

**Peaceful coexistence?
Ideology in the representation of Scots
and North American languages
in Late Modern literature***

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses some ideological traits in Late Modern English literary discourse concerning contact with other languages or socially- and geographically-marked varieties across the North Atlantic. Beyond 'dialect literature' and occurrences of 'literary dialect' (Shorrocks 1996), other very popular works greatly contributed to the definition of how readers perceived different languages and varieties in terms of relative prestige. In addition, popular culture also helped to disseminate evaluations of linguistic features. Representations in such texts were often ambivalent, ranging from humorous (to the point of caricature) to nostalgic, elegiac tones, but they always drew attention to the exotic, distant quality of the forms under discussion. Indeed, glossaries often present these features as witnesses of a quickly vanishing past, in need of preservation like ancient relics. In my analysis I will consider both different languages and varieties of the same language, in an attempt to show how their more or less explicit evaluation contributed to the creation of their (often persistent) image among readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Keywords: Late Modern English, Scotland, America, literary discourse, ideology.

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1. Introduction

My title borrows a phrase ('peaceful coexistence') dating from Cold War times as a starting point for the study of some ideological traits in Late Modern English literary discourse pertaining to Scotland and North America. The main research question aims to assess to what extent contact with other languages or socially- and geographically-marked varieties in that register was indeed peaceful, i.e. descriptive of linguistic landscapes, or was more or less explicitly biased, and therefore a tool of historical and political argumentation. It is true that literary scholars have studied similar phenomena, especially in relation to post-colonial contexts – see for instance Sorensen (2000) and Brown (2018); however, their approach has typically addressed ideology in a broader sense, going beyond linguistic issues to address more overarching themes.

In addition, if we exclude Derrick McClure, whose work has consistently placed Scotland within the framework of European literary studies (e.g. in McClure 1995a and 2000), the scholars who have investigated Scottish literary discourse in Late Modern times – such as Broadhead (2013) and Sorensen (2017) – have normally done so from an Anglo-centric or at least a Continental perspective. In fact, an additional level of analysis may be offered: one in which Scotland and North America may be seen to be part of the same cultural framework, and indeed the ways in which the languages of one are represented may find an echo in the representation of the other. In this respect, the linguistic study of literary discourse may prove of great relevance.

Unlike in studies of earlier stages of the language, where the analysis of literary texts has normally been part of scholarly investigations, not least on account of the relative paucity of materials at hand or of their popularity and accessibility, when Late Modern English is concerned historical linguists have tended to focus instead on grammarians, orthoepists and lexicographers – i.e., on prototypical codifiers (e.g. Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2008). Of course there are notable exceptions, but present-day studies of the language of literary figures have normally taken into consideration non-literary works (e.g. Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2014) or analyses have mostly concerned stylistics. A valuable approach has recently been taken by the project on *Dialect in British Fiction 1800-1836* (Hodson – Broadhead – Millward 2014; see also Hodson – Broadhead 2013). However, its rather limited time span (expanded in Hodson 2017) only offers preliminary insights into the role played by significant literary figures in the endorsement or stigmatization of linguistic features at a time when also literary critics and book reviewers could

have a say in the assessment of language variation (Percy 2010). Moreover, labelling this kind of fiction as 'British' corresponds to a Late Modern view of presupposed unity and uniformity across the British Isles, but for this very reason it is ideological in itself, as it irons out any distinctions between English, Irish and Scottish literature, regardless of the literary tradition that different texts may continue or challenge.

Beyond so-called 'dialect literature' and uses of 'literary dialect' (Shorrocks 1996), the success of works authored by figures like James Fenimore Cooper and Robert Louis Stevenson greatly contributed to the definition of how readers perceived the relatively greater or lesser prestige of different languages and language varieties.¹ While these authors were not unique in their treatment of language variation, their attention to language as a special poetic and narrative element is well-documented (e.g., see Warner 1969, Blakemore 1984, Rosenwald 1998, Dossena 2005: 131-133, Shields 2009, Schachterle 2011, and Dossena 2012 and 2013) and may thus be taken as emblematic examples of how their interpretation helped shape attitudes to languages and varieties. Besides, the role of popular culture in the dissemination of specific views on language variation is hardly negligible: use of socially- and geographically-marked features in songs, ballads, dime novels and penny dreadfuls is a valuable object of investigation for the study of how language representation could be more or less ideologically charged.

Both in literary works and in popular culture, the coexistence of languages and varieties was often represented as ambiguous and problematic. In addition to stereotypical uses for humorous purposes, in which differences were emphasized to the point of caricature, as in the famous case of Sam Weller's Cockney speech in Charles Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* (1836-37), the supposed distance between varieties could be stressed to evoke exotic scenarios, such as in the representation of the so-called 'Mountain Men', fur trappers and traders in nineteenth-century North America, where social class distinctiveness was represented and indeed emphasized by the geographical distance of the context (see Hubbard 1968).

On the other hand, a certain fascination with different varieties underpins the compilation of numerous Late Modern English glossaries,

¹ Obviously, such figures cannot be mentioned without reference to other authors, whose impact on literary discourse and on perceptions of cultural links would be very significant both on the Continent and across the Atlantic. It is the case, for instance, of the extensive Ossianic tradition (see Moore 2017), but also of Walter Scott, as we will see below, and of Robert Burns, whose popularity both in the US and in Canada would contribute to the creation of a specific (and often idealized) identity in the Scottish diaspora (see Dossena 2012).

such as those collected in the *Salamanca Corpus of English Dialect Texts* (2011-), in which variation represents both social and diachronic distance. In the Positivist agenda of the times, language standardization was expected to improve as progress advanced, but this improvement entailed the disappearance of varieties which therefore needed to be preserved like archeological artefacts, bearing witness to a distant (and often idealized) past – see Dossena (2005: 83-115). Within this framework, political ideologies could also be at work, whether it was to highlight distinctiveness or to emphasize linguistic contiguity as a metaphor of national unity.

In my contribution I intend to focus both on different languages and on varieties of the same language, in an attempt to show how their more or less explicit evaluation contributed to the construal of their image among readers on both sides of the Atlantic – an image which may have persisted through time thanks to the popularity of the texts in which it was framed.

After an overview of how language commentary was informed by both political bias and sociological ideologies as to what models should be followed (Section 2), in Sections 3 and 4 I will discuss some examples of the ways in which literary discourse has contributed to the stability or the demise of specific languages and to the representation of their speakers: Section 3 will focus on Scots, while Section 4 will make a brief comparison with the case of Native American languages.

In this context the issue of authenticity will appear to be relatively unimportant, as authors either attempted to imitate credible, recognizable usage, or exaggerated it for humorous purposes, but in any case it should be remembered that the texts were authored by fully-literate people: they were not monolingual speakers of the languages or varieties under discussion, whose access to the printed medium was minimal on a receptive level and non-existent on a productive level. The choice of a socially- and/or geographically-marked code was thus deliberate and therefore grounded in ideology, which would also make the notion of enregisterment (Agha 2003) an ideological construal. Finally, some concluding remarks will be offered in Section 5.

2. Ideology in language commentary

Twenty-first-century (non-expert) readers may be justified in assuming that academic texts are neutral, scientific representations of their objects of study, as great emphasis has often been placed on the value of detached discussions

in which any instance of personal involvement should be avoided. However, numerous analyses have shown that even in academic texts the authors' views and attitudes do feature in more or less explicit ways: see for instance Hunston – Thompson (2001), Martin – White (2005), Hunston (2011) and White (2007, 2015). Whether it is to criticize or support the views expressed by other scholars, or indeed to convey one's own ideas in more convincing tones, stance emerges at both the lexical and the syntactic level in all types of academic texts (see for instance Hyland– Bondi 2006, Hyland – Diani 2009, and Bondi 2015 and 2017). Unsurprisingly, the expression of stance is definitely more obvious in texts where the argumentative function is given prominence, but even supposedly more neutral descriptions, such as those of language phenomena, can be forcefully evaluative. One striking example is Otto Jespersen's (1905: 39) explanation of why few Celtic items were adopted into English (cited by Filppula – Klemola 2014: 35):

There was nothing to induce the ruling classes to learn the language of the inferior natives; it could never be fashionable for them to show an acquaintance with that despised tongue by using now and then a Celtic word. On the other hand the Celt would have to learn the language of his masters, and learn it well; he could not think of addressing his superiors in his own unintelligible gibberish, and if the first generation did not learn good English, the second or third would, while the influence they themselves exercised on English would be infinitesimal. (Jespersen 1905: 39, in Filppula – Klemola 2014: 35)

The sociolinguistic features of the historical context under discussion are presented in terms that are certainly unacceptable by twenty-first-century standards, but they use the strongly evaluative vocabulary of Late Modern linguistic commentary, where the social and often political bias of individual authors could be expressed quite directly. Similar remarks had been made for centuries in descriptions of Scots and Scots Gaelic, both of which could be described as barbarous and indeed as damaging for society in general. Only a few years after the Union of the Crowns, in 1609, the Statutes of Iona imposed schooling in the Lowlands for at least the eldest child, whether male or female, so as to eradicate “ignorance and incivility”:²

² In fact, Lowlanders had associated Gaelic with “incivilitie” already in the sixteenth century, as shown in often hyperbolic terms in the *Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy* (1508).

- (1) it being undirstand that the ignorance and incivilitie of the saidis lles hes daylie incressit be the negligence of guid educatioun and instructioun of the youth in the knowledge of God and good letters [...] it is inactit that every gentilman or yeaman within the said llandis, or any of thame, haveing childerine maill or femell, and being in goodis worth thriescore ky, sall put at the leist their eldest sone, or haveing no children maill thair eldest dochter, to the scullis in the Lowland, and interneny and bring thame up thair quhill that may be found able sufficientlie to speik, reid and wryte Inglishche.

(Register of the Privy Council 1609 Vol. IX, 28-29, in Innes 1993)

A few years later, in 1616, an Act of the Privy Council established parish schools both to promote religious education and to eradicate use of Gaelic:

- (2) Forsameikle as the Kingis Majestie having a speciall care and regaird that the trew religioun be advancit and establisheit in all the pairtis of this kingdome and that all his Majesties subjectis especiallie the youth, be exercised and trayned up in civilitie, godliness, knowledge, and learning, that the vulgar Inglishche tounge be universallie plantit, and the Irische language, whilk is one of the cheif and principall causes of the continewance of barbarite and incivilitie amongis the inhabitantis of the Illis and Heylandis, may be abolishit and removeit; and quhair as thair is no measure more powerfull to further his Majesties princlie regaird and purposis that the establisheing of Scooles in the particular parroches of this Kingdom whair the youthe may be taught at least to write and reid, and be catechised and instructed in the groundis of religioun.

(Register of the Privy Council 1616 Vol. X, 671-672, in Innes 1993)

It was only at the onset of Late Modern times that a different image of Scotland and its languages began to emerge, in which the antiquity of such languages was emphasized, thus granting them the prestige that a rampantly anglicizing trend had denied them. Also in such cases, however, ideological bias was often the driving force behind what elements were foregrounded: already in 1677 the religious pamphlet *Ravillac Redivivous* (1678: 77)³ included an annotation on the proximity between Scots, Northern English and older Saxon forms. The text, probably best known for being the one in which the first occurrence of *Scotticism* is found, referred to William Lisle's *Saxon*

³ Published anonymously, it is attributed to George Hickes (1642-1715).

Monuments, published forty years before, but the lineage of English and Scots would be a matter of debate throughout the Late Modern period.

The antiquity of Scots was also emphasised in James Adams's *Vindication of the Scottish Dialect* (1799), a fiercely anti-French text which actually recommended a list of Scots lexical items for adoption into English (Dossena 2005: 85-90) when codifiers all over Britain had been strenuously attempting to eradicate Scotticisms. For Adams, Scots preserved "the Saxon original in spite of the attempts of the Norman invaders and tyrants who endeavoured totally to extirpate its antient form" (1799: 148). Indeed, George Chalmers made the same point citing Lisle, whose work had now been proving influential for almost two centuries, in his Introduction to the *Poetical Works of Sir David Lyndsay*:

- (3) Lisle, the Saxon scholar, says, in the Preface to his *Ancient Monuments of the Saxon Tongue*, that he improved more, in the knowledge of Saxon, by the perusal of Gawain Douglas's Virgil, than by that of all the Old English he could find, poetry, or prose; because it was nearer the Saxon, and further from the Norman. (Chalmers 1806: 146fn)

The lively debate on the authenticity of Macpherson's Ossian poems influenced the controversy on the Celtic or Germanic roots of Scots. However, Scottish Teutonism was also tinted with political overtones: for instance, in 1722 Edmund Gibson dedicated the revised edition of his translation of William Camden's *Britannia* to George I in emphatically loyalist terms. As only a few years had passed since the Jacobite rebellion of 1715, "the terrible Storm" to which Gibson refers at the beginning of his text, he stressed the mutual Saxon origins of the House of Hanover and of Britain's language, law, customs, names and place names. In practice, he was indirectly stating that the exclusion of the Stuart line from succession was not only acceptable, but could also be justified on historical grounds:

- (4) When we consider the terrible Storm which threaten'd these Protestant Kingdoms a few years ago, [...]; We cannot but adore the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in laying such a Train of Providences, for our Deliverance in that Hour of Extremity. [...].

It is this Alliance which has made *Us* happy in your Majesty and your Royal Family, and which entitles *You* to the Love of every Subject, as a Prince of our own Blood; [...]. But the ensuing Work points out a Relation between your Majesty and these Kingdoms, of

a far more Ancient Date. Not only our Histories, but our Language, our Laws, our Customs, our Names of Persons and Names of Places, do all abundantly testify, that the greatest part of your Majesty's Subjects here, are of Saxon Original. And if we enquire from whence our Saxon Ancestors came, we shall find, that it was from your Majesty's Dominions in *Germany*, where their Brethren who staid [sic] behind, spread themselves through a noble and spacious Country, which still retains their Name. So that the main Body of your People in both Nations, are really descended from one and the same common Stock; and now, after a Disunion of so many Ages, they live again under the Protection and Influence of the same common Parent.

(Gibson 1722: To the King)

Also in the case of Samuel Johnson Teutonism was linked to anti-French bias, but it did not contradict interest in both Gaelic and Older Scots; not only did Johnson subscribe to William Shaw's *Galic and English and English and Galic Dictionary* (1780), but he also encouraged James Boswell to compile a dictionary of Scots, despite Boswell's ambivalent attitude to that language. Boswell did start this project in the 1760s, but he never completed it,⁴ like he never went beyond his 'Proposals for a periodical paper in the Scots dialect', to be called *The Sutiman* (see Pottle – Abbott – Pottle 1993: 106). However, it is important to see how two figures that are often associated with the heyday of linguistic prescriptivism also paid attention to a more varied linguistic landscape on account of their antiquarian interest.

3. "For the sake of auld lang syne": Languages and varieties in literary discourse

The search for 'pure Saxon' persisted throughout the nineteenth century (Dury 1992): in 1888, when Charles Mackay published *A Dictionary of Lowland Scotch with an introductory chapter on the poetry, humour, and literary history of the Scottish language and an appendix of Scottish Proverbs*, the closer connection of Scots with older 'Anglo-Teutonic' vocabulary was emphasized, stressing that such vocabulary was obsolete in English, but still fully comprehensible in Scotland (1888: xii).

⁴ The manuscript, believed to be lost, was rediscovered in the Bodleian Library in 2011 (see Rennie 2011 and 2012).

This kind of approach thus draws attention to an interesting ambivalence in attitudes to Scots that would underpin both literary and critical writing. Far from being the ‘vulgar, barbarous jargon’ that prescriptivists sought to eradicate, Scots could be an icon of patriotism and/or sentimentality, in what McClure (1995b: 57) has called the ‘Pinkerton syndrome’, referring to a comment that John Pinkerton made in 1786 in the preface to a selection of poetry from the Maitland MSS and where he wrote:

- (5) none can more sincerely wish a total extinction of the Scottish *colloquial* dialect than I do, for there are few *modern* Scoticisms which are not barbarisms... Yet, I believe, no man of either kingdom would wish an extinction of the Scottish dialect in poetry. (Pinkerton 1786: I, xvii)

Pinkerton stressed the separation between ordinary and literary discourse that had been the object of metalinguistic comments since Early Modern times, when George Puttenham had given very clear indications as to what models poets should follow, not only in terms of geographical variety, but also in terms of sociological specificity:

- (6) [Use of language] in our maker or Poet must be heedly looked vnto, that it be naturall, pure, and the most vsuall of all his countrey: and for the same purpose rather that which is spoken in the kings Court, or in the good townes and Cities within the land, then in the marches and frontiers, or in port townes, where straungers haunt for traffike sake, or yet in Vniuersities where Scholers vse much peeuish affectation of words out of the primatiue languages, or finally, in any vplandish village or corner of a Realme, where is no resort but of poore rusticall or vnciuill people: neither shall he follow the speach of a craftes man or carter, or other of the inferiour sort, though he be inhabitant or bred in the best town and Citie in this Realme, for such persons do abuse good speeches by strange accents or illshapen soundes, and false ortographie. But he shall follow generally the better brought vp sort, [...].

(Puttenham 1589: Book 3, ch. 2)

Of course it would be an anachronism to call Puttenham an ‘Ur-prescriptivist’: his book was explicitly addressed to courtiers, hence the kind of guidance that he provided ought to be seen in the framework of numerous other texts which aimed to educate users in the best manners, not least in relation

to language use. Among these, books aiming to form Renaissance princes paid great attention to the role of rhetoric, eloquence, and knowledge of literary texts written both in classical and in vernacular languages – see for instance the works of Stefano Guazzo and Baldassarre Castiglione, in which the concepts of *politesse* first begin to be outlined (see Culpeper 2017 and Paternoster – Saltamacchia 2017).

The ideological role of antiquity in literary representation changed again when the Pre-romantic movement took a different approach from what had been customary in previous decades. Classical models in literary expression and in architecture began to be seen as sublime ruins in both domains – worthy of preservation, no doubt, but also irretrievably distant, possibly on the verge of erasure, and therefore to be collected before it was too late. Dictionaries and glossaries became the linguistic counterpart of *Wunderkammern*; this was especially true in cases where folk lore and traditions had to be saved for posterity before progress and the resulting increase in linguistic and cultural uniformity could wipe them out – see the examples below, recorded in the *Salamanca Corpus* among numerous other instances:

(7) Harland, John.

1865. *Ballads and Songs of Lancashire: Chiefly Older than the 19th Century*. London: Whittaker & Co. 1865. EDD.

1867. *Lancashire Folk-lore: Illustrative of the Superstitious Beliefs and Practises, Local Customs and Usages of the People of the County Palatine*. London: Warne. EDD.

1875. *Ballads and Songs of Lancashire, ancient and modern, collected, Compiled and edited with notes*. Second edition corrected, revised and enlarged by T.T. Wilkinson, F. R. A. S. London: George Routledge and Sons and L.C. Gent. SC. EDD.

Even John Jamieson, in his *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, aimed to illustrate “national rites, customs and institutions in their analogy to those of other nations” (1808: titlepage), thus making his dictionary a valuable resource for both linguists and ethnologists. In addition to glossaries of local traditions, folk lore, farming, flora and fauna, numerous collections of proverbs were also published throughout Late Modern times, in the presupposition that they offered insights into both local culture and the antiquity of certain forms (see Dossena 2000).

In other cases, small, inexpensive booklets were published with an openly entertaining purpose, offering dialogues between ‘rustic’ characters in order to amuse readers who did not necessarily hail from completely different parts of the country, but whose linguistic competence could be flattered through a representation of ‘less-than-educated’ usage – see for instance the following texts, again from the *Salamanca Corpus*, in which phonetic spelling is meant to evoke the kind of usage that readers should expect:

- (8) Robison, Joseph Barlow (c. 1820-1883)
Owd Sammy Twitcher’s Visit tu’t Gret Exibishun e Derby Roat, Kompozied an Hillustrated by a Darbysher Mon. (1870)
Owd Sammy Twitcher’s Crismas Bowk for the year 1870. Full a fun, tales, etc. (1870)

Audiences could be entertained with the thought they could ‘see [themselves] as others [saw them]’, while feeling outside (and above) the circle of those very same speakers. William Donaldson’s studies of popular literature in Victorian Scotland (Donaldson 1986 and 1989) have shown the relevance of such texts which featured very prominently in local newspapers and magazines, providing both humorous, often satirical, commentary and helping to preserve uses which could be recognizable, though probably somewhat inauthentic, like all constructed instances of spoken usage.

On the other hand, the literary production of Robert Fergusson first and of Robert Burns later is exemplary of how Scots could be employed to convey meanings that were not just pastoral (like in Allan Ramsay’s *Gentle Shepherd*) or humorous. Their use of Scots in poems like *Auld Reekie* and *A Man’s a Man* is perfectly within a literary tradition that could have continued along independent lines if it had not been for events that changed Scotland’s political, cultural and linguistic horizon: the Union of the Crowns in 1603 and of Parliaments in 1707.

Literary critics shared this ambivalent attitude: while they could praise Scottish literary texts, they could have reservations about the language in which they were written. Robert Burns, for example, gained fame as a supposedly simple ploughman with an extraordinary literary talent, but whose language was claimed to be hardly accessible to English readers:

- (9) One bar, indeed, his birth and education have opposed to his fame – the language in which most of his poems are written. Even in Scotland, the provincial dialect which Ramsay and he have used is now read

with a difficulty which greatly damps the pleasure of the reader: in England it cannot be read at all, without such a constant reference to a glossary, as nearly to destroy that pleasure.

(Mackenzie 1786 [1897]: 278)

As a matter of fact, several articles emphasized the specificity and difficulty of Burns's language; however, the critics' comments reflected their own ideological bias, as Burns is known to have monitored his linguistic choices quite closely, using Scots, English or Scottish English in different contexts and trying to avoid "the peculiarities of Scottish phraseology" (Currie 1846: li). Indeed, Burns appears to have been aware of the dangers of the 'over-scotticization' of Scottish poetry, something that might result in a stereotypical and oversimplified shortbread-tin image of Scotland.

Unfortunately, that is exactly what happened in the nineteenth century, when the defeat of the last Jacobite rebellion was gradually construed as a heroic-but-doomed effort, and a series of often mythical dichotomies were established. Although 'the Forty-five' had actually been a rather poorly orchestrated enterprise which ended with Charles Edward Stuart's escape back to France, it was romanticized in countless songs, poems, ballads, novels and even paintings – and linguistic considerations also played a part in the construction of that image. The myth of an opposition between Jacobite, Gaelic- or Scots-speaking Highlanders on one side, and Hanoverian, English-speaking Lowlanders and Englishmen on the other, was a convenient but hardly accurate representation, since Hanoverians were both in the Highlands and in the Lowlands, and English had been taught in the Highlands since at least the seventeenth century, albeit with varying levels of success.

While Jacobite poems and songs did get written in Gaelic,⁵ especially in the nineteenth century novels began to represent Jacobite characters as speakers of Scots, thus giving an extraordinary boost to a certain representation of Scotland that is still with us today. Nor were such representations exempt from anachronistic features – in Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, for instance, one of the protagonists whistles a few bars of a well-known Jacobite tune, 'Charlie's my darling', despite the fact that the song was written many years after the events narrated in the book, set in 1752.⁶

⁵ Useful studies of Jacobite songs are provided by Donaldson (1988) and Pittock (2009).

⁶ Indeed, in 1817 James Hogg compiled a collection of Jacobite songs on commission from the Highland Society of London; in 1819 William Blackwood published it in Edinburgh as *The Jacobite Relics of Scotland*.

Scots thus functions as an identity-marker, placing the text in a well-defined social and geographical context – a strategy that appears to have been initiated in the novels authored by Sir Walter Scott, the third most frequently quoted source in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*) after *The Times* and William Shakespeare. Undoubtedly, Scott's novels did contribute to the popularization of numerous lexical items normally associated with Scotland. On the basis of *OED* data, among the items that Scott introduced into daily usage we find the following:

- (10) **Gael, n. Etymology:** <Scottish Gaelic *Gaidheal* a member of the Gaelic race = Old Irish *Gaidel*, *Goidel*. ... A Scottish Highlander or Celt; also, an Irish Celt.

[1596 J. Dalrymple tr. J. Leslie *Hist. Scotl.* (1888) I. 73 Calling thame al Scottis... albeit is plane and euident that mony hundir 3eiris eftir, thay war called Gathelis fra Gathel.]

1810 Scott *Lady of Lake* v. 192 The Gael around him threw His graceful plaid of varied hue.

slainte, int. Etymology: < Gaelic *sláinte*, lit. 'health'. A Gaelic toast: good health!

1824 Scott *Redgauntlet* II. vii. 159 He then took up the tankard, and saying aloud in Gaelic, '*slaint an Rey*', just tasted the liquor.

sporrán, n. Etymology: < Scottish Gaelic *sporan*, Irish *sparán* purse. A pouch or large purse made of skin, usually with the hair left on and with ornamental tassels, etc., worn in front of the kilt by Scottish Highlanders.

1817 Scott *Rob Roy* III. vii. 209 I advise no man to attempt opening this sporrán till he has my secret.

As for new semantic values, Scott's contribution is found in the following entries, among many others:

- (11) **beyond, adv., prep., and n. C. n.**

2. **the back of beyond:** a humorous phrase for ever so far off, some very out of the way place.

1816 Scott *Antiquary* I. ii. 36 You...whirl'd them to the back o'beyont to look at the auld Roman camp.

forty-five, n. a. the Forty-five: the year 1745, and the Jacobite rebellion of that year.

1832 Scott *Redgauntlet* II. xi. 247 Ye have heard of a year they call the *forty-five*.

Although Scott's Scots-speaking characters have often been seen as prototypical instances of dialect users in literature, his ideological stance in relation to Scottish culture went beyond literary discourse and actually contributed to the achievement of political aims. When *Waverley* was published anonymously in 1814, the success was extraordinary and the name of the author, officially announced only in 1827, was in fact an easy guess. In 1815 Scott obtained permission to search for the long-lost Honours of Scotland, the crown and regalia which had last been used for the coronation of Charles II in 1651, and he actually found them hidden in Edinburgh Castle, where they can still be seen today. This led to Scott organizing George IV's visit to Edinburgh in 1822, the first time a reigning monarch had been to Scotland since Charles II in 1650 (see Prebble 1988). It was also the occasion on which tartan was given new value, although the 1746 Act of Proscription had been repealed in 1782. The 1746 Act stated:

- (12) from and after the first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and forty seven, no man or boy, within that part of Great Briton [sic] called Scotland, other than shall be employed as officers and soldiers in his Majesty's forces, shall on any pretence whatsoever, wear or put on the clothes commonly called Highland Clothes (that is to say) the plaid, philibeg, or little kilt, trowse, shoulder belts, or any part whatsoever of what peculiarly belongs to the highland garb; and that no tartan, or partly-coloured plaid or stuff shall be used for great coats, or for upper coats; and if any such person shall presume, after the said first day of August, to wear or put on the aforesaid garments or any part of them, every such person so offending, being convicted thereof [...], shall suffer imprisonment, without bail, during the space of six months, and no longer; and being convicted for a second offence before a court of judiciary or at the circuits, shall be liable to be transported to any of his Majesty's plantations beyond the seas, there to remain for a space of seven years. (Act of Proscription, 19 Geo. II, ch. 39, sec. 17, 1746)

When George IV visited Edinburgh, according to the *Caledonian Mercury* "His Majesty was superbly dressed in the Highland costume, with trows of the Stuart tartan. [...] the manly and graceful figure of his Majesty was

finely displayed in this martial dress". London's *Morning Post* for 22 August added that "his Majesty was dressed in a full Highland uniform, and wore the broad sword, pistols, and philebeg" (see Goff 2014). In practice, between Culloden and the repeal of the Act, the Highland garb had been allowed only in the Hanoverian army, i.e. it could be worn only on condition that loyalty be sworn to the ruling monarch; but when George IV wore it in Edinburgh, with this gesture the king merged identities and – paradoxically – transformed what used to be the most obvious marks of an opposing group into the new official outfit of 'North Britain'.

Sir Walter Scott is thus seen to have contributed in very substantial ways to the creation of a distinctly romanticized image of Scotland, or indeed of 'Scott-land', as Kelly (2010) has called it. The novelist's literary use of Scots should therefore be considered in the framework of a loyalist agenda which also chose to ignore the harsh reality of the Highland Clearances, although it was in those same years that forced evictions were taking place in many areas and depleted the country of those same speakers whose language was so appreciated, at least in theory.

The case is somewhat different for Robert Louis Stevenson, whose works were published at another high-water mark in the romanticization of Scotland: what some critics have actually labelled 'Balmoralization', following Queen Victoria's fascination with the area.⁷ Although many of the Scots lexical items employed by Stevenson had indeed occurred in other literary works, his ideological approach differs from that of his predecessors, as he was neither a purist nor a staunch Unionist,⁸ but paid close attention to the historical sources on which he relied for his novels and stories.

Stevenson knew very well that printers felt at liberty to 'standardize' whatever was submitted, ironing out spelling or morphological discrepancies in manuscripts, for the sake of uniformity and homogeneity. Also, dialect forms could be deliberately diluted for editorial reasons, so as to make the text accessible to a wider audience (Donaldson 1986: 146-147). His works, however, were very accurate in this respect, as he paid close attention to these issues. In the introduction to the Scots poems in *Underwoods* (1887) Stevenson problematized the inconsistency of Scots spelling and candidly

⁷ See for instance comments on this phenomenon in Hodler (2015).

⁸ We know that Stevenson did not approve of the label 'North Britain', as in a letter dated 1888 he wrote:

Don't put 'N.B.' on your paper: put Scotland, and be done with it. Alas, that I should be thus stabbed in the home of my friends! The name of my native land is not North Britain, whatever may be the name of yours. (RLS to S.R. Crockett, c. 10 April 1888, in Booth and Mehew 1995: 156, original emphasis).

admitted that, as far as lexical choices were concerned, his usage was somewhat eclectic:

- (13) if I wish the diphthong *Ou* to have its proper value, I may write *Oor* instead of *Our*; many have done so and lived, and the pillars of the universe remained unshaken. But if I did so, and came presently to *Down*, which is the classical Scots spelling of the English *Down*, I should begin to feel uneasy; and if I went on a little farther, and came to a classical Scots word, like *Stour* or *Dour* or *Clour*, I should know precisely where I was – that is to say, that I was out of sight of land on those high seas of spelling reform in which so many strong swimmers have toiled vainly. To some the situation is exhilarating; as for me, I give one bubbling cry and sink. [...]. As I have stuck for the most part to the proper spelling, I append a table of some common vowel sounds which no one need consult; [...].

I simply wrote my Scots as well as I was able, not caring if it hailed from Lauderdale or Angus, from the Mearns or Galloway; if I had ever heard a good word, I used it without shame; and when Scots was lacking, or the rhyme jibbed, I was glad (like my betters) to fall back on English. (Stevenson 1887: x-xi)

It would thus be futile to look for ‘dialect authenticity’ in his works, as Stevenson challenged the ideology of ‘purity’. At the same time, his texts are both effective and evocative; pieces like *Thrawn Janet* (published in *Cornhill Magazine* in 1881) and *The Tale of Tod Lapraik* (in *Catriona*, published in 1893) are actual tours-de-force in the art of native story-telling, and present stories within stories, with a mise-en-abyme effect that enables readers (or indeed listeners) to imagine themselves in the distant, spooky milieu of the protagonists. In *Thrawn Janet*, the shift from the introduction (in Scottish English) and the actual story, is not even marked explicitly, as if the narrator had always been present and had only been waiting for his turn to speak. As for *The Tale of Tod Lapraik*, it is a Gothic interlude in the main novel, in many ways like *Wandering Willie’s Tale* in Scott’s *Redgauntlet*, first published in 1824. In both cases the first-person narrative is presented as an accurate representation of life experiences – let’s compare the two incipits:

- (14) Scott:
But this that I am going to tell you was a thing that befell in our ain house in my father’s time – that is, my father was then a hafflins

callant; and I tell it to you, that it may be a lesson to you that are but a young thoughtless chap, wha ye draw up wi' on a lonely road; for muckle was the dool and care that came o' 't to my gudesire. [...] Ye maun have heard of Sir Robert Redgauntlet of that ilk, who lived in these parts before the dear years. The country will lang mind him; and our fathers used to draw breath thick if ever they heard him named. He was out wi' the Hielandmen in Montrose's time; and again he was in the hills wi' Glencairn in the saxteen hundred and fifty-twa; and sae when King Charles the Second came in, wha was in sic favor as the laird of Redgauntlet? He was knighted at Lonon Court, wi' the king's ain sword; and being a red-hot prelatist, he came down here, rampauging like a lion, with commissions of lieutenancy (and of lunacy, for what I ken), to put down a' the Whigs and Covenanters in the country. (Scott 1855: 73)

Stevenson:

My faither, Tam Dale, peace to his banes, was a wild, sploring lad in his young days, wi' little wisdom and little grace. He was fond of a lass and fond of a glass, and fond of a ran-dan; but I could never hear tell that he was muckle use for honest employment. Frae ae thing to anither, he listed at last for a sodger, and was in the garrison of this fort, which was the first way that ony of the Dales cam to setfoot upon the Bass. Sorrow upon that service! The governor brewed his ain ale; it seems it was the warst conceivable. Therock was proveesioned frae the shores with vivers, the thing was ill-guided, and there were whiles when they büt to fish and shoot solans for their diet. To crown a', thir was the Days of the Persecution. The perishin'cauld chalmers were a' occupped wi' sants and martyrs, the saut of the yearth, of which it wasna worthy. (Stevenson 1893: 164-165)

In such cases, the use of Scots does not merely serve to characterize speakers, but actually to profile a genre, the Gothic story, which is consistent with the attention paid to folk lore, legends, superstitions and other traditions by collectors of lexical items for 'provincial' glossaries – see Dossena (forthcoming). A similar approach is seen in *The Merry Men*, published in *Cornhill Magazine* in 1882, where Scots forms frame the development of another tale of the supernatural and which thus may bring Stevenson also close to the Robert Burns of *Halloween* (1785) and *Tam O'Shanter* (1790).

4. Another wilderness across the ocean

The power of ideology in the representation of other languages and/or other varieties is seen to be at work also in American literature, and equally in often ambivalent ways.⁹ Indeed, beyond literature, ideology underpins other artistic representations, educational materials, and even lexicography: Noah Webster's patriotic views are well-known and they are clearly illustrated in the presentation of what sources his dictionary meant to employ:

- (15) I do not indeed expect to add celebrity to the names of *Franklin, Washington, Adams, Jay, Madison, Marshall, Ramsay, Dwight, Smith, Trumbull, Hamilton, Belknap, Ames, Mason, Kent, Hare, Silliman, Cleaveland, Walsh, Irving*, and many other Americans distinguished by their writings or by their science; but it is with pride and satisfaction, that I can place them, as authorities, on the same page with those of *Boyle, Hooker, Milton, Dryden, Addison, Ray, Milner, Cowper, Davy, Thomson and Jameson*. [...] *Franklin and Washington*, whose language is their hereditary mother tongue, unsophisticated by modern grammar, present as pure models of genuine English, as *Addison or Swift*. But I may go farther, and affirm, with truth, that our country has produced some of the best models of composition. The style of *President Smith*; of the authors of the *Federalist*; of *Mr. Ames*; of *Dr. Mason*; of *Mr. Harper*; of *Chancellor Kent*; [the prose] of *Mr. Barlow*; of the legal decisions of the *Supreme Court of the United States*; of the reports of legal decisions in some of the particular states; and many other writings; in purity, in elegance and in technical precision, is equaled only by that of the best British authors, and surpassed by that of no English compositions of a similar kind.

(Webster 1828: Preface)

A patriotic approach in which the specificity of American English was stressed is equally found in books aimed at self-education, such as in *Beadle's Dime Speakers*, 25 inexpensive booklets published between 1859 and 1886 by a company best-known for its dime novels, which comprised titles like *The American Speaker* (1859), *The National Speaker* (1860), *The Patriotic Speaker* (1862), *The Spread Eagle Speaker* (1869) and *The Hail Columbia Speaker* (1876).

⁹ On the similar approaches to Scottish and Native American cultures see Calloway (2008) and Lauzon (2008).

In the historical context of those same years, both before and after the Civil war, the US was also defining its identity through a long sequence of Indian wars which were reflected in an often contradictory representation of protagonists and events both in literature and in other forms of art. In paintings, sculptures and chromolithographs, for instance, Native subjects could be depicted either as fierce warriors or as ‘vanishing Indians’ (see Cartosio 2016); similarly, alongside troubling captivity narratives readers found conversion narratives that stressed the ‘civilizing’ value of religion (see Wyss 1999 and Campbell 2015). Emigrants’ guides and travelogues provided what were supposed to be objective descriptions, but it was literature and popular narratives that established images of Native Americans (and of their languages) that would be just as powerful as those offered by the visual arts (see Dossena 2015). To give just two examples, we can compare the annotations we find in a travelogue (Campbell 1876) and in a historical account (McIntosh 1853). In the former, John Campbell described the phonological rendition of a native conversation in the Puget Sound area in the following terms:

- (16) An old woman, clicking as men click when they talk in the Caucasus and at the Cape of Good Hope, with strange grunts and gutturals for language, chattered. The men grinned. They were the ugliest set of mortals that ever I saw. (Campbell 1876: 111-112)

In the latter, instead, John McIntosh called Algonquin “the Italian of the western continent” on account of its vowel system, and stressed traits that were seen to be characteristic of ‘proper’ languages: elegance, harmony, “richness of expression, [...] variety of turns, [...] propriety of terms, and [...] regularity”:

- (17) The *Algonquin* language has not so much force as the *Huron*, but it has more sweetness and elegance, and may with great propriety be denominated the Italian of the western continent; for it abounds with vowels, which renders it soft, musical, and harmonious. Both the *Algonquin* and the *Huron* have a richness of expression, a variety of turns, a propriety of terms, and a regularity which seldom prevails in some of the more cultivated languages of Europe.

(McIntosh 1853: 93-94)

Within this framework, the works of James Fenimore Cooper are justly considered to be exemplary of this ambivalent (and ideologically-construed)

attitude to the languages of Native Americans (see Scatà, this volume). In *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) the ways in which different characters, their languages and their cultural values are seen to interact places at least four different languages along a cline ranging from near-perfection (the language of the Mohican) to deprecation (French) – English is better than French, but still inadequate to represent Mohican qualities, while the language of the Huron, who are siding with the French, is stigmatized on account of their having abandoned their ancestral culture, in order to take on that of an invading people who have no qualms about renaming their territory and imposing foreign place names. As for the character of Natty Bumppo, European by birth but adopted by the Mohican, he often relies on silent gestures like his Delaware companions, almost as if his ability to understand two different cultures placed him at the centre of a complex communicative network.

In stories concerning ‘Mountain Men’, i.e. fur trappers and traders, instead, linguistic representation again presents a different kind of exotic usage. Instances of this can be found in George Frederick Ruxton’s narrative of his “Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains”, first published in Blackwood’s *Edinburgh Magazine* in 1848, and indeed the text in which the term ‘mountain men’ is first found.¹⁰ Here the protagonists are shown to use a kind of sociolect not unlike what is found in urban narratives. Rather than geographical distance, what is showcased is a class distinction that does not envisage much schooling and in which both lexis and pronunciation define the in-group. In the excerpt below, eye-dialect, slang, and typical colloquialisms intertwine and offer readers a glimpse of this distant, but still comprehensible, world:

- (18) “Whar’s them mules from? They look like Californy.” “Mexican country-away down south.” “H-! Whar’s yourself from?” “There away too.” “What’s beaver worth in Taos?” “Dollar.” “In St. Louiy?” “Same.” “H-! Any call for buckskin?” “A heap! The soldiers in Santa Fe are half froze for leather, and mocassins fetch two dollars easy.” “Wagh! How’s trade on Arkansa, and what’s doing to the fort?” “Shians at Big Timber, and Bent’s people trading smart. On North Fork, Waters

¹⁰ See the entry in the *OED* for *mountain man*, n. [...] b. U.S. A backwoodsman, a trapper; a pioneer. Also *fig.* 1847 G.F.A. Ruxton *Adventures Mexico & Rocky Mts.* xxv. 221 The depreciation in the value of beaver-skins has thrown the great body of trappers out of employment, and there is a general tendency among the mountain-men to settle in the fruitful valleys of the Rocky Mountains.

got a hundred pack right off, and Sioux making more." "Whar's Bill Williams?" "Gone under they say: the Diggers took his hair
(Ruxton in Hubbard 1968: 220)

In spite of the apparent heterogeneity of the various texts from which examples have been presented here, what they all have in common is the attempt to show linguistic distinctiveness as a token of authenticity, a feature to which a strong ideological value is attributed, whether it is to stress patriotic views or to emphasize distance from other cultures.

5. Concluding remarks

In nineteenth-century literature speakers of different languages and/or language varieties are often seen to embody the ambivalent attitudes that authors, critics and the reading public shared towards the cultures that such languages and varieties expressed. Literary representations reflected and indeed helped to perpetuate the kind of bias which idealized supposedly ancient forms, while at various levels educational policies stigmatized those same forms and sought to eradicate them. On both sides of the Atlantic grammarians and lexicographers strove to promote linguistic assimilation and uniformity; at the same time, compilers of glossaries and novelists made sure that lexical and phraseological items could be preserved as relics of ancient eloquence.

Both approaches could lead to the fabrication of myths – on one hand, of standard regularity; on the other, of antiquity, purity and (implicitly) of non-viability in the modern world. It was only in very few cases that socially-and/or geographically-marked forms could be employed as strategies for social critique and empowerment; in general, the ideology underpinning the representation of such forms in literary discourse reflected a kind of 'imperialist nostalgia' even in linguistic matters.

While observations along these lines have often been put forward in the study of post-colonial literature, in this study I have attempted to outline how representations of Scots fit into this framework and indeed how closely related they can be to the linguistic representation of Native Americans, offering a transatlantic perspective on topics that have not often been considered through a more encompassing approach. At the same time, it may be stressed that, in order to study these phenomena, the tools of quantitative investigation can only provide a starting point for further

interdisciplinary studies; to that end, historical linguists must acquire new tools and question assumptions from different perspectives; i.e., as aptly suggested by Filppula and Klemola (2014), they must redefine themselves, first and foremost, as language historians.

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