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## Introduction

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### Historical aims

The aims of this book are threefold. First, it seeks to liberate eighteenth-century literary history from a historiography which has often itself been imprisoned in the construct of Britain we all inherit, predicated as it is on the social, constitutional and political outcomes of the Revolution of 1688/89. ‘Augustanism’ and ‘Enlightenment’ as literary concepts have often been popularly based on a view of a civilized and civilizing, stable and metropolitan society in which historians of whatever colour have ceased to believe in the terms literature has absorbed.<sup>1</sup>

This kind of historicizing, sometimes called ‘Whig’, I label here by the term ‘incremental’, intending not to write a revisionist view of metropolitan literary history from a differing partisan viewpoint, but instead to uncover the language in which the metropolis, the centre, the imperial state, makes sense of its achievements. ‘Incremental’ is chosen to indicate the developmental, progress-oriented minimizing of difference in terms of which such history expresses itself. ‘Linear’, an alternative term, seems to me to insufficiently identify this aspect.

Within the context of the British state (other contexts are suggested in Chapter 1), incremental history’s essential premiss is the Revolution of 1688/89 and the constitutional developments which, flowing from it, established the state itself and consolidated the British Empire. Reliance on this premiss requires a commitment to prioritize certain aspects of British political and intellectual life, to minimize opposition and to exclude marginal or different interests: hence Trevelyan’s attack on the Highlanders as ‘barbarians’, and the barely veiled association of Catholicism with arbitrary brutality in traditional assessments of James VII and II.<sup>2</sup>

This imperial Protestant view, has, like the imperial Protestant map, receded. But sophisticated revisions of it are still found, as, for example,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. David Allan, *Virtue, Learning and the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), for a questioning of traditional positions.

<sup>2</sup> George Macaulay Trevelyan, *England Under the Stuarts*, 14th edn (London, 1928), p. 455.

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Linda Colley's recent *Britons*, a book which argues that Protestantism lies at the core of the building/development/convergence of a common British identity. This explicit view of the centrality of religious faith, neglected by many recent historians, is to be welcomed: but Professor Colley's book nonetheless can be seen as reinforcing the lineaments of a much older kind of incremental history. Nonjurors and dissenters are to her book what lies were to Swift's *Houyhnhnms*: the thing that is not, which enables her to cover Bishop Ken's stand for 'the Catholic Church, before the disunion of East and West' and Quakerism alike with the blanket term 'Protestant'. Despite the book's many excellences, there is no real acknowledgement of the hostility of Anglicans towards dissenters, or of the variety of religious fragmentation thus compressed by purposive hindsight. Scottish Episcopalians find no place, and nor does Ireland: in fact, it is deliberately excluded, as incremental history must exclude it, for it is an embarrassment to 'Britain'. 'It seems history is to blame', as Haines says to Stephen Daedalus.<sup>3</sup>

These margins are relevant. Ireland's population was not far behind England's in the eighteenth century, and the population of the Scottish Highlands was five times what it now is. Thus even purely in terms of demography, the Jacobite threat was greater in the centre's perception than a centralizing history can now make it. This book intends to enter literary history by the margins of eighteenth-century politics: not only the geographical, demographical and confessional margins, but also the *sub rosa* whispers of marginal speech of discontent within the British state.

This book's first aim thus gives rise to two more. It attempts to weaken the border between canonical and non-canonical literature in the eighteenth century in the interests of exposing a shared language of cipher and allusion in response to a changing polity which politicizes the traditional core of Augustan writing in ambivalent terms. Connexions between high cultural writing and other kinds of cultural transmission throughout the British Isles are used both to establish ideas of a 'mediated text' in the circles of Jacobite opposition, and also to show general similarities as well as differences in such practice throughout the four nations.

Thus thirdly, the aim is to catch up with historical thinking by offering, for the first time, 'four nations' literary history. Such a move is intended not only to allow what has been called 'Augustanism' to detach itself from old historiographical positions, but also to give an account of literature's politicizing of and by history in both incremental and typological modes. Typological history, history as recurrence and renewal, spoken of in folk and sacred terms, is the history often chosen by the marginalized and

<sup>3</sup> Timothy Ware (Bishop Kallistos), *The Orthodox Church* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982 (1963)), p. 325.

defeated in the account I am offering. It places particular emphasis (of which more in Chapter 1) on the repetitive or prophetic quality of events. Such an understanding of history interacts strongly with literature, because of literature's habit of revisiting compelling images repeatedly. Dryden and Yeats are only two of the poets who have displayed this at crucial moments in political history, finding a language of event which becomes the event itself: 'Did that play of mine send out / Certain men the English shot?'. Thus what I am aiming to show are meeting-points between literary and historical understanding of events. Events are the issue for both kinds of writing, and are what make them one in the field of typological history. For myths are facts to those who objectify them in belief, and become part of that nature of things declared by Burke to be a sturdy adversary.<sup>4</sup>

This book may be accused of overestimating the force of Jacobitism. Much of the evidence adduced will be, by the nature of things, provisional, codified, uncertain. But there will be a great deal of it, and taken together I trust it will prevail. It is not intended to show that the vast majority of English, Scots, Welsh and Irish were Jacobites; only to suggest that Jacobite and associated nationalist views and beliefs were sometimes the sympathies of many, and always those of a significant minority. Edward Gregg, in a recent hostile review of Paul Monod's *Jacobitism and the English People*, suggests that the Jacobites were like the third party in British politics, low in bedrock support and good only for a protest vote. Professor Gregg is psephologically vulnerable here. Not only have the Liberals / Alliance attracted around 20 per cent of the vote in five of the last six elections (beside many spectacular by-election victories), but almost half say they would support them if they had a chance of winning. This is the core of the matter, and I would claim no more for Jacobitism. But what should not continue to evade scholarly scrutiny is the assertion that only those prepared to risk all they owned and a gruesome death can be counted as interested in supporting the Stuarts.<sup>5</sup>

### Literary evidence

As indicated above, this book looks closely at literature outside the canon. The corpus of songs and poems we inherit from the Jacobite movement is of great significance in establishing the ideology and political analyses of Jacobitism, as well as allowing us to read the Jacobite cause as a contemporary text: relating in literary terms intertextually, in historical terms evidentially, to its period context.

<sup>4</sup> W. B. Yeats, *The Collected Poems* (London: Macmillan), p. 393.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Gregg, 'Review of Paul Kleber Monod's *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688–1788*, *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 16:1 (1993), pp. 71–2.

Unfortunately, anyone approaching the Jacobite lyric with such ideas in mind runs up almost immediately against a scholarly claim which renders this choice research material useless: the view that the Jacobite lyric is usually written subsequently to the events it describes. David Johnson, writing in his *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (1972), argues that

It has been stated that Jacobite songs arose spontaneously out of the Scottish people's deep emotional involvement with the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. I can only say that I have seen no evidence supporting this; most of the recorded Jacobite songs were actually written as an act of self-conscious nationalism, between 1790 and 1820, by such people as James Hogg and Lady Nairne.<sup>6</sup>

This assertion does not receive a footnote, but it is echoed by writers with more specialized interests in the period, such as William Donaldson in *The Jacobite Song* (1988), who calls the 'overwhelming majority' of Jacobite songs 'brilliant fakes': but offers only 'half a dozen titles' of what are, incontrovertibly, late compositions, such as 'The Skye Boat Song' and 'Cam' ye by Athol'. To be fair, the main body of Dr Donaldson's book doesn't quite echo the strength of his introduction's claims: but the scholarly position is plain. Not much faith can be placed in the contemporaneity of the Jacobite song.<sup>7</sup>

Yet I suspect that this widespread view needs to be clarified. What both Johnson and particularly Donaldson may really mean is not that the vast majority of *all* Jacobite song is post-Jacobite, but that the vast majority of *all good* Jacobite song is so. I assume that this is the case because given the vast amount of eighteenth-century printed book and pamphlet Jacobite material any cursory examination of a research library would reveal, it is impossible that it could be otherwise. Indeed, this is the line pursued more explicitly by David Daiches when he argues that it is the aggressive and satirical Jacobite material which is contemporary; the (good?) erotic and sentimental which is later.<sup>8</sup> It is important to make this distinction clear, because if aesthetic quality is all that is at stake, the Jacobite lyric is fully rehabilitated as a historical, if not a literary, document with no further ado.

Quality is a difficult question to tackle academically (if not administratively or pedagogically) in the 1990s. It is easier to show that the variety of eighteenth-century Jacobite lyric we inherit is greater than implied above. In 1989, in an annotated edition of a dated Jacobite songbook from the 1740s on contemporary paper, I suggested a threefold categorization of

<sup>6</sup> David Johnson, *Music and Society in Lowland Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1972), p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> William Donaldson, *The Jacobite Song: Political Myth and National Identity* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), pp. 3–4.

<sup>8</sup> David Daiches, 'Robert Burns and the Jacobite Song', in Donald Low (ed.), *Critical Essays on Robert Burns* (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 137–56 (138).

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the songs we inherit: the aggressive/active song, calling for war or opposition to the Whig state; the erotic song, portraying the absent king as lover; and the sacred lyric, in defence of Episcopacy or what can only be called Anglo-Catholicism. That these categories can all be found in the early eighteenth century was made clear in that edition, and will be made clearer here. Moreover, I shall argue for a contiguity of Jacobitical interpretation among differing classes and cultures in these islands: that the erotic ballads of London display a similar iconography of sacred monarchy to the *aislings* of Munster, and that the 'mediated text' produced through interaction between folk and dispossessed high culture voiced dissatisfaction in allied terms. That the Jacobite song was crucial in voicing the ideas and sentiments of the Jacobite cause is clear from its widespread military use and popularity with the Jacobite leadership, Charles Edward himself being an aficionado.<sup>9</sup>

But there is yet more to be said than a scouring of archives alone can reveal. The strong disincentive which existed to writing down Jacobite songs in the Jacobite period should strongly suggest to us that much of the lyric corpus is lost, or if not lost, surviving in forms we cannot prove were contemporary, and yet may well have been. Central to this assertion is the focal position occupied by Jacobite folk culture, or its propagandistic use by high culture, during the Jacobite period.

Sometimes the internal evidence of the songs supports this view. The fine song, 'Lochmaben Gate', first collected by Hogg, has left (apparently) no earlier written trace. But it deals with a particular Jacobite rally on 27 May 1714, which had been prepared to demonstrate support in that area of southern Scotland. Such particularity renders a remote date for composition less likely – many of the Regency or Victorian compositions are sentimental as much due to their vagueness as anything else. More important to note is the disproportionate strength of Jacobitism in the richest folk cultural area of Scotland: the North East. Jean McCann, in her unjustly neglected thesis 'The Organization of the Jacobite Army, 1745–46' (Edinburgh, 1963), shows how recruitment in the Episcopal North East was proportionately more than 30 per cent higher than in the West Highlands. And they took their culture with them. It was a North-Eastern ballad singer, 'Mussel-Mou'd' Charlie, who was the last survivor of the 'Fifteen (d. 1782), while the importance of folk and street singers to the support and spread of Jacobite ideology is recognized by many writers, beginning with M.G.D. Isaac, in his thesis 'A Study of Popular Disturbance in Britain 1714–54' (Edinburgh, 1953). Donaldson himself

<sup>9</sup> Frank McLynn, *Charles Edward Stuart: A Tragedy in Many Acts* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 284.

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mentions how limited print runs were used to circulate forbidden propaganda-songs in 'safe' areas.<sup>10</sup>

Also of note is the fact that writers on folklore can find Jacobite songs and attitudes at the heart of the corpus they are studying. Airs such as 'Chevy Chase' seem to have been used to indicate Jacobite support within a ballad tradition entered by explicit Jacobite songs, such as 'Lord Derwentwater's Goodnight' (variants of which even rendered the English earl a Scottish popular hero), while the transmission of that tradition itself could be coloured by political sentiment, as will be evident later. Moreover, the eighteenth century is a period when printed culture is increasingly intruding on and interacting with folk culture. When aided by a nationalist vernacular revival, as in Scotland, or the cross-class outlawry of opposition, favourable historical circumstances were intensified by ideology and opportunity. There was a convergence of high and folk culture in the Jacobite milieu, as those who wished to defend a peculiarly Scottish (or Irish) high culture were forced into alliance with their own folk culture as the only alternative to surrender to the cultural standards of the British state. This is an area of research which strengthens the Jacobite lyric's place in both history and literature, but as yet it has only been touched on: J.G. Simms' chapter on 'Swift and Oral Culture' in Swift's tercentenary tribute volume is one example of this.<sup>11</sup> The process also appears in the adoption of Belhaven's lurid and sententious speech against the Union in the popular broadside, 'Lord Belhaven's Speech in Parliament', one of the early ancestors of the 'bought and sold for English gold' school of Scottish political history:

While all the world to this day,  
Since Nimrod did a sceptre sway,  
Ensigns for sov<sup>r</sup>ign power display,  
Shall it be told,  
We, for a little shining clay,  
A kingdom sold.<sup>12</sup>

To read this, as so much of early Jacobite poetry, does not dispose one to think of Burns as a faker of Jacobite songs, more a packager, an image-maker, a presenter: those heroes of our age, and the guardians of quality. So perhaps that question is answered too.

<sup>10</sup> James Hogg, *Jacobite Relics*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1819–21), 1: pp. 132, 293n; Alistair and Henrietta Tayler, *Jacobites of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire in the Rising of 1715* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1934), p. 146.

<sup>11</sup> Derwentwater is referred to further in Chapter 2; see also Roger McHugh and Philip Edwards (eds.), *Jonathan Swift: A Dublin Tercentenary Tribute* (Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1967), in particular Austin Clarke's essay on 'The Poetry of Swift'.

<sup>12</sup> LORD BELHAVEN'S SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT, *The Second Day of November 1706 ... To which is subjoined, BELHAVEN'S VISION. A Poem* (Edinburgh: A. Robertson, 1766), p. 35.

The alliance between high and folk cultural perceptions is accompanied by a split between official and unofficial high culture, out of which many historical and typological Jacobite codes were born. Dryden's *Aeneid* was an officially acceptable version of what was unofficially (as Dryden knew when he introduced extensive Jacobite vocabulary into his translation) already a Jacobite document, a statement almost of the Jacobite credo: the exile and restoration of the Trojan Stuart, rightful heir of Brutus, made by James Philp of Almericlose in his *Grameid*, and more explicitly by Maitland in his translation of the central books of the *Aeneid*, dedicated to Mary of Modena in 1691. Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century the *Aeneid* and the plight of the Stuarts was to be linked in the high cultural coda of Jacobitism. Such a typology might suggest to us the inherent political instability of the 'Augustan' concept: the *Aeneid* was after all central to the image of Augustus. The Jacobite lyric, more broadly the Jacobite poem, is itself the key to a literary revisionism of the 1688–1760 period. A Jacobite literature exists for this period at all levels of society, from all points of view, the vanguard in verse for the ideology of the cause, sometimes literally, as when 'The White Cockade' played the Irish Brigades into battle at Fontenoy.<sup>13</sup> It is time to stop demythologizing the documents, either as literature or history. They exist, just as tartan existed before Lord Dacre allows it to.<sup>14</sup>

Variety and quality having been argued for a contemporary Jacobite song, only popularity remains. There are two central points I advance in support of the Jacobite lyric's popularity: the first is its use and adaptation of popular sets and airs, which show an intention to reach an audience familiar with the culturally demotic; the second is its responsibility for maintaining and distributing some of what are now the most widespread songs in our historic culture, such as 'God Save the Queen' and 'Auld Lang Syne' (the first being so strongly Jacobite that a Hanoverian set to it (which we inherit) was one of the government's great propaganda successes in the 1745 Rising). A Jacobite poet like Fergusson's opposition to the invasion of Scots by classical music in the later eighteenth century thus becomes one dimension of Jacobite high culture's affection for a vehicle which presented its aims to a popular audience; a traditionalism also evident in the harpers and bards maintained by Welsh and Irish Jacobite gentry. The folk orientation of Burns is part of the same pattern: a pattern

<sup>13</sup> John Cornelius O'Callaghan, *The Irish Brigades in the Service of France* (Glasgow: Cameron and Ferguson, 1870), p. 355.

<sup>14</sup> Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 15–41.

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which drew its authority from the conservative reaction against capitalist innovation argued for by both Eric Hobsbawm and E.P. Thompson.<sup>15</sup>

These are the points of departure, and this book allies them both with military attempts to secure the British state for the Stuart cause and with less violent political beliefs which tended to the same end. More Jacobites hoped for another Monck than did for another Montrose, but they are justly termed so for all that. From a language of past events they tried to articulate a restoration of those same events, in speaking history trusting to hear its echo. We speak, or have spoken, a different history, whose echoes do not convict its errors of guilt, as in Stuart drama: it expects to move on. But if we listen for those echoes they are louder than we care to hear, and still resonate in the British state which survives today. So here is offered a reconstruction of the Jacobite voice, without reducing it to the dimensions of war or conspiracy, which those same echoes, at least in fiction, overthrow at last, as that same Stuart drama makes ambivalently plain:

Integrity of life is man's best friend,  
Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> As in E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London: Merlin Press, 1991); E. J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Sandra Clark, *John Webster: The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfi*, Penguin Master-studies (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), p. 122.



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## 1

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## Invasion and xenophobia

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### The breaking image

Thus was Life's Sacred Tree of old  
 Committed to a Guardian Angel's Care . . .  
 Thrice happy James, whose First Year's Reign  
 Hath brought Astraea back to Earth again!  
 Joshua Barnes

To be sure we may say with Vergilius Maro,  
*Fuimus Troes.*<sup>1</sup>

The Baron of Bradwardine

On 5 November 1688, fifty years after the National Covenant had been signed in Edinburgh, William of Orange landed in England. His coming brought full circle Fortune's wheel which had deposed one Stuart through the fanaticism of the northern kingdom, and now evicted another by the fear and apathy of the southern realm.

Like so many patterns of recurrence, this description is too simple to stand as linear history. But to the Stuarts, and to this book which is an explanation of the poetry and ideology of their cause, such a reservation is redundant. For the Stuart cause (and on occasion, the ambition of its kings) was habitually expressed in a language of typology, with metaphors of prophecy and recurrence-salvation history, and not without its messianic force. This offered a profound and rich political analysis of the realms they had lost, won and lost again in the course of half a century. It was also a tongue which, increasingly after 1688, betokened the exclusion it lamented. As this kind of view of history declined in the following century, it was clung to tenaciously by the Stuart cause, and those to whom its interests were allied – and this was to a degree due to the marginalization of the historicity they represented. Typological history, history as recur-

<sup>1</sup> G. W. Keaton, *Lord Chancellor Jeffreys and the Stuart Cause* (London: MacDonald, 1965), p. 336; Sir Walter Scott, *Waverley*, ed. Claire Lamont (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 303.

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rence, myth, archetype and image is often the history sought by the defeated, whose linearity and incrementality have been exiled into colonialism or absorbed in a greater identity (as 'British' history so often absorbs its peripheries). Incremental, progressive history is on the other hand the language of victory, that of the British state over Scotland, Ireland and the Stuarts being one example famously visible in the broadening from precedent to precedent of classic Whig history; that of Communism over Tsars, White Russians and the Baltic states being another. As is evident from the fate of the latter, incremental history's prophecies of destiny and exclusion of marginal interests (e.g. Scots, Irish or Native Americans in the United States) are not necessarily 'true' any more than is typological history's lamentation, mythogeny and messianic hope. Typological history does not evolve along timescales: it takes a mythic or remote historical era, and glorifies it either to lament its passing or praise its return. The prophets of ancient Israel provide one of the clearest examples of typological history in action, with the nation's past covenant with God always being betrayed and always renewed; others are found in the returning Stuart Aeneas of Dryden, the Cuchulain of Pearse's *Scoil Eanna* and the Rising and the use of Zimbabwe's ruins as a focus for native nationalism in Rhodesia.

These categories are not absolute, but typological and incremental history are habitual opponents along the battle-lines drawn above. Centering, imperial or ideological states usually choose the latter; those whom they usurp the former. The Dalai Lama is renewed from generation to generation as Communist destiny exiles the identity of Tibet. Yeats' 'The Second Coming' is a classic expression of such typological protest against the progressive forward pressure of incremental history. Originally written in outrage at the Bolshevik Revolution and the murder of the Tsar and his family, Yeats' poem denies Communism its claimed historical destiny. It is only a new aberration, a repetition of Cromwell's king-killing (hence the derivation of the 'falcon and falconer' image from Marvell's 'Horatian Ode', itself a wry typological comment on the 'Augustanism' of Cromwell).<sup>2</sup> We are in the era of the 'rough beast', but gyres will narrow again once they have widened, narrow to an era of order (and here the need for typological interpretations of disaster can clearly be seen, since no disaster is irreversible in a history which repeats itself: no gyre will disorderly widen for ever).

This was how the ideology of the Jacobites spoke, particularly in the poetry in which typology's high cultural expressions often display themselves. The Revolution broke the image of kingship restored at the Restoration, but another restoration would come. Appropriately enough, the

<sup>2</sup> Murray G. H. Pittock, 'Falcon and Falconer: W. B. Yeats and Marvell's "Horatian Ode"', *Irish University Review*, Autumn 1986, pp. 175–9.