A phrase, but after two measures the melody changes and is thus labeled as B in the scheme above. The second and third phrases of section two have new melodic material and are labeled as C and D. The last phrase is an identic repetition of phrase A.

⁵² Richard Wall, “Dialect in Irish Literature: The Hermetic Core,” *Irish University Review* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 10; Pittock, ed., *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland: second series* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 498.

⁵³ “The Blackbird”, in *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland*, ed. Murray G. H. Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 68.

⁵⁴ “Stanza” and “strophe” are used synonymously in this thesis.

Example 2.1: “The Blackbird”

ONCE on a morning of sweet re-cre-a-tion, I
 heard a fair la-dy a-making her moan, With sighing and
 sobbing, and sad la-men-ta-tion, Aye singing, “My
 Blackbird for e--ver is flown! He’s all my heart’s
 treasure, my joy, and my pleasure, So justly, my love, my
 heart follows thee; And I am re-solved, in foul or fair
 weather, To seek out my Blackbird, wher-e-ver he be.

“ I will go, a stranger to peril and danger,
 “ My heart is so loyal in every degree ;
 “ For he’s constant and kind, and courageous in mind.
 “ Good luck to my Blackbird, wherever he be !
 “ In Scotland he’s loved and dearly approved,
 “ In England a stranger he seemeth to be ;
 “ But his name I’ll advance in Britain or France.
 “ Good luck to my Blackbird, wherever he be !

“ The birds of the forest are all met together,
 “ The turtle is chosen to dwell with the dove,
 “ And I am resolved, in foul or fair weather,
 “ Once in the spring-time to seek out my love.
 “ But since fickle Fortune, which still proves uncertain,
 “ Hath caused this parting between him and me,
 “ His right I’ll proclaim, and who dares me blame ?
 “ Good luck to my Blackbird, wherever he be !”

Notable is that every phrase starts with two beamed quavers. In the first section, the phrases start with a quaver on G'.⁵⁵ The figure of two beamed quavers reoccurs throughout the entire song. To have a closer look at the text-music relations, it is important to have a clear idea of the underlying structure first. The scheme in Table 2.1 presents rhyme scheme of the three stanzas in “The Blackbird”.

⁵⁵ The pitches in this thesis are indicated using the Helmholtz pitch notation system.

Stanza 1		Stanza 2		Stanza 3	
<u>Music</u>	<u>Rhyme</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>Rhyme</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>Rhyme</u>
A	A	A	E	A	I
A	B	A	D	A	J
A	A	A	F	A	I
A	B	A	D	A	J
B	C	B	G	B	K
C	D	C	D	C	D
D	C	D	H	D	L
A	D	A	D	A	D

Table 2.1: Rhyme scheme stanza 1-3 “The Blackbird”.

The high notes in the melody in phrase B for instance, stress the fifth poetic line in each stanza. This suggests that these lines are significant. In the first stanza this poetic line reads: “He’s all my heart’s treasure, my joy and my pleasure” this reveals that the blackbird is a he and it symbolizes Prince Charles Stuart. The fifth line in the second stanza reads: “In Scotland he’s loved and dearly approved,” and in the third stanza the fifth poetic line reads: “But since fickle Fortune, which still proves uncertain,”. The interpretations of these lines will be discussed later.

The theme of the woman-nation is evident in the first poetic line: “I heard a fair lady a making her moan, with sighing and sobbing, and sad lamentation,”. As discussed in chapter 1, this event of a woman representing Scotland appearing to a singer is called *aisling* and it being present in “The Blackbird” strengthens the claim that the song is of Irish origin.⁵⁶ The sentiment of loyalty towards the absent monarch is found throughout the entire song. Where the woman-nation expresses her own love for the blackbird in the first stanza, in the second stanza the love of Scotland for the blackbird is more prominent and obvious for the audience. “My heart is so loyal in every degree” states that the lady (Scotland) shows loyalty explicitly at all levels, including the political level.

The fifth and sixth poetic lines, “In Scotland he’s loved and dearly approved, in England a stranger he seemeth to be” are emphasized musically by the ascending notes in the melody. This accentuates the conflict between the English government troops and the Scottish Jacobites. In the fifth poetic line of the third stanza the uncertainty of Scotland’s fate is accentuated by the

⁵⁶ For more on this, see Bernard O’Donoghue, “The Aisling,” in *A Companion to Poetic Genre*, ed. Erik Martiny (Chichester, South Sussex: Wiley – Blackwell, 2012), 420 – 434.

melody: “since fickle Fortune, which still proves uncertain”. This can be read as a reference to the *Rota Fortunae*, the wheel of fortune goes up.⁵⁷

The first stanza is dominated by the feeling of sorrow, abandonment and grief. In the second and third stanzas this feeling is overthrown, and the woman-nation now expresses the feeling of empowerment. The last two poetic lines of the second stanza “But his name I’ll advance in Britain or France. Good luck to my Blackbird, wherever he be!” change the general attitude from passive to active. The fifth line refers to the promotion of the name of James Stuart by the Jacobite movement and the song could have motivated other Jacobites to do the same. In the third stanza the woman-nation is aware of the uncertain fate and that this is the reason she and her Blackbird are separated; however, she does not accept this and continues to proclaim the right of the Stuart king.

The choice of the poet for a blackbird is not accidental, it is a songbird and since the sixteenth century, songbirds are often used as symbols in erotic contexts.⁵⁸ In this case it is the romance between the woman and Prince Charles Stuart. The abandoned woman in the song is Scotland and she is mourning her lost lover ‘Bonnie Prince Charlie’.⁵⁹ Another way of reading this symbolism is that the bird has fled the cage that is the English oppression. The symbolism of the blackbird fits perfectly in the erotic style of Jacobite songs because it is not too direct, only the Jacobites would be able to read between the exact references the lines.⁶⁰

To conclude, the lyrics of “The Blackbird” convey many of the issues that members of the Jacobite movement were concerned with after 1746. The loyalty towards the absent monarch is expressed in love and glorification of Charles Stuart, but also in the sentiment that the

⁵⁷ For more on this, see Edward E. Lowinsky, “The Goddess Fortuna in Music: With a Special Study of Josquin’s ‘Fortuna dun gran tempo’,” *The Musical Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (January 1943): 45-77.

⁵⁸ The Stuarts had a strong alliance with France. In French poetry it was a custom to use bird symbolism to portray human morals. For more on this, see Kate van Orden, “Sexual Discourse in the Parisian Chanson: A Libidinous Aviary*,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48, no.1 (Spring 1995): 1-41.

⁵⁹ When ‘The Blackbird’ first began circulating in the seventeenth century, the blackbird was a metaphor for the Stuart king reigning at that time, Charles II until 1685 and James II & VII until 1688. In the eighteenth century, Prince Charlie Stuart became the center of the Jacobite movement and the subject of many Jacobite ballads. For more on this, see Murray G. H. Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity* (London: Routledge, 1991).

⁶⁰ Another reason why the blackbird symbolizes Charlie Stuart and his predecessors is the dark-colored hair of the Stuarts. According to Pittock, the color black specifically was Jacobite code for the Stuarts. See: Pittock, ed., *The Jacobite Relics*, 498.

Jacobites must keep fighting for the cause with the hope that their Scottish ruler will return and push away the English. The loyal actions of the woman-nation served as an example for followers of the Jacobite movement. Even when Prince Charles Stuart was absent, the movement still had to fight for the cause with the hope to bring him back to the throne.⁶¹

“What Ails Thee Poor Shepherd?”

In sacred Jacobite song, Christian themes were used to address socio-political and cultural problems in Scotland. This is also the case in the song “What Ails Thee Poor Shepherd?”.⁶² As discussed in the previous chapter, sacred songs were rather direct, and the biblical metaphors allowed to address socio-political and cultural problems with references that everyone would have known from the Bible. “What Ails Thee Poor Shepherd?” is a syllabic song and consists of seven stanzas with four poetic lines each.

Stanza 1	
<u>Music</u>	<u>Rhyme</u>
A	A
B	A
C	B
D	B

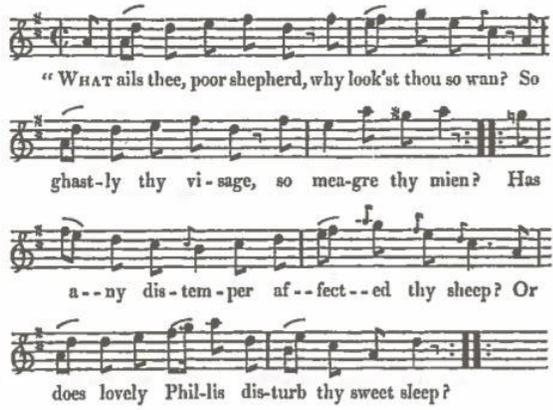
Table 2.2: Rhyme scheme stanza 1 “What Ails Thee, Poor Shepherd?”

⁶¹ Daniel Szechi, *The Jacobites: Britain and Europe, 1688-1788* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 35.

⁶² According to Pittock, the version that appeared in Hogg’s *Jacobite Relics* originated between 1710 and 1730. During this period, a considerable amount of Jacobite poetry was composed that may be classified in the sacred category. Pittock, ed., *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland: second series* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 498.

Example 2.2: "What Ails Thee, Poor Shepherd?"

What ails thee, poor Shepherd.



“ WHAT ails thee, poor shepherd, why look'st thou so wan? So
ghast-ly thy vi-sage, so mea-gre thy mien? Has
a--ny dis-tem-per af--fect--ed thy sheep? Or
does lovely Phil-lis dis-turb thy sweet sleep?

“ That thou should'st sit here by the shades and complain :
“ What is't that perplexes or troubles thy brain ?”
It was close by an elm where his pipe and crook lay,
But his heart was so griev'd, not one tune he could play.

“ Alas !” quoth the shepherd, “ the theme of my song
“ Is, since our old landlord is o'er the seas gone,
“ Hogan Mogan has seiz'd and kept all for his own,
“ And from plenty to want our country is grown.

“ Our rents they have rais'd, and our taxes increase,
“ And all is because we have ta'en a new lease.
“ So dull are my notes, on my pipe I can't play
“ The tune I was wont, since our landlord's away.

“ Heaven bless our great master, and send him again,
“ Ere famine and poverty kill the poor swain ;
“ For the Dutch and the Germans our lands they do keep,
“ They fleece this poor nation as I fleece my sheep.”

“ Cheer up, honest shepherd, and calm thy griev'd heart ;
“ Gird thy sword by thy side, act a true British part ;
“ Gird thy sword by thy side, throw thy sheephook away,
“ For our landlord is coming, we'll clear him the way.

“ See the glass how it sparkles with true English corn :
“ Here's his health, honest shepherd, and speedy return ;
“ And when he comes o'er he shall have all his own,
“ And with disgrace Hanover must yield up the crown.”

The song represents a conversation between a man (the poet) and a shepherd. In the first stanza the poet refers to Greek mythology in the association of the God Pan as the shepherd and Thracian queen Phyllis, who supposedly disturbed the shepherd's sleep, see Example 2.2.⁶³ The shepherd here is a metaphor for the Scottish people and Phyllis might represent the Hanoverian rulers. In the third stanza the shepherd explains what bothers him: “since our old landlord is o'er the seas gone, Hogan Mogan has seiz'd and kept all for his own.” “Our old landlord” is a reference to James III & VIII who had fled to France and ‘Hogan Mogan’ is an insult describing Dutch and German people, directed at William of Orange.⁶⁴ The title itself already contains biblical imagery as the “Poor Shepherd” refers to Jesus as the shepherd of his flock.⁶⁵

⁶³ “What Ails Thee, Poor Shepherd?”, in *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland*, ed. Murray G. H. Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003): 100.

⁶⁴ ‘Hogan Mogan’ comes from the Dutch word ‘Hoogmogendheiden’, meaning High Mightiness. In this context it refers to someone who feels high and mighty, or very important.

⁶⁵ Psalm 23.

The financial struggles of Scotland in the early eighteenth century are mentioned explicitly in the fourth stanza: “Our rent they have rais’d, and our taxes increase”. This description of the situation was rather recognizable for the eighteenth-century listener and with this type of ‘propaganda’ in such songs, the movement probably gained more attention amongst Scottish supporters.

The fifth stanza expresses the theme of loyalty and contains an important reference. “Heaven bless our great master and send him again, ere famine and poverty kill the poor swain; for the Dutch and the German our land they do keep, they fleece this poor nation as I fleece my sheep.” Here ‘fleecing’ means to swindle or deprive someone of nearly all they possess.⁶⁶ This suggests an explicit attack on William of Orange and the Hanoverians. The biblical imagery of the shepherd and the sheep in this song could represent a clan-chief and his people.

Usually in sacred Jacobite song, Scotland is portrayed as the desolated Israel and the Scottish people are waiting for their savior, Prince Charles, to return.⁶⁷ Notably, this is not explicitly mentioned in this song. Eighteenth-century Jacobite listeners would be able to connect the implicit biblical reference with the socio-political and cultural situation easily.⁶⁸ This way, these biblical themes were used in Jacobite songs to address the problems in Scotland and to express criticism towards the ruler while still being discrete.

⁶⁶ Peter Richard Wilkinson, *Thesaurus of Traditional English Metaphors* (London: Routledge, 2002) “fleece”.

⁶⁷ Another example is the song “General Cope’s Defeat at Gladsmuir”. For more on this, see Murray G. H. Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1991), 48.

⁶⁸ The situation in which the rents became higher and the taxes increased is also applicable to the Israelites in the Bible.

“Geordie Sits in Charlie’s Chair”

The lyrics of this song are set on the air “The Highland Laddie”. As can be observed in music example 2.3, the melody of this song uses a pentatonic scale of C – D – F – G – A with B-flat as ornament.⁶⁹ The melody consists of eight melodic phrases that correspond to the eight poetic lines in each stanza. The music setting is syllabic with no grace notes.

Example 2.3: “The Highland Laddie”.

The Highland Laddie.

PRINCELY is my lov - er's weed, Bon - ny lad - die,
Highland lad - die; Fu' his veins o' princely blude, My
bon - ny lad - die, Highland lad - die. The gay bonnet
cir - cles roun', Bon - ny lad - die, Highland lad - die,
Brows wad bet - ter fa' a crown, My bon - ny lad - die,
Highland laddie.

⁶⁹ “The Highland Laddie”, in *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland: second series*, ed. Murray G. H. Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003): 125.

Geordie sits in Charlie's Chair.

For the Air, see Song L, XIII. of this Volume.

GEORDIE sits in Charlie's chair,
 Bonny laddie, Highland laddie ;
 Deil cock him gin he sit there,
 My bonny laddie, Highland laddie !
 Charlie yet shall mount the throne,
 Bonny laddie, Highland laddie ;
 Weel ye ken it is his own,
 My bonny laddie, Highland laddie.

Weary fa' the Lawland loon,
 Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
 Wha took frae him the British crown,
 My bonny laddie, Highland laddie.
 But weel's me on the kilted clans,
 Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
 That fought for him at Prestonpans,
 My bonny laddie, Highland laddie.

Then Charon grim came out to him,
 Bonny laddie, Highland laddie ;
 "Ye're welcome here, ye devil's limb!"
 My bonny laddie, Highland laddie.
 They pat on him a philabeg,
 Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
 And in his doup they ca'd a peg,
 My bonny laddie, Highland laddie.

Example 2.5: Stanza 4 "Geordie Sits in Charlie's Chair".

Stanza 1	
<u>Music</u>	<u>Rhyme</u>
A	A
	B
A'	A
	B
B	C
	B
B'	C
	B

Example 2.4: Stanza 1 and 2 "Geordie Sits in Charlie's Chair".

Table 2.3: Rhyme scheme stanza 1 "Geordie Sits in Charlie's Chair".

The first stanza introduces the two main characters and their names are emphasized by the music setting. "Geordie", the Hanoverian ruler, is characterized by the low notes at the beginning of the melody, see example 2.3 and 2.4.⁷⁰ Charlie, or Charles Stuart, is characterized in the fifth musical phrase with the poetic line "Charlie yet shall mount the throne" in a higher register. 'Geordie Sits in Charlie's Chair' could be classified as an aggressive Jacobite song. The focus is on the clans, Prince Charles and getting revenge on the Hanoverian ruler.

In the second stanza it is noticeable that there is a music pattern that underlines the characters. The "Lawland loon" is again characterized by notes in a lower register in the first poetic line, where the "kilted clans" are highlighted in the fifth poetic line with notes in a higher register.

The fourth stanza describes an ideal scene of Prince Charles coming to Scotland and being welcomed by the clans, see example 2.5.⁷¹ "They pat on him a philabeg," creates the image

⁷⁰ "Geordie Sits in Charlie's Chair", in *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland: second series*, ed. Murray G. H. Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003): 202.

⁷¹ "Geordie Sits in Charlie's Chair", *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland: second series*, ed. Murray G. H. Pittock (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003): 203.

of Charles Stuart as a Highlander himself now as the philabeg is the Highland dress. This is important for the fellow-rebel aspect in the support for the Stuarts. Not only the Jacobite hero Prince Charles is mentioned, this song also emphasizes the support and power of the Highland clans, the Jacobites themselves. “By depicting and praising individual heroes for the cause, all with strong links to the highlands and to the clans which supported the Stewards, the Jacobite ballads gave listeners role models to impel their loyalty and dedication to the cause.”⁷² When one would hear someone they can relate to being praised in song, the support would grow stronger. Such songs can be seen as empowerment for the clans.

To conclude, fellow-rebel imagery was used to offer followers of the Jacobite movement role-models to which they could relate. This likely strengthened the support of the Jacobites for the Stuart king.

⁷² Megyn E. Dixon, “National Song: Scottish Jacobite Ballads and the Shaping of Scottish National Identity” (Honors thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2007), 27.

Conclusion

Music and songs have been crucial in the Jacobite movement as the Jacobites have used their songs as empowerment, propaganda and entertainment, but also as a manner to express their support for the cause. Jacobite songs were so popular that musicians and lyricists kept composing in the Jacobite tradition even decades later into the nineteenth century.⁷³ This aftermath has led scholars to dismiss the idea of contemporaneity of most Jacobite songs for a long time. This view dominated the field until the 1980s. From that moment, Pittock has been advocating the scholarly position that considers Jacobite songs as products contemporaneous to the events in the songs. In this thesis, I have argued that Jacobite songs should be regarded as cultural sources that reveal the underdog's perspective of the social and political situation in eighteenth-century Scotland.

The case studies analyzed in chapter 2 contain a number of strategies for showing political sentiments of the time. My analysis of "The Blackbird" shows that loyalty is expressed by the use of the woman-nation theme which explicitly states the love for the Stuart monarch. The implication of this on the Jacobite movement is that the loyal actions in the song serve as guideline for its followers. The song "What Ails Thee, Poor Shepherd?" contains biblical imagery explicitly linked to the social problems the Scottish people were dealing with, such as increase of rents and taxes at the hands of the English government. The last case study, "Geordie Sits in Charlie's Chair" is an example of fellow rebel imagery. It depicts the Stuart monarch as "one of them" in the sense of one of the Scottish listeners of the song, which gave these listeners role models and extra motivation to relate to the cause and get involved in it.

It can be concluded that Jacobite songs were crucial mechanisms to express the sentiments of the Jacobite movement. Through erotic, sacred and aggressive Jacobite songs, the movement could spread their ideas without being noticed by officials of the English government and at the same time strengthen the bond between the Jacobite leaders and their constituency.

The discussion of sacred Jacobite song in chapter 1 has sparked my interest in the use of themes of Pagan religion in Jacobite songs and to what extent lyricists of Jacobite songs utilized

⁷³ For example, Carolina Oliphant. For more on this, see Carol McGuirk, "Jacobite History to National Song: Robert Burns and Carolina Oliphant (Baroness Nairne)," *The Eighteenth Century* 47, no. 2/3 (Summer/Fall 2006): 253-287.

the ancient Celtic roots to give the cause more authority. It is worth to consider further research on this topic and to what extent it is linked to earlier literary tradition and mythology of the British Isles. A second suggestion for further research is the influence of the Highland Clearances on the Scottish musical tradition. This outcome of the Jacobite uprisings caused the English government to prohibit cultural expression and it is worthy to consider research on what effect these events had on the practice of music-making. Lastly, the dissemination of Jacobite sentiments in urban and rural areas via songs would be worth considering as well. All these proposals may lead to further research on the nineteenth-century nationalistic use of the Jacobite songs.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ As this has not been studied thoroughly, with the exception of literary studies on Robert Burns and Carolina Oliphant - Lady Nairne.

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