Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

NAVIGATING THE MIDDLE ROAD: SIR WALTER SCOTT'S REPRESENTATION OF THE SCOTTISH IDENTIY IN *MARMION: A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD* AND *THE LADY OF THE LAKE*

Oğuzhan KARACA

Master's Thesis

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ABSTRACT

KARACA, Oğuzhan. *Navigating the Middle Road: Sir Walter Scott's Representation of the Scottish Identity in Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field and The Lady of the Lake*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2024.

Regarded as the father of the historical novel and recognised for his ground-breaking influence on the genre, Sir Walter Scott played a pivotal role in reinstating Scottish identity amid Britain's dominance in nineteenth-century Europe. In response to Napoleon's threat, Scott adopted a middle-of-the-road policy, steering clear of enmity with England and seeking to preserve Scotland's cultural heritage within the unified Great Britain. In this context, this thesis explores the intricate relationship between Scott's dedication to Scottish identity and his loyalty to broader Britishness through an analysis of his poems *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field* (1808) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810). In *Marmion*, Scott emphasises Scotland's unity with England, foregrounding British identity. Despite reflecting Scotland's cultural values, Scott's primary objective is to strategically integrate the idea that both countries should coexist within a common British identity. *Marmion*'s narrative unfolds through the incorporation of supernatural and gothic elements, typical in romantic literature, centred around the character of Marmion. Conversely, *The Lady of the Lake* shifts focus directly to Scotland, revealing Scott's profound respect for Scottish traditions. He manifests this reverence through the narrative's exploration of relationships between the Scottish kingdom, the Highlands and the Lowlands. The idea of the necessity for peaceful coexistence between England and Scotland in *Marmion* transforms into the idea of the Scottish monarchy and clans living harmoniously in this poem. Besides recounting Scotland's history and showcasing its natural beauty, the narrative centres on the traditions of Scottish clans. In essence, this thesis uncovers the dual narrative embedded in Scott's poems under analysis. In *Marmion*, Scott champions British unity, whereas, in *The Lady of the Lake*, he assumes the role of a Scottish nationalist. The thesis meticulously explores Scott's nuanced approach to national identity in these works and investigates the underlying reasons for this intricacy.

Keywords: Sir Walter Scott, *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field*, *The Lady of the Lake*, middle-of-the-road-policy, Scottish Identity, British Identity

ÖZET

KARACA, Oğuzhan. *Orta Yolda İlerlemek: Sir Walter Scott'ın Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field ve The Lady of the Lake Şiirlerinde İskoç Kimliğinin Temsili*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2024.

Tarihi romanın babası olarak kabul edilen ve bu yazın türü üzerindeki çığır açan etkisiyle tanınan Sir Walter Scott, Britanya'nın on dokuzuncu yüzyıl Avrupa'sındaki hâkimiyeti esnasında İskoç kimliğinin yeniden tesis edilmesinde önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Napolyon'un Britanya'ya yönelik tehdidine karşı Scott, İngiltere ile düşmanlık yaratmaktan kaçınarak ve İskoçya'nın kültürel mirasını korumaya çalışarak orta yolcu bir politika izlemiştir. Bu bağlamda bu tez, Scott'ın İskoç kimliğine olan bağlılığı ile bu kimliği içine alan Britanya kimliğine olan sadakati arasındaki karmaşık ilişkiyi *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field* (Marmion: Bir Flodden Field Hikâyesi) (1808) ve *The Lady of The Lake* (Gölün Leydisi) (1810) isimli şiirler üzerinden incelemektedir. *Marmion*'da Scott, İskoçya'nın İngiltere ile bir bütün olma fikrini vurgulayarak İskoç kimliğinden ziyade Britanya kimliğini ön plana çıkarır. İskoçya'nın kültürel değerlerini yansıtmasına rağmen Scott'ın öncelikli hedefi her iki ülkenin ortak bir Britanya kimliği içinde arada var olması gerekliliği fikrini stratejik bir şekilde entegre etmektir. Şiirdeki anlatı, romantik edebiyatta yaygın olarak kullanılan doğaüstü ve gotik unsurlar kullanılarak ve Marmion karakteri etrafında şekillenen bir hikâye aracılığıyla aktarılır. Öte yandan *The Lady of the Lake*'te odak doğrudan İskoçya'ya kayar ve Scott'ın İskoç geleneklerine olan derin saygısı gözler önüne serilir. Scott bu saygıyı İskoç krallığı, Highlands (Yukarı İskoçya) ve Lowlands (Aşağı İskoçya) klanları arasındaki ilişkiler üzerinden kurduğu anlatısı aracılığıyla ortaya koyar. *Marmion*'da İngiltere ve İskoçya'nın barışça yaşaması gerekliliği fikri, bu şiirde İskoç kraliyetinin ve ülkedeki klanların birlikte huzur içinde yaşaması fikrine dönüşür. İskoçya tarihini ve ülkenin doğal güzelliklerini anlatmanın yanı sıra İskoç klan geleneklerine de odaklanılır. Özetle, bu tez, Scott'ın bu çalışmada konu edilen şiirlerindeki iki yönlü anlatıyı ortaya koymaktadır. *Marmion*'da Britanya birliğini savunan Scott, *The Lady of the Lake*'te bir İskoç milliyetçisi gibi hareket eder. Çalışmada, Scott'ın bu şiirlerde ulusal kimlik konusundaki karmaşık yaklaşımı ve bunun altında yatan nedenler detaylı bir şekilde irdelenmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Sir Walter Scott, *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field, The Lady of the Lake,* Orta Yol Politikası, İskoç Kimliği, Britanya Kimliği

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INTRODUCTION

"Un-Scotch us, if you will; but if you do, you will make us damned mischievous Englishmen."
– Sir Walter Scott

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) was a renowned and prolific author during his time, widely recognised as a critical figure in the revival of Scottish identity. He is often credited as the father of the historical novel and has since attained an esteemed status as an iconic figure in Scottish cultural history. Although Walter Scott was a writer who achieved widespread acclaim in the nineteenth century and left a mark on the literary landscape of that century, his popularity declined in the twentieth century and throughout the present day (Raleigh 7). Although Walter Scott's name may not be commonly discussed in contemporary literary circles, nor is it a prominent subject of academic lectures or widely recognised among readers of British literature, it is undeniable that he had a significant influence on early nineteenth-century literature. This impact is primarily attributed to his extensive body of work, particularly his historical novels and narrative poems. During a period characterised by the dominance of the British Empire in Europe and the vulnerable state of Scottish culture in the broader British framework, Sir Walter Scott emerged as a prominent figure who sought to revive Scotland's historical legacy. His works instilled a sense of national pride in the Scots, motivating them to uphold their cultural values.

Scott's political views have faced significant scrutiny due to the apparent contradiction between his alignment with Scottish nationalist sentiments and his concurrent support for unionist ideals. His attitude towards England is not antagonistic but acknowledges England's indispensable role in shaping Scottish history. However, this policy of middle-of-the-road did not hinder his ability to create works that extensively depict the conflicts between England and Scotland and consistently elevate his native land, commonly referred to as "North-of-the-border[1]." Scott's literary output at times narrated the Scots' resistance against the English forces and, at other times, explored the internal conflicts within Scotland. This thesis explores Sir Walter Scott's role as a poet

[1] "North-of-the-border" is an informal term used in the United Kingdom to refer to Scotland, indicating its geographic location in relation to England. The term emphasises Scotland's northern location in relation to the rest of the United Kingdom, emphasising its distinct cultural identity.

positioned within the expansive scope of the literary tradition prevalent during the Romantic era. It scrutinises the intricate alignment of Scott's dedication to both Scottish nationalist sentiments and his defence of Britishness[2], which fundamentally form the basis of his literary recognition.

This thesis primarily centres on Walter Scott's notable poems, *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field* (1808) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810). Through an examination of these works, the study aims to illuminate the connection between Scott's poetic artistry and his commitment to fostering and reflecting Scottish identity while championing the broader concept of Britishness. In *Marmion*, the focus leans more towards Britishness than Scottishness, emphasising the unity between Scotland and England. In the poem, Scott attempts to implant the idea of Scotland and England peacefully coexisting within the framework of Britishness without centralising the goal of reflecting Scotland's cultural values. In order to do this, he uses the commonly used supernatural and gothic elements found in Romantic literature to craft a story through the character of Marmion. The poem's central theme is Britishness, even though Marmion's anti-hero actions take centre stage in the story. Contrarily, in *The Lady of the Lake*, Scott's primary objective is to reflect Scottish traditions and values, which he does extensively. In the poem, he reflects Scottish values through various elements such as the castles that adorn the Scottish landscape, his portrayal of Scottish clans with their unique traditions and legends woven into the essence of Scottish history, and his depiction of Scottish attire, rich in cultural significance. Furthermore, he encapsulates the spirit of Highland clan rituals as well as the melodies of traditional music. Therefore, in the context of Scott's national agenda, *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake* illustrate the somewhat contrasting

[2] Britishness is a multifaceted concept that encompasses the collective identity of individuals in Great Britain, comprising England, Scotland, and Wales. Rooted in cultural, historical, and social influences, it signifies a shared sense of belonging, serving as a unifying force that promotes unity. It is crucial to clarify the usage of the concepts of Britishness and British identity in this thesis. While Wales is integral to this identity, the focus of Scott's politics in the poems analysed in this work—and in many of his works—is on the relationship between Scotland and England. Given the distinct historical dynamics, unique cultures, and struggles for independence in Wales compared to England and Scotland, and notably, Scott's lack of interest in narrating Wales, he concentrated only on the relationship of his own country, Scotland, with England. Therefore, in this study, the concept of British identity is employed solely in the context of Scotland and England, and should be read accordingly.

aims between advocating for the British empire and embracing Scottish nationalism, respectively.

This thesis stands out as a comprehensive analysis of the poems *Marmion* (1808) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), scrutinising them through the lens of Scott's middle-of-the-road policy. Previous examinations of *Marmion* have predominantly focused on the protagonist's portrayal as an anti-hero, seen as a precursor to the Byronic hero. Rather than treating the poem solely as a literary study, this thesis asserts that depicting Marmion as an anti-hero was a deliberate decision aligned with Scott's middle-of-the-road policy. This choice, consistent with the socio-political climate of the time, aimed to strengthen unity between Scotland and England. On the other hand, *The Lady of the Lake* is commonly regarded as Scott's most romantic poem, and it showcases Scottish customs and landscapes; existing analyses predominantly revolve around these themes. This study acknowledges these aspects but introduces a new perspective by arguing that the moderate political stance defining Scott's political and literary career is once again central to this poem. The thesis suggests that Scott, previously a middle-way poet in *Marmion* concerning Scotland-England relations, endeavours to pursue a balanced policy between the Kingdom and the clans within Scotland in *The Lady of the Lake*. This exploration adds a distinctive and original layer to the thesis.

Scott's literary legacy reveals his ability to portray historical diversity. While novels such as *Ivanhoe* (1819), *The Talisman* (1825), and *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828) are set in the Middle Ages, works like *Rob R*oy (1817), *Waverley* (1814), *Marmion* (1808), and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810) unfold in Renaissance Scotland. Therefore, attributing a uniform medieval setting to all his works would be inaccurate. Nevertheless, even in these Renaissance settings, Scott integrated medieval traditions, architecture, and customs into his depictions. His inclination to revisit the medieval era within Renaissance settings might have been raised from a multitude of factors, including the shared legacy of customs and the deliberate allure of the enigmatic medieval period. As a significant feature of Romantic literature, the medieval revival had a big impact on Scott's writing. He purposefully explored this fascinating-sounding historical era in

order to enthral, bring back the mysterious atmosphere of that era, and add more depth to his writing.

Although he is not recognised as one of the "Big Six[3]" (Levy and Perry 134) Romantic writers, nor is he called a purely Romantic poet, Scott is widely recognised as an essential writer who, along with the famous figure of Robert Burns, represented the Romantic Literary Tradition in Scotland. His literary pursuits were centred around the primary goal of reinstating Scottish cultural identity, drawing inspiration from medieval Scotland. Notably, the Romantic poets sought to counteract the societal upheavals caused by the Enlightenment's emphasis on science and reason. They purposefully resurrected medieval themes and found comfort in the Middle Ages by praising the virtues of individuality, subjectivity, imagination, and sincerity. As Stuart Curran observes, their attraction to these qualities can be seen as a reaction to the adverse effects of rationalism (5). This reaction originated from the acknowledgement that rationalism, by concentrating on the human intellect, places limitations on human freedom. In contrast to the rationalist viewpoint, which diminishes the bond between humanity and nature, and industrialisation, which enables the exploitation of nature, the Romantics aimed to establish a deep connection between humans and the natural world. Essentially, their goal was a conscientious effort to "revive" nature. This revivalist approach, for Scott, provided a powerful vehicle for promoting the restoration of Scottish identity, drawing on the rich historical tapestry of medieval Scotland. His narratives captured the essence of the Romantic era and demonstrated his deep commitment to preserving and revitalising Scotland's cultural heritage.

With its mystic content, the Middle Ages served as both a point of reference and a rich source of reinterpretation for the Romantics, who sought to express their artistic freedom through creative expression. Although they did not have national concerns like Sir Walter Scott; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, and Percy Shelley drew heavily on this period, and their desire to rediscover their inner fervour and intuition played a crucial role in shaping a collective heritage in Britain. At this point, it

[3] Among this group of poets were renowned names in literature, including William Blake (1757-1827), William Wordsworth (1770-1850), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), Lord Byron (1788-1824), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) and John Keats (1795-1821).

is necessary to remember that historical consciousness and Romanticism are tied to one another (Kroeber 8). The "historical consciousness," which Kroeber describes as possessed by romantic poets, was actually a consciousness indirectly gained by romantic poets who wanted to criticise the era in which they lived through the medieval revival. At this point, it should be noted that Scott deviates from Romantic poets who embraced the medieval revival. His engagement with medievalism was deliberate and purposeful, driven by his aspiration to revive the eroded virtues of his nation.

Scott was inclined to emphasise nationalist sentiments more prominently than many of his Romantic contemporaries. This emphasis was a direct consequence of his unwavering commitment to restoring Scottish identity, which necessarily entailed a deep exploration of the nation's cultural and historical distinctiveness. While Stuart Piggott and many critics define Scott as a Romantic writer, writers like John Sutherland argue that, in line with his national concerns, Scott crafted a "technical history," placing him on a delicate line between Romanticism and Realism (McLane 439). A close reading of Scott's poetry reveals that very few poems emphasise individualism and sentimentality, like those written by Wordsworth, Keats, or Percy Shelley. Because of the almost non-existent individuality in Scott's poetry (especially in his narrative poems), which is a defining feature of the Romantic movement, this absence has naturally led some critics to refrain from classifying Scott as a Romantic writer. Scott's recognition as a Romantic poet, however, stems from his deep engagement with the dominant Romantic literature of his time, his relationships with and inspiration from other Romantic poets, and his incorporation of essential elements like personification, nature celebration, and the supernatural and gothic themes linked to the medieval revival.

At this point, Scott's constant involvement with national concerns, which distinguished him from other Romantic writers, raises the question: what motivated this specific attention in his works? What factors prompted the revival of Scottish nationalism in his works? Caitlin and Dilawar Khan offer a valuable insight as follows:

> Independence was only the beginning of Scotland's losses to England. Following the cessation of military hostilities, the Scottish cultural identity became the subject of censure and was eventually outlawed entirely. Centuries of warring with England ill prepared Scots for becoming English . . . Although Scotland and England were formally united in 1707, it was not until after the disastrous end to the final Jacobite rebellion in 1746 that all of Scotland was forced to accept the union. Fear of inciting another rebellion led King George II of England to harshly outlaw tokens of Scottish heritage . . . tartans, bagpipes, and Gaelic played important outwards roles in representing what set Scotland apart from their southern neighbours. Scotsmen keenly felt the loss of the physical representation of their heritage. Highland clans suffered the most punishment for their involvement in the rebellions; not only did they lose the right to wear tartans and speak Gaelic, but the clans were also disbanded. (65)

The historical backdrop against which the dynamics of English and Scottish relations evolved is rooted in the lengthy Anglo-Scottish Wars, starting with Edward I's incursion into Scotland in 1296 (Bonner "The Origins"). Over centuries, these wars bore witness to a recurrent struggle, with England trying to assert its dominion over Scotland while Scotland ardently sought to maintain its status as an independent sovereign state. In fact, when Elizabeth I of England died without an heir in 1603, James I, King of Scotland and the son of Queen Mary of Scots, became King of England and Ireland. Although James later attempted to unite England, Scotland, and Ireland under a single kingdom with the 1603 Union of the Crowns, this was not entirely successful due to the countries' unwillingness to change their administrative systems, religious differences, and concerns about national identity (Waurechen 575). However, after a span of 104 years, precisely in 1707, the two nations were formally united and established as what is now known as Great Britain. Khan's comments shed light on how the merging of these two nations in 1707 inevitably affected Scottish identity. The dominance of England, marked by its "superior might" (Barron ii), cast a long shadow over Scotland's distinct cultural and historical heritage, thereby setting the stage for a complex interplay of forces that would shape the trajectory of Scottish identity in the wake of this union. The Scottish faced a multifaceted set of challenges, each contributing to the profound disruption of their way of life.

One of the biggest obstacles was notably the prohibition of their distinctive Gaelic language, greatly affecting their linguistic and cultural legacy. Following the prolonged wars that had eroded Scotland's military power, the country stood on the brink of losing

its unique national identity (Khan 64). However, in this critical period of Scottish history, a beacon of hope emerged for the transmission of the country's values into the future. Walter Scott would take on the role of reminding the Scots of their rich and enduring heritage, thereby playing a pivotal role in preserving their cultural and national identity. As Henry Beers propounds, Walter Scott "possessed the true enchanter's wand, the historical imagination . . . he raised the dead past to life, made it once more conceivable, made it even actual" (1). Scott accomplished this by writing his poems and novels in the form of chivalric romance, which held a prominent place in medieval literature and was the most appropriate literary genre for his purpose.

Scott argues that, in contrast to the prevailing notion that medieval romances are wholly constructed and distant from reality, they, in fact, encompass significant historical insights. He says: "We shall greatly err if we suppose that the adventures told in romance are as fictitious as its magic, its dragons, and its fairies. The machinery was indeed imaginary, or rather, like that of Homer . . . But the turn of incidents resembled, in substance, those which passed almost daily under the eye of the narrator" ("Essay on Chivalry" 45). It is evident that he possessed a keen awareness of the need for a particular form of medieval revival, specifically in the guise of medieval romance[4], as a means of relieving the prevailing cultural depression among the Scots. His insight in recognising the potential of romance as an influential genre stemmed from its capacity to contain substantial cultural and historical content, thus serving as a medium for transmitting such knowledge. Furthermore, he appreciated the romantic appeal of chivalry in the realm of romance, with its vivid depictions of heroic valour and knightly conduct. His discernment extended to the acknowledgement that chivalric romances invariably incorporated elements of the "strange, magical, or amazing experiences," as

[4] At this juncture, it is important to highlight that although Scott draws inspiration from medieval romance in both *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*, these poems do not entirely adhere to medieval romance conventions. This divergence could stem from Scott's prioritisation of his poems' themes and messages over the romantic elements and fantastical events typical in traditional romances. For example, as noted by Nestor and Goslee, *The Lady of the Lake* shifts from medieval romance to Renaissance romance after the initial canto. The primary focus of this thesis is not centred on interpreting these poems in the framework of medieval romance or pinpointing their deviations from it. Hence, for a deeper exploration of this topic, Nestor and Goslee's articles, "Revisiting *The Lady of the Lake*: Walter Scott and the Representation of Scotland" and "Romance as Theme and Structure in *The Lady of the Lake*," respectively, offer insightful perspectives.

suggested by Michael O'Neill (284). It was within these very elements that he perceived the source of his romantic imagination, thereby strengthening his determination to utilise them to the fullest. Ralph Stewart propounds that Scott's "first great gift to his people was the gift of his dreams, through which the land was made to glow again in the light of romantic imagination. He was eager and anxious to preserve the spirit not only of the border people but of the whole Scottish race" (6-7).

The works of Walter Scott, characterised by their romantic portrayal of a bygone era and nationalist undertones, have garnered significant appeal among the Scottish population and a global audience. His literary works merged skilful descriptions with history, placing him in a different position even though novels written before him addressed significant historical events. Having produced a copious amount of fictional works, he gained significant recognition initially in Scotland, followed by England. Kerry Dean Carso contends, "Scott's books were republished in the United States as soon as they appeared in England" (60). Subsequently, his renown extended across Europe and other regions, encompassing countries such as Australia and the United States. The influence of Scott's historical fiction on foreign writers was significant; prominent authors such as Victor Hugo, Tolstoy and Pushkin were inspired by Scott (Granata 11; Hoisington 343). As Fiona Robertson propounds, Scott "had the creative and technical brilliance to reassert the place of romance at the heart of a literary culture, nationally and internationally" ("Romance" 287). While it may initially appear as a surprising and somewhat nebulous assertion, there exists a widely held belief that Sir Walter Scott played a role in the American Civil War (Eckenrode 603).

Scott's Waverley Novels and historical romances, characterised by their vivid portrayal of the Scottish resistance against English domination and their emphasis on notions of masculinity, chivalry, and patriotism, achieved such a level of popularity that they exerted an influence far beyond their literary realm. Notably, they captured the imagination of estate owners in the southern states of the United States. The intersection of Scott's narratives with the subsequent socio-political developments in the southern United States thus highlights the profound and far-reaching impact of his work on shaping cultural and historical events (McParland 121). In *Life on The Mississippi*

(1883), Mark Twain criticised Scott, and held him responsible for laying the groundwork for the American Civil War:

> Walter Scott is probably responsible for the Capitol building; for it is not conceivable that this little sham castle would ever have been built if he had not run the people mad, a couple of generations ago, with his medieval romances . . . Sir Walter Scott with his enchantments, and by his single might checks this wave of progress, and even turns it back; sets the world in love with dreams and phantoms; with decayed and swinish forms of religion; with decayed and degraded systems of government; with the sillinesses and emptinesses, sham grandeurs, sham gauds, and sham chivalries of a brainless and worthless long-vanished society. He did measureless harm; more real and lasting harm, perhaps, than any other individual that ever wrote. (328-363)

Concluding solely from Twain's assertions, it would be an overstatement to assert that Scott played a direct role in instigating the American Civil War. These remarks, though, are about a writer who was well-known in America and whose novels sold thousands of copies, despite living thousands of kilometres away. This is why Twain's assertions should not be taken too lightly. Upon examining Twain's assertion, it becomes evident that a noteworthy correlation exists between Southerners drawing parallels between the Scots' resistance against the English and their own resistance against the North, thereby making an effort to secure their autonomy. From this particular standpoint, it is reasonable to argue that Scott had a significant influence worldwide[5].

Scott was a versatile writer. His vast body of work, including novels, poems, plays, historical accounts, and biographies, is evidence of the scope of his literary career. These diverse contributions proved Scott's adaptability as a writer and his ability to work across various genres and themes. This wide-ranging creative output highlighted his literary identity's complexity and demonstrated his enduring influence on the literary community. In his sixty-one years of life, Scott left a legacy remembered in international literature and "in the fields of architecture, tourism, lexicography, sustainability, biodiversity, and landscape management" (Smith, "Five Reasons" n. pag.). Walter Scott's body of work demonstrates his skilful utilisation of various

[5] Regarding the popularity of Walter Scott's works, Marian Irish argues that even Henry Adams, the famous American historian and grandson of former President John Adams, stated that he grew up reading Scott's novels *Ivanhoe* (1819), *Quentin Durward* (1823), and *The Talisman* (1825) (224).

Scottish locations as essential elements in the construction of his story. A number of these locations gained not only public recognition but also the attention of government agencies due to the skilful integration of their respective geographical settings. Following their newfound fame, these locations subsequently evolved into popular tourist destinations. Scott's ability to portray these regions' unique characteristics and cultural peculiarities within his literary works elevated them from obscurity, thereby contributing to their transformation into celebrated landmarks on the Scottish landscape. As Anthony Smith expressed, the landscape of a country "is not just the setting of the national drama, but a major protagonist, and its natural features take on historical significance for the people" (65).

Loch Kathrine (the famous lake from *The Lady of the Lake*), Crichton Castle (the castle featured in *Marmion*), Rossyln Chapel (featured in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*), Smailholm Tower (the tower next to Scott's grandfather's farmhouse, where Scott spent considerable time), and Glasgow Cathedral (depicted extensively in *Rob Roy*) are only a few of the spots Scott popularised ("Places in Edinburgh"). Nonetheless, among the many locations associated with Walter Scott, Scott's home in Abbotsford stands out. The home of Scott extends beyond the mere fact of it being Scott's personal dwelling. This heightened attraction is attributed to the rich and multifaceted collections housed within its walls, including artworks, weaponry, books, and an array of historical artefacts. Walter Scott's fondness for antiquities and his role as a collector is particularly evident in the opulent display of valuable antique items adorning his home (Parsons 454). To understand the origins of Walter Scott's fascination with history, it is imperative to delve into the story of his childhood.

The turning point in Walter Scott's life can be traced back to an incapacitating stroke at the age of two, which left his right leg permanently impaired. In the aftermath of this significant event, Scott's parents decided to send him to his grandfather's rural home in Sandyknowe, an arrangement intended to provide a restorative and nurturing environment for the young Scott. There Scott "made contact with the strongest of all the formative elements that would later mould his work – the oral tradition of the Borders, and beyond that, of Scotland as a whole" (Crawford 1). His unfortunate experience

presented him with an opportunity to immerse himself in the realm of literature. This can be partially attributed to the individuals with whom he socialised and the availability of leisure time that afforded him the chance to engage in reading. Scott was consistently accompanied by his aunt, Miss Jennet (qtd. in Finley 566). He engaged in extensive reading about Scottish ballads, their familial lineage, and narratives from the Border region. This exposure significantly stimulated the young Scott's curiosity about literature and Scottish history. He exhibited a strong preference for narratives centred around conflicts among knights.

Upon reaching the age of formal education, Scott had developed a profound engagement with the tales of chivalry and the historical heritage of their country. John Lauber asserts that Scott "became a famous storyteller among his schoolmates and improvised with a friend endless tales of knight errantry," and adds: "Above all, Scotland's past absorbed him. As a child, he learned the Jacobite songs and had become a convert to that last cause" (15). During his early years, he developed a profound fascination with his nation's history due to the stories conveyed to him and the works he read at his grandfather's rural home. Moreover, despite having read the works of John Dryden (1631-1700), Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), Alexander Pope (1688-1744), and Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), Scott was particularly interested in *Don Quixote* (1605), the works of Edmund Spenser (1552-1559) and the romances of Boiardo (1440-1494) and Ariosto (1474-1533) (15). He was an avid reader, but it was in the pages of chivalric romances, not the works of Neoclassical poets, that he found the heroic tales he sought.

After overcoming his walking impairment, Scott attended secondary school in Edinburgh and studied law at the University of Edinburgh. At the age of twenty-one, he was awarded admission to the Scottish Bar and promptly started a legal career, much like his father had done before him (McKinstry 61). He knew in his heart, however, that he would pursue a career in literature. Following that, he made his initial attempts. At the age of 25, Scott, who self-described as "German-mad" (Jones 32), translated the poems "Lenore" (1773) and "Der Wilde Jäger" (1786) by German poet Bürger (1747-1794), followed three years later by Goethe's (1749-1832) play *Gotz von Berlichingen*

(1773) (George 24). When it became clear that these translations were not going to be particularly successful, Scott, who had an interest in Border ballads ever since he was a boy, decided to start preparing his first comprehensive work, *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802), which was an anthology of ballads. The 1765 publication of Thomas Percy's (1729-1811) ballad collection *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765*)* had served as an influence for Scott (Vassallo 351). In the meantime, he became a partner in his friend James Ballantyne's printing company with the money he earned as a lawyer. Thus, he would easily print his works and "earn for himself all the profits - those of author, of publisher, and of printer" (Lauber 18). The public well received the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and Scott's reputation began to grow.

After a while, Scott set his mind on creating an original work and wrote the narrative poem *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805). The poem quickly became successful, reaching thousands of copies, and finally selling 44.000 copies before Scott's death (Kelly 19). In 1808, Scott cleared the bar upon writing an even more successful poem, *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field*. In the same year, he wrote a biography of John Dryden (1631-1700). Moreover, he was instrumental in establishing the publication known as the *Quarterly Review,* founded in 1809. In the meantime, sales figures were immense, "twenty-five thousand copies were sold within ten years (such sales for a volume of poetry would be remarkable in the 1960's in Great Britain or America)" (Kelly 17). *The Lady of the Lake*, another of Scott's famous narrative poems, was first published in 1810 and earned significantly higher sales. Scott became a pioneer, alongside Robert Southey, for long narrative poems produced in the Romantic tradition with the publication of all these pieces (Vassallo 351). He spent the money he earned from his poems on the land near Galashiels, which later became the site for Abbotsford, his home (Kelly 20).

However, after his initial surge of success, sales of Scott's poetry decreased. In the "General Preface" to Waverley Novels (1814), Scott explains that after some point, he turned to writing novels because he wished to reach the same level of success in novels that he did in poetry: "My early recollections of the Highland scenery and customs made so favourable an impression in the poem called *The Lady of the Lake* that I was

induced to think of attempting something of the same kind in prose" (xx). However, this switch was primarily the result of Lord Byron's growing popularity. In a letter he wrote to his friend Countess Pürgstall in 1821, Scott accepted the impact of Byron on him: "In truth, I have long given up poetry. I have had my day with the public; and being no great believer in poetic immortality, I was very well pleased to rise a winner . . . Besides, I felt the prudence of giving way before the more forcible and powerful genius of Byron" (qtd. in Lockhart, III: 80). Byron's writings, especially *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-1818), raised the bar to such a degree that Scott could not compete in the poetry market and instead switched to novel writing[6] (Craig 113).

The popularity of his books later greatly surpassed that of his poetry, to the point that Jane Austen criticised Scott with these words: "Walter Scott has no business to write novels, especially good ones. – It is not fair. – He has Fame & Profit enough as a Poet, and should not be taking the bread out of other people's mouths" (404). The fact that Scott did not reveal his identity as the author of his books until the 1820s was undoubtedly a contributing factor to his immense success as he "turned the convention of genteel anonymity into a guessing game, generating curiosity, speculation, and sales" (Robertson, "Novels" 295). The fact that Scott shifted to writing novels immediately following his fear of losing his success demonstrates that he was not particularly ambitious in poetry.

Not only the need of the public for a romanticised Scottish history following the French Revolution, which upheaved nationalistic sentiments and reminded the Scots of the long-endured Anglo-Scottish conflicts but also, and maybe the most importantly, Scott's drive to make a living would determine the trajectory of his professional life. However, it would not be entirely accurate to claim that Scott's transition to novels was unanticipated. His portfolio of literary works was predominantly composed of narrative poems. His experience in narrative poetry, in turn, provided Scott with a platform for transitioning from a poet to a novelist. Indeed, the greater expanse provided by the

[6] Scott gained widespread recognition after publishing *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake*, which led to an invitation for the Poet Laureateship in 1813. However, he turned down the offer, resulting in the appointment of Robert Southey as the poet laureate instead (Mayer 5).

length of novels offered Scott an enhanced platform to demonstrate the range of his talents, which included his profound grasp of antiquarianism, keen observations of human life and character, his appreciation for scenes both popular and courtly, and his skilful infusion of rich humour throughout his narratives (Legouis 299).

It was mentioned that Scott's works had a nationalist purpose and elicited a significant response locally and, to some point, globally. At this point, it is vital to clarify what Scott's nationalism entails, and why his works were so well received. Scott's nationalism-themed compositions were not only created from his childhood readings. In the same vein, the Anglo-Scottish conflicts in the earlier centuries were not the only factor contributing to Scott's works' widespread adoration. The comments made by Robert Crawford regarding Scott and Scott's history professor at Edinburgh University, A. F. Tytler, shed more light on these circumstances:

> Tytler's were designed to promote an ideology of Britishness in post-Union Scotland. They might note William Wallace as 'one of the greatest heroes whom history records,' but they censured more modern "mutual prejudices" between Scotland and England, and were geared to the strengthening of modern Britishness and "the admirable fabric of the British constitution." Tytler used his university position as a pulpit for his British Unionist politics, and the young Scott listened attentively; his own literary career would return repeatedly to just such "mutual prejudices." (139)

As this passage implies, the fact that Scott attended university and studied under a mentor who advocated for British-Scottish unity may have prevented him from being a radical Scottish nationalist. Although some Scots sought independence following the Acts of Union of 1707, which allowed the kingdoms of England and Scotland to be united under the name of Great Britain, Professor Tytler, whose theories Scott enormously appreciated, was a proponent of union. This viewpoint also affected Scott. Although the French Revolution, which occurred the year Scott attended university, impacted Scotland as much as any other country in terms of nationalism and independence, Scott was captivated by Tytler's comprehensive and rational approach to history.

Scottishness held immense significance for Scott. When discussing Scottish identity, one might immediately think of the historically significant tartan fabric, the flag representing St. Andrew's Cross known as The Saltire, the Lion Rampant, which represents Scotland's royal heritage, the Loch Ness Monster, and the national anthem Flower of Scotland (Leith 75-81). On the other hand, Scott placed particular emphasis on tradition, Scottish landscapes, and the historical narrative of Scotland. The cultural heritage of Scotland, its rich tapestry of customs and traditions, the distinct Gaelic language, the historical narrative of struggles for independence, the beauty of its landscapes, and the emblematic national symbols collectively form integral aspects of the Scottish identity vividly portrayed in Scott's works. Although Scottishness was vital to Scott, it made more sense for him to pursue a middle-of-the-road policy and defend Britishness as the tensions between England and Scotland had subsided.

Common Protestant beliefs, being born in Britain, speaking English, and Britain's rise to imperial power were all factors that formed the concept of British identity. According to Scott, the pivotal aspect of Britishness was that the constituent nations of Britain were not solely concerned with their own futures but also unified in support of Britain's self-defence and imperial ambitions. Scott's viewpoint is clearly conveyed in *Marmion* (Colley 316). As Robin Mayhead propounds, "Scott was a staunch supporter of the government and the Crown, yet at the same nostalgic for the old pre-Union Scotland he was born too late to have known" (11). As David Moltke-Hansen argues, the loss of colonies in America and the Napoleonic Wars led to the "growing number of Britons [being] eager to embrace any allegiance that would unite ever more closely the English and the Scots across their common border" (26). Matthew P. Dziennik parallels Moltke-Hansen's thoughts, asserting that the characters in Scott's works reflect the shared enmity against France, mirroring the unity between Scotland and England (146). Consequently, the imminent threat Napoleon posed to Europe and the loss of the American colonies would mark crucial turning points in Scott's formative years, profoundly shaping the essence of his future literary works.

Scott would create works that were infused with a unique spirit that encouraged and celebrated Scottish identity within the larger British context, as opposed to jingoistic

works motivated by nationalist fervour[7]. This spirit was so profound that it finds vivid manifestation in the romantic hero of *Marmion*, one of the two romances to be examined in the forthcoming chapters. In this narrative, the central protagonist is an English lord, and the storyline revolves around the historical event of the Battle of Flodden in 1513, a pivotal confrontation in Scottish history marked by the resounding defeat of the Scots against the English forces. The deliberate selection of an English protagonist and the focus on a tragic event in Scottish history underscored Scott's nuanced approach to promoting Scottishness in a broader British framework.

Taking a holistic approach to history, Scott, like Tytler, would value "factual minutiae" (Crawford 139) and be a writer who would not only write about historical events in Scotland but also countries and historical figures from all over the world. Scott's literary output encompassed a notable scope, extending beyond the confines of Scottish history and identity. Notably, he wrote the biography of Napoleon and fictionalised historical episodes such as the Ottoman Siege of Malta in 1565, as well as the conflict involving Saladin and European armies during the Third Crusade. In light of these diverse undertakings, it becomes evident that characterising Scott as a mere jingoist would be an oversimplification of his literary pursuits and the underlying themes in his works.

The French Revolution was a significant catalyst in Walter Scott's rapid rise to literary fame. The revolution sparked feelings of equality and, more importantly, liberty among the Scots. Prior to this, their mindset had been influenced by ideas from England. In 1792, the articles of *The Rights of Man* (1792) by Thomas Paine (1737-1809) were already circulating among the public. Robert Burns (1759-1796), regarded as Scotland's national poet and considered a Pre-Romantic, wrote nationalist poems and influenced the Scottish people's perceptions. Henry Cockburn, a Whig lawyer who saw the revolution, provided an explanation for the predicament in which the people found themselves in the aftermath of the revolution: "Everything rung and was connected with

[7] The intricate portrayal of British and Scottish identities in Scott's works requires a nuanced analysis. Therefore, in the analyses of *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*, the identities are not analysed sequentially but intertwined. This intentional choice is considered an effective technical decision to elucidate Scott's middle-of-the-road politics.

the Revolution in France; which, for above twenty years, was, or was made, all in all. Everything, not this thing or that thing, but literally everything, was soaked in this one event" (Cowley 41).

This period, when nationalism was on the rise, was an ideal time for Scottish writers to shape the public image and establish a new identity; as "through an emphasis on chivalrous codes of conduct in romantic Highland settings, [they] engineered interest in Scottish traditions" (Khan 65)[8]. Because they knew that "certain traditions of images, cults, customs, rites and artifacts, as well as certain events, heroes, landscapes and values" have a critical place in the survival and transmission of national identity to the next generations (Smith, *National Identity* 38). In the meantime, Scottish society was still changing because of the Acts of Union of 1707. While some people thought that the British culture would absorb the Scottish culture after this merger, others emphasised the benefits of being together in a larger union. By the time Scott began producing his significant works, a century had passed since the union, and the society had begun to lose its traditions. As T. M. Devine and Jenny Wormald argue, Scott's works "satisfied the nostalgic emotional needs of the propertied classes in a world experiencing unprecedented change" (3). Therefore, it can be argued that Scott's works achieved success due to the particular atmosphere in which it flourished. According to Lenman, Scott "probably did more for Scottish history in this period than all the Scottish universities put together" (171).

Walter Scott was a prolific writer from 1814 to 1820, publishing over ten novels as well as a wide range of poetry and short stories. This increased literary production was supported by motives other than a love of writing. A combination of financial liabilities, notably substantial expenditures on antiquities for the decoration of his residence at Abbotsford, the acquisition of land in multiple locations, and a decline in the revenues of his printing business, left Scott struggling with increasing debts. Consequently,

[8] The mention of the invention of the printing press, as discussed by Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities* (1983), is noteworthy in relation to its significant role in the development of nationalism. Scottish writers achieved a shared language through the publication of their works, and these works appealed to the patriotic sentiments of the Scottish population.

creating literary works became an urgent necessity to improve his financial situation (Lauber 19). As Thomas Carlyle put it, the speed with which he worked contributed to a decline in the quality of his works: “Scott’s career consisted of writing impromptu novels to buy farm with” (qtd. in Gregson 176). Mayhead supports Carlyle’s remark and elaborates: “We find in Scott no explicit evidence of the care that Dickens took in structuring his novels to be both serious works of literature and stories conforming to the exigencies of serial publication” (68).

Walter Scott’s novels had some literary flaws as a result their apparent compositional haste. Interestingly, their widespread popularity was not lessened by these shortcomings. The huge success of his literary works can be attributed to a convergence of factors, notably the prevailing dominance of nationalist ideologies in the wake of events like the American Revolution and later, the French Revolution. Furthermore, it was under the broad influence of the Romantic movement that the individual’s sentiments and experiences attained heightened significance in the literary and cultural milieu. These overarching socio-cultural ideas contributed to the inevitability of Scott’s literary acclaim.

While certain aspects have been touched upon, a comprehensive understanding necessitates an exploration of the historical events that laid the foundation for the emergence of the Romantic movement and British Romanticism. This context is essential for locating Walter Scott within the Romantic movement and comparing his works to those of other prominent Romantic poets. In addition, it lays the foundation for the examination of his poetry in the following two chapters.

The advent of the Industrial Revolution in mid-eighteenth-century Britain triggered a significant expansion in both commercial and industrial sectors, contributing to the nation’s economic well-being. This period of industrialisation witnessed the unprecedented integration of mechanisation into daily life. As Özge Güvenç argues, the revolution caused great suffering when impoverished people from the provinces moved to factories in the cities, where they were forced to work long hours in unfavourable conditions (113). Simultaneously, there emerged a decline in society’s spiritual and

moral dimensions, a phenomenon linked to the expansion of mass production and the pursuit of economic gain. Socially, this era witnessed the worsening of social gaps, with a marked escalation in the oppression experienced by the lower socioeconomic strata of the population (Shields ii). Subsequently, the nation would have to deal with the societal upheaval unleashed by the French Revolution. This awakening, which began in France, spread on a global scale, resulting in a profound shift in thought.

While the revolutionary principles of liberty, fraternity, and equality were initially perceived as a revolt against authoritarian rule, their consequences gradually extended into diverse fields over time. Beyond their impact on politics and social dynamics, both revolutions had an apparent effect on literature. Writers created emotional content in their works by reflecting on the social turmoil and the struggle for individual freedom brought about by the French Revolution. Against the materialism of the Industrial Revolution, Romantic writers adopted an understanding of art full of sentimentality, mysticism and love of nature. In response to these transformative currents, the Romantic movement emerged, marking a liberation of the human imagination, as it rejected established literary conventions and emphasised the significance of individuality.

One of the significant steps Romantic poets took was their attempt to democratise the realm of literature (Cladis 26). Prior to the emergence of the Romantic movement, poets of the Neo-classical era created poetry with the noble goal of conveying moral knowledge to individuals. As a result, these works were characterised by limitations in terms of both style and thematic content. The Neoclassical school of thought posited the notion that the primary objective of poetry was to instruct and enlighten society. According to their perspective, the poet possessed exceptional talents, engaging with the reader and demonstrating a profound understanding of the content within their works. Now, poetry would shift away from rigid rules and logic to emphasise emotions, thoughts, and experience. Championing the virtues of imagination, creativity, freedom, intuition, individuality, and emotional depth, poets embraced the self-identity of being “free.” In pursuit of this newfound artistic freedom, they embarked on novel modes of expression, which included a profound admiration for nature, elevating its beauty to a

central position in their creative endeavours. Their engagement extended to Gothic elements and a heightened emphasis on exploring the inner world of the artist. Nature, once predominantly depicted in an objective manner, underwent a re-evaluation, and now symbolised human purity and creative potential.

To claim that British poets picked up their pens, and wrote works that became representative of the British Romantic literary movement soon after the French Revolution would be incorrect. In fact, during the mid-eighteenth century, certain poets had already showcased literary traits commonly associated with Romantic literature (such as telling ordinary people's stories and emphasising human emotions). Graveyard poets[9], a group that included poets such as Thomas Gray (1716-1771) and Thomas Parnell (1679-1718) dealt with topics such as suffering and death[10]. Their poetry mirrors personal encounters and embodies one of the fundamental attributes of the Romantic movement, namely, the faculty of imagination. Similarly, before the revolution in 1789, William Blake produced *Songs of Innocence* (1789), emphasising the importance of imagination while also placing a premium on human experience and the natural world (Canlı 6). Many believed that Blake's unique perspective, "expressed in a highly symbolic language and form . . . was . . . a new kind of revolutionary writing" (Kitson 329). However, the British Romantic Movement can be considered to have begun in earnest with the publication in 1789 of the *Lyrical Ballads, with a Few Other by* William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The first edition of this book, which included such poems as Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" (1798), "The Thorn" (1789), and Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner (1789),* was followed by a second edition published in 1800.

Wordsworth's "Preface" in the new edition functioned as a de facto manifesto for the Romantic movement. However, it is imperative to recognise that while the prevailing

[9] These poets are regarded as forefathers of both romantic and gothic poetry, laying the groundwork for these influential literary movements to thrive.

[10] The first examples of the Romantic movement in Scottish literature can be seen in the poems of Allan Ramsay (1686-1758). Additionally, poets such as James Thomson (1700-1748), James Macpherson (1736-1796), Robert Fergusson (1750-1774), Robert Burns (1759-1796), James Hogg (1770-1835), Walter Scott (1771-1832), and Allan Cunningham (1784-1842) can be considered as representative figures of Scottish Romanticism.

themes in Romantic poetry often revolve around imagination, nature, and emotions, the Romantics approached their craft with a degree of individuality, each having distinct intentions and consequently employing diverse poetic techniques. The criteria for poetry outlined in Wordsworth's "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads* did not uniformly govern the works of Coleridge, his collaborator, nor did it dictate the works of second-generation Romantic poets like Byron, Shelley, and Keats. In addition to these, it is even asserted that Scott cannot be classified solely as a Romantic writer. Nevertheless, Scott's poetic expressions have been significantly enriched as a result of this diverse tradition. Before analysing Scott's poems, it is essential to examine his interaction with other poets to determine his place in the Romantic movement, understand how he differs from other writers, and grasp his perspective on poetry.

The influence of Romantic poets on Scott may not have been as significant as Scott's influence on American and European authors of historical novels. Scott was a fervent Tory[11] supporter at the time, and his works demonstrated his conservatism. His "Tory sentiment, which had from the beginning turned him from the revolutionary enthusiasm that for a time at least inflamed almost all his contemporaries, gave him a natural sympathy with the days of chivalry" (Legouis 301). Consequently, his foremost ambition was to rediscover the past virtues of his nation, with particular emphasis on the revival and imaginative aspects of the medieval era, both of which are integral features of the Romantic movement. Given the absence of any Romantic poets who espoused nationalist ideals similar to Scott's, it can be inferred that Scott did not draw direct inspiration from any poet in terms of the subject matter of his poems (French 248). French adds that Scott read his contemporaries' works avidly but was not significantly influenced by them (1). Hence, Scott devised his own distinctive techniques that suited his unique subjects. Nevertheless, it would be inaccurate to contend that Scott, who had personal encounters with Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Byron and extensively studied

[11] In fact, rather than being a supporter, Scott was a leading figure in Edinburgh's Tory establishment. Romantics, in general, were not indifferent to the political events of their time. Kroeber elaborates: "Romanticism initiates modern political activity in that during the period an increasing role was played by a widening range of citizenry in many political processes . . . The Romantic poets could scarcely have had the sensitivity to be poets without being affected by the political events of their time" (11).

their works, remained entirely unaffected by the influence of his contemporaries. Although these poets did not directly impact Scott's choice of subject matter, it is noticeable that they shared certain commonalities in their artistic approaches. There remains a lack of consensus on whether these parallels resulted from Scott being influenced by prominent Romantics or occurred coincidentally. To gain a comprehensive understanding of Scott's positioning within the Romantic movement, it is imperative to look at his interactions with the poets above and his perspectives on their respective styles of composition.

William Wordsworth, often celebrated as the father of British Romanticism, shared a deep mutual fondness with Walter Scott. Despite their differing appreciation of each other's literary methods, they maintained a close relationship, frequently visiting one another and embarking on nature (Rubenstein 579). Wordsworth explicitly articulated in his "Preface" the core principles of poetry, emphasising the importance of nature, the use of natural and straightforward language over artificial expressions, and the portrayal of the mundane experiences and emotional states of individuals leading ordinary lives. Based on this explanation of Wordsworth's approach to poetry, it is apparent that there are no substantial disparities between Wordsworth and Scott. Much like Wordsworth, Scott's poetry also delves into the poet's and characters' inner thoughts and emotions, although to a lesser extent than Wordsworth. Moreover, both poets assign a significant role to common people in their literary works. In the "Advertisement" of *Antiquary* (1816), Scott advocates the use of everyday language, echoing Wordsworth's principles:

> I agree, with my friend Wordsworth, that [the lower orders] seldom fail to express [their feelings] in the strongest and most powerful language. This is, I think, peculiarly the case with the peasantry of my own country, a class with whom I have long been familiar. The antique force and simplicity of their language, often tinctured with the Oriental eloquence of Scripture, in the mouths of those of an elevated understanding, give pathos to their grief, and dignity to their resentment. (3)

This passage highlights the shared emphasis placed by both authors on the significance of common people. Nonetheless, the two poets' perspectives on this subject are driven by differing motivations. For Wordsworth, simplicity is the cornerstone of poetry, and

thus, poetic subject matter should centre around the everyday lives of common people. This concept of poetry and the role of the poet does not align with Scott's viewpoint. A closer examination of his literary works and introductions to his books reveals that Scott's primary motivation is his national agenda, which underpins his fondness for common people. In his attempt to convey the past virtues of his nation, he bestows significant importance upon common citizens who embody these ideals. While much of Scott's poetry often appears to revolve around monarchs, princesses, and knights, as he adapts historical events, it should not be misinterpreted that he neglects ordinary characters in his narratives. For Scott, a nation's values are inherently ingrained in its citizens, and he places a premium on preserving and celebrating "the antique force and simplicity of their language" ("Advertisement" 3).

Likewise, nature, a pivotal element in the Romantic tradition, diverges in the works of these two authors. According to Wordsworth, a profound disconnection exists between humanity and the natural world, resulting in a loss of a sense of belonging. Nature, in his view, possesses healing qualities, offering solace to those who seek to rediscover their inner selves and re-establish their connection with it. In the works of Wordsworth, the significance of nature is comparable to that of a therapeutic remedy. Consequently, his poetic persona predominantly dwells in the embrace of nature within his verses. In Scott's works, nature also enjoys a prominent role, akin to Wordsworth's approach. Notably, Scott's inclination for crafting expansive poems and novels allows him the capacity to provide remarkably intricate and detailed portrayals of the natural world. However, a distinction arises between these two poets at this juncture.

Scott employs nature for a more pragmatic purpose, diverging from Wordsworth's belief that nature has a healing power, as can be seen in his words on nature: "take away from her beauty after beauty, and ornament after ornament, her appearance cannot be marred—the scars, if any be left, will gradually disappear before a healing spirit; and what remains will still be soothing and pleasing" (qtd. in Hess 96). In Scott's narratives, nature serves multiple functions, including infusing vibrant colour into his historical-themed poems and novels, cultivating an aura of suspense through the inclusion of Gothic and supernatural elements, and underlining the profound significance of his

homeland by transporting to the resplendent Scottish landscapes. In other words, Scott "view[s] nature less as an individual phenomenon and more as a conveyor of collective Border tradition and history" (Durkawi 10). Scott created a strong bond between the Scots and their home country by painting vivid pictures of Scotland's natural beauty. This helped them feel patriotic and proud of their cultural and historical heritage. Through his poetic portrayal of Scottish landscapes, Scott sought to evoke a strong sense of identity and belonging among the Scottish people, emphasising the beauty and significance of their country.

Apart from the parallels and differences discussed thus far, there is a fundamental difference between these two poets about the function of poetry. Scott, in critiquing Wordsworth, contends that "[the] common class of readers are not poetical and rather embarrassed than delighted with a profusion of imaging. Wordsworth fails in receiving the universal suffrage he merits because his poetry is too subtle and metaphysical in the idea, & too blunt in the expression" (qtd. in Mayer 14). According to Scott, Wordsworth's poetry suffered from excessive imagery, which eventually caused reader fatigue and diminished Wordsworth's creative ability. Thus, to Scott, Wordsworth "betray[ed] [his] own talents through the indulgence of what Scott [saw] as mere eccentricities" (Mayer 67). Evidently, it would be misleading to assert that Scott refrained entirely from employing imagery or resorting to metaphysical narratives. However, akin to his utilisation of nature, he employed these literary devices with the intent of enhancing the reader's engagement with the narratives and facilitating a clearer comprehension of the content being conveyed. According to Scott, the biggest mistake of the Lake Poets is that they "present to the public works that are unnecessarily, even wilfully, recondite, and to them he is a poet who is merely 'entertaining'" (67). On top of that, the fact that Scott wrote a biography of John Dryden allowed Wordsworth to criticise Scott over Dryden:

> Dryden is not a poetical Genius: the only qualities I can find in Dryden that are essentially poetical are a certain ardour and impetuosity of mind with an excellent ear . . . Dryden had neither a tender heart nor a lofty sense of moral dignity: where his language is poetically impassioned it is mostly upon unpleasing subjects; such as the follies, vice, and crimes of classes of men or of individuals. (Wordsworth, *The Letters* 641)

According to Mayer's analysis, Wordsworth's critique of John Dryden, a poet whose literary style was in contrast to his own, seems to have been aimed at Scott. Scott held Dryden in high regard and even wrote his biography. Wordsworth's assertion that he solely makes use of Dryden's poetic genius to depict the "follies, vice, and crimes of classes of men or of individuals" calls to mind the numerous conflicts between antagonists depicted in Scott's literary works. Wordsworth reacts to Scott's criticisms of his narration in his poem by stating that "Grand thoughts . . . [can]not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits, without some violation of their sanctity" (*Poems* 373), implying the low poetic quality of Scott's poetry. In this assertion, Wordsworth offers a critique of Scott's narrative style, suggesting that Scott does not exhibit the qualities of a "poetic genius." In fact, the majority of literary circles agree with this implication.

Many contend that Scott's simplicity and straightforward style of expression, especially in his poetry, made him incredibly popular while he was alive but has since made him somewhat obscure in contemporary times. During Scott's time, the average individual was more concerned with the content of the works and paid little attention to their technical craftsmanship. Contemporary individuals, on the other hand, appear to approach literature with a more critical eye, making it difficult to identify the refined poetic qualities found in the works of other Romantic writers within Scott's works. As noted by Parsons, Scott is now primarily recognised as a writer rather than a poet, and even his most celebrated poems are remembered for their subject matter rather than their technical finesse (450).

Coleridge, another integral figure within British Romanticism, did not share the same level of intimacy with Scott as Wordsworth did. Their interactions were limited to occasional meetings and conversations at dinner gatherings to which they were both invited (French 249). Although Scott had great admiration for Coleridge's poems and was an avid reader of them, Coleridge had concerns regarding the literary value of Scott's poetry. John Payne Collier recounts the words of Coleridge in his "Preface" to Coleridge's *Seven Lectures on Shakespeare and Milton* (1856):

> If I were called upon to form an opinion of Mr. Scott's poetry, the first thing I should do would be to take away all his names of old castles, which rhyme very prettily, and read very picturesquely; then, I would remove out of the poem all the old armour and weapons; next I would exclude the mention of all nunneries, abbeys, and priories, and I should then see what would be the residuum—how much poetry would remain. (qtd. in xxvi)

Even though both poets used narrative techniques that included gothic, supernatural, and natural elements, it is clear that Coleridge had reservations about Scott's poetry. While Coleridge recognised the effectiveness of Scott's rhymed descriptions, he believed Scott's poems lacked substantial technical excellence. Scott's poetry may not be as refined as *Christabel* (1797-1800), but it is a faithful representation of Scott's intended subject matter. Given that Scott's primary goal was to spark a cultural revival in Scotland, Coleridge's criticism of Scott's poetry seems incongruous.

Conversely, Scott deeply appreciated Coleridge's poetic works, with a particular emphasis on Coleridge's extensive narrative poem, *Christabel*. This admiration reached a point where it ignited a noteworthy debate. It all started when Sir John Stoddart presented the unfinished *Christabel* at a dinner gathering, with Scott as an attentive audience. Subsequently, allegations emerged suggesting that Scott had incorporated elements from this poem into *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, which sparked a literary dispute (French 249). After receiving information from his colleagues regarding Scott's alleged plagiarism of *Christabel*, Coleridge thoroughly analysed both poems and subsequently reached a conclusion. He acknowledged the presence of similarities between the two works, yet maintained the position that these resemblances were not a result of intentional imitation. He stated: "An intentional plagiarist would have translated, not transcribed[12]" (qtd in Mazzeo 32). Likewise, William Wordsworth's sister, Dorothy Wordsworth, dismissed the allegations as "unconscious imitation" (qtd. in McCracken 395).

[12] According to literary scholar Jerome Christensen, Scott's inspiration from *Christabel*, which led to the creation of *The Lay*, is of minor importance. According to Christensen, it is natural for a poet aspiring to write their first long narrative poem to be influenced by admired poets such as Coleridge. He claims that such literary influences are common and unsurprising (122). Coleridge was also affected by the book *Purchas His Pilgrimage* (1614), as indicated in the "Preface" to *Kubla Khan* (1816). Christensen presumes that Coleridge was also influenced by *Paradise Lost* (1667), demonstrating that even the seemingly most unique works have a source of inspiration and that literature is fundamentally a cumulative structure (122).

Scott, on the other hand, accepted that he was inspired by *Christabel*, at least technically: "The singularly irregular structure of the stanzas, and the liberty which it allowed the author to adapt the sound to the sense, seemed to be exactly suited to such an extravaganza as I meditated on the subject of Gilpin Horner" (*Complete Poetical Works* 21). The scope of this influence, whether it is a minor form of inspiration or a significant instance of plagiarism, is beyond the scope of this thesis. The significant aspect, however, is the striking resemblance between the discussed poem and the extensive narrative poems that Scott would later create. It is plausible that Scott could have learned valuable insights from Coleridge's work, particularly *Christabe*l (1797-1800) and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), regarding the adept integration of eerie and gothic elements into a narrative, a technique he would later employ in his own works.

At this point, it should also be noted that Scott was first exposed to a diverse array of traditional stories, including those with supernatural[13] and gothic elements, during his early years. As indicated in the "Introduction to Canto III" in *Marmion*, Scott's upbringing was marked by exposure to such tales: "Old tales I heard of woe or mirth, / Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charm, / Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms" (192-195). When Scott first heard *Christabel*, he may have been intrigued by the fact that a poet he recognised dealt with similar themes with such competence. Scott's dislike of his close friend Wordsworth's poetic style and Coleridge's influence on Scott's first poem suggest that Scott's writing style resembled Coleridge's. Because, like Scott, Coleridge was interested in German literature and, through his ballad-style poems, contributed to the romantic revival. Coleridge may not have had as much influence on Scott's use of the gothic and supernatural as Byron did. Nonetheless, he contributed to the start of a process that enabled Scott to compose increasingly successful poetry. By adopting the meter utilised in *Christabel*, Scott captured the "lilting rhythm" (Vassallo 31), which made his first poem a huge success.

[13] According to Shepherd, one of the reasons behind Scott's frequent incorporation of supernatural elements in his works lies in the belief prevalent in Scotland since the early modern period regarding the existence of ghosts, witchcraft, and other supernatural events. Scott undeniably used these elements in his works for various purposes; however, widespread beliefs among the Scottish people throughout the country's history corroborate these themes. Therefore, Scott did not reflect something non-existent (14).

In addition, Scott's journal shows a notable preference for references to Lord Byron over Coleridge or Wordsworth, underlining the significant presence of Byron in Scott's literary world (French 250). While Scott and Byron had opposing political views, with Scott being a conservative and Byron a Whig, their mutual admiration for each other's literary works was unwavering. Scott and Byron were both influential on Alexander Pushkin, a literary figure of great importance (Hoisington 344). Their influence on Pushkin emphasises their shared status as the foremost poets of their time. Despite their infrequent face-to-face meetings, Byron and Scott's correspondence via letters served as the primary means of intellectual exchange. Byron's influence on Scott was notable, particularly in shaping the course of Scott's literary career rather than changing his poetic style. After reading Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Scott was motivated to venture into novel writing, recognising that he could not surpass Byron's immense popularity in the realm of poetry (French 249). Scott's status as the "father of the historical novel" is primarily due to this successful shift from poetry to prose. "Byron be[a]t me" (249), said Scott and described *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* as "certainly the most original poem which we have had this many a day" (Manning 170).

In fact, Byron was first harshly critical of Scott. In his poem *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809), he criticised Scott and Marmion, writing: "the golden-crested haughty Marmion, / Not quite a felon, yet but half a knight, / . . . / A mighty mixture of the great and base. / And think'st thou, Scott! by vain conceit perchance. / On public taste to foist thy stale romance" (28). With these lines, Byron implied that Scott's public poetry was trite and overused love tropes (French 249). Byron later expressed sorrow about his criticisms, stating that they were made by a younger and less experienced version of himself (Speer 9). According to Speer, the reason behind Byron's harsh criticism was Byron's "sense of bitterness and personal isolation from the earliest age" (2). Both writers had crippled legs since childhood; however, this situation seems to have affected Byron more psychologically. Nonetheless, the two later became very close friends.

Scott deeply admired Lord Byron's character and poetic prowess, as exemplified by the glowing review he wrote for *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. This appreciation of Byron's

literary contributions continued even after Byron's passing away in 1824, as Scott expressed: "I have been terribly distressed at poor Byron's death. In talents he was unequalled and his faults were rather of a bizarre temper originating from an eager and irritable nervous habit than any depravity of disposition" (qtd. in Grierson 236). Scott discovered a substantial similarity between Byron and himself in their mutual adaptability as people who followed different interests apart from writing. This aspect of leading multifaceted lives, where literature was not the sole preoccupation, was particularly appealing to Scott. He said: "What I liked about him . . . was his generosity of spirit as well as purse, and his utter contempt of all affectations of literature" (qtd. in Statham 311).

According to a story told by Thomas Moore to Scott, when Moore visited Byron in Italy, he praised the beauty of the sunset, to which Byron replied: "Oh come, d-n me, Tom, don't be poetical" (Scott, *The Journal* 203). Similarly, Scott disliked literary devices and preferred to communicate his ideas in a straightforward manner through his literary works. This direct approach in his poetry has led some to perceive a lack of technical brilliance, which would explain Coleridge's dislike of his poetry. In spite of this apparent shortcoming, Scott's overall success was not greatly diminished because the general opinion was primarily captured through the "romantic theatricality of his plots" (Craig 114). The literary exchange between these two poets emphasises Scott's significant influence on Byron. Their unlikely friendship aroused Byron's interest in Scott's literary pursuits. As himself put it, Byron read Scott's novels "at least fifty times" (274). The profound impact of Scott's novels on Byron was chiefly attributable to the historical authenticity of Scott's characters, their engaging adventures, and the masterful manner in which these elements were narrated (Joseph 159). Consequently, themes of exploration, adventure, and extensive portrayals of the natural world became prominent elements in Byron's lengthy poems. Byron, who compared Scott's literary success to that of Cervantes, never parted with his copies of Scott's novels (Speer 10). Consequently, Byron's close engagement with Scotland, which he had previously viewed critically, led to him embracing a degree of national affinity, although not to the same extent as Scott, thus making him, in Calder's words, "tolerably national" (*Byron and Scotland* 58).

Both poets' poems have many essential components of Romantic poetry, but because of their different goals, each poet's poetry has a different emphasis. William Hazlitt and George Lukacs criticised the "lyrical subjectivist absolute" tone in Byron's poems and praised Scott's reputation for his "objectivity and socio-historical concern" (Speer 1). H. E. Marshall offers an explanation for the divergence in the general atmosphere in the poetry of the two poets as such:

> The metrical romances of these two poets are widely different. With Sir Walter we are up among the hills, out on the wide moorland. With him we tramp the heather, and ford the rushing streams; his poems are full of healthy, generous life. With Byron we seem rather to be in the close air of a theat[re]. His poems do not tell of a rough and vigorous life, but of luxury and softness; of tyrants and slaves, of beautiful houris and dreadful villains. And in the villains we always seem to see Byron himself. (596)

By saying Scott "tell[s] a rough and vigorous life," Marshall references the historical events that serve as the focal point of Scott's poetry. Scott, while incorporating elements of fiction into historical narratives, maintains a solid connection to factual accounts (generally), depicting the challenging conditions of the eras he portrays. Conversely, Byron, akin to Coleridge and Wordsworth, lacks a specific nationalist objective, resulting in a more flexible and less constrained poetic style. "To Byron's sceptical eye . . . neither political nor literary power can make a significant mark on history . . . The claims of history are as illusory as the enchantments of theatre" (116), Craig writes of Byron. As can be understood, Craig contends that Byron doubted literary works would have a lasting influence on history, no matter how successful the writer was.

As Scott composed his poems with a keen historical consciousness and a dedication to celebrating his nation's heritage, his narratives are vivid, and his protagonists exhibit limited agency. For this reason, he "invariably offers heroic resolution and redemption" (Oliver, "Crossing" 18). According to Marshall, a milder tone of "luxury and softness" (496) prevails in Byron's poetry, as his poems do not reference actual historical events as extensively as Scott's. Thus, Byron emancipated his protagonists and granted the reader a deeper insight into their inner lives. In Byron's romantic works, the characters

revolve around the plot instead of vice versa. Consequently, the hero[14] assumes a central role in the narrative, with a particular emphasis on their psychological suffering, resulting in a darker atmosphere. Consequently, Byron's poetry has a stronger emphasis on gothic and supernatural themes. Oliver argues that "Byron's gloomy tenor and fatalism remained fundamentally at odds with Scott's upbeat providentialism" ("Crossing" 20). It is not that Scott never resorted to pessimism or fatalism, but he used them as narrative tools to enhance the vividness and complexity of his poems. Besides, due to the message-oriented and nationalist character of his works, a prevailing atmosphere of pessimism is noticeably absent from his writings.

It has often been emphasised that Scott's literary works contributed directly or indirectly to the revitalisation of Scottish identity. However, explaining the necessity of such a "restoration" is not a straightforward task, as it involves multifaceted factors. Even though Scotland officially formed Great Britain with England in 1707, a significant portion of the Scottish population continued to advocate for independence from the UK. In fact, Scotland has its own church (the Kirk) and a Scottish Parliament, granted increased authority through the devolution process. However, while Scotland has more autonomy in domestic matters, it still relies on the United Kingdom for critical issues such as economy and foreign affairs. In the 2014 referendum, nearly 45 per cent of the Scots voted in favour of leaving the United Kingdom (Mullen 627). Given the possibility of another referendum in the near future, it would not be surprising if the Scottish people decided to pursue independence from the United Kingdom, particularly England. Humza Yousaf, Scotland's First Minister since March 2023, also continues his push for independence. The demand for separation is rooted in a centuries-old Scottish independence movement. Despite shared genetic similarities and a common language (albeit with regional dialects), cultural distinctions have persisted. This enduring

[14] The conventional portrayal of a typical Byronic hero is often attributed to Byron's projection of his own life experiences onto his characters. Literary critic Marilyn Butler asserts that "[c]haracters such as Childe Harold, the Giaour, the Corsair and Manfred are all moody outcasts with the mark of Cain upon them, mad, dangerous, and dangerous to know... his heroes appeared to be at least partially spectacular self-projections" (2-3). Butler posits that the archetype of the Byronic hero can be traced back to the protagonists found in the works of Walter Scott and Friedrich Schiller. Consequently, Byron adapted and refined the characters of these writers as a model to craft the distinctive Byronic hero (2).

cultural identity is a testament to the complexity of nationality, which transcends geography, race, language, and even political history. As historian J. D. Mackie notes, "nationality is not entirely a matter of geography, of race, of language, or even of political development; it is a product of all these things" (7). The processes involved in creating and maintaining a unique national identity are complex and difficult to classify or dissolve. Before delving into the issues that have been discussed thus far, it is essential to examine the origin of the longstanding tensions between these two neighbouring regions on the island of Great Britain.

The origins of the disputes can be traced back to England's persistent efforts to establish control over the entire island, which were met with Scotland's persistent pursuit of independence. The potential for armed conflict was a prominent concern until the year 1707, when a pivotal moment occurred with the enactment of the Act of Union, which united both nations under the umbrella of Great Britain. Clashes can be traced back to the early periods of the island's history, involving the Picts and Northumbrians as predecessors to the Scots and the English.

Before Edward I of England's invasion of Scotland in 1296, the two nations maintained friendly relations. However, this amicable relationship began to deteriorate after the passing away of Alexander III, the King of Scotland. With Alexander's sole successor, his granddaughter Margaret, passing away before she could ascend the throne, a power vacuum emerged in the Scottish monarchy (Mackie 70). Indeed, the Treaty of Birgham (1289-1290) had established an arrangement between Scotland and England. It intended that Margaret, the heir to the Scottish throne, would marry Edward's son, fostering peace between the two nations. However, Margaret's untimely death disrupted this possible deal (Linklater 48). Although multiple candidates were vying for the Scottish throne, concerns within the Scottish council regarding potential internal conflicts led them to seek King Edward's intervention in selecting a monarch. However, this decision would prove to be irreversible and filled with consequences. King Edward began to exert control over John Balliol, whom he had installed as the King of Scotland, prompting the Scottish council to reach a diplomatic agreement with France. This pact, established in 1295, stipulated that if either party engaged in a war with England, the

other would also declare war against England. When Edward learned of this treaty, he invaded Scotland in 1296, setting centuries of strife in motion (Barron 1). The events that unfolded, beginning with the invasion in 1296, marked the beginning of Scotland's enduring struggle for independence and gave rise to iconic figures such as Robert the Bruce and William Wallace.

The above-described tension between the two nations did not suddenly disappear when they united to form Great Britain in 1707. As relations gradually stabilised and major conflicts between the parties ceased, some Scots persisted in their desire for independence. Scotland was gradually subjected to pressure from England within the union, which weakened its values. Inspired by the nationalist feelings that emerged from the French Revolution and the threat posed by Napoleon, Scott started writing works that spoke directly to the Scots, who had been suppressed and were at risk of losing their values since 1707. He blended Scottish pride into a larger British identity, bringing dying customs back to life with his literary works. In *The Lady of the Lake*, Scott focuses exclusively on Scotland and emphasises the internal dynamics and cultural values of his homeland. His middle-of-the-road politics function in this poem between the Scottish clans and the king. As will be demonstrated in the next section, Scott's middle-of-the-road policy comes forth in *Marmion* with the notion that the two countries should unite for the benefit of Britain, preventing the emergence of hostility between Scotland and England. While maintaining the unity of Great Britain, Scott also acknowledges Scotland's cultural values.

CHAPTER 1

MARMION (1808): WALTER SCOTT'S BALANCING ACT OF BORDERS

Sir Walter Scott's first attempt at narrative poetry, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, was published in 1805 and achieved widespread success. The poem not only served to cement Scott's reputation as a poet of remarkable distinction but also laid the thematic groundwork for Scott's future works. Within *the Lay*, Scott created a narrative around a minstrel entangled in the web of clan disputes, thus shedding light on the historical foundations that fuelled his poetic pursuits. Expanding upon his previous achievements and driven by his aspiration to enhance his reputation in literature, improve his financial prospects, and utilise his extensive knowledge of history, Scott initiated a new poetic endeavour in 1808. His ambition was to integrate the fabric of Scottish culture and folklore with a captivating storyline, a creative pursuit that received enthusiastic praise. This ambition resulted in the creation of *Marmion*, which prominently situates the narrative against the backdrop of a pivotal moment in Scottish history, the notorious Battle of Flodden, known for the calamitous defeat suffered by the Scottish forces (Burwick 1203). Although *The Lay* may have received a more enthusiastic reception from critics, it is essential to acknowledge *Marmion*'s significant impact in shaping Scotland's national identity as a country that deeply values its culturally diverse heritage. In *Marmion*, Scott expresses a balanced view of nationalism, suggesting a middle-of-the-road perspective where the historical conflicts between Scotland and England should be forgotten. His idea suggests a peaceful partnership between these two countries, united by a common British identity, leading to a future defined by harmony and living together.

Undoubtedly, the complex and diverse character of Sir Walter Scott is prominently manifested in *Marmion*. This complexity is evident in the deliberate placement of contrasting elements and a noticeable sense of ambiguity in the poem. The apparent paradoxes captured within the poem emerge from the juxtaposition of a Scottish poet, filled with nationalist sentiments, crafting a narrative centred around the Battle of

Flodden, an event that culminated in English victory and featured an English lord as its central character (Letellier 74). Within this particular context, it is crucial to thoroughly examine *Marmion*, giving equal importance to both the character depicted in the poem and the character of the poet, Sir Walter Scott. It is essential to acknowledge that, within Scott's intricate conceptualisation of nationalism, Scottish and English nationalisms are inherently intertwined.

The success and impact of *Marmion* were not due to its literary excellence or narrative characteristics but were linked to the wave of nationalist enthusiasm during that era. This enthusiasm was driven mainly by the geopolitical context of the time, with the looming threat of Napoleon Bonaparte, whose military campaigns aimed at asserting European dominance directly challenged Britain, the global superpower of that period (Aiton xxv-xxvi). After a while, Napoleon's fearful image faded under the pressure of the British military, particularly in historic naval battles such as the Nile and Trafalgar. Simms argues that Britain's possession of the Royal Navy played a crucial role in the defeat of Napoleon (892). Admiral John Jervis, in 1801, famously expressed Britain's strength at sea when he declared in parliament: "I do not say, my Lords, that the French will not come. I say only they will not come by sea" (qtd. in Gollin 43). Nevertheless, Napoleon's advance across Europe in the early nineteenth century continued and inevitably generated fear in Britain. At this juncture, Sir Walter Scott embarked on writing *Marmion* as the victories against Napoleon had begun to shift the nation's attention towards its national identity. Through *Marmion*, he emphasised the paramount significance of unity between these two nations in the face of Napoleonic threats.

Even though Scotland and England had been officially united for over a century, traces of ultra-nationalism and secessionist sentiments persisted in various segments of Scottish and English societies. Scott's aims in creating *Marmion* were diverse; he sought to pay homage to the complex fabric of Scottish history and culture while also countering the spread of extremist ideologies within society. His message emphasised the importance of solidarity, particularly highlighting the need for Scotland and England, both governed by the same sovereign, to come together in opposition to the imminent danger presented by Napoleon. As argued by Thomas Bayne, Scott's

"patriotic ardour" and his aspiration to resonate with the national sentiment were the primary driving forces behind the poem's composition (19).

Despite the emotional motivation driving Sir Walter Scott's artistic pursuits and the cultural context that shaped his poem, the composition of *Marmion* reveals an aspect that should not come as a surprise: money. It is important to acknowledge that Scott's decision to begin writing *Marmion* was influenced by factors beyond simple artistic inspiration. The start of the poem's writing coincided with a period of economic hardship experienced by Scott's sibling, which prompted him to pursue this undertaking (Masterman n. pag.). Meanwhile, Scott's publisher, Constable, recognised the potential of Scott's upcoming literary work and presented a bold proposition. Constable's actions reflect the prevailing commercial trends of the time, as he offered a significant amount of "one thousand guineas" to obtain the publishing rights for *Marmion* (Aiton xxiii)[15].

Although materialism was a constant presence in Scott's literary attempts, it is important to remember that his works resulted from years of meticulous historical research. Although he had intended to create *Marmion* over a lengthy period, his brother's financial straits accelerated the process. Nonetheless, the fact that more than 50,000 copies of *Marmion* had been distributed by 1836 demonstrates its exceptional resonance with the reading public (Hughes 1). Scott's own acknowledgement that he occasionally approached his literary creations with varying degrees of care and diligence, underscores the distinct importance accorded to *Marmion*: "Particular passages . . . were laboured with a good deal of care by one by whom such care was seldom bestowed" (Scott, *Complete Poetical Works* 79). The poem was born from his thorough exploration of historical sources. *Marmion* draws substantively from the *Chronicles of Scotland, 1436-1565* (1728) by Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie and the State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler, secretary to the English statesman Thomas Cromwell, both of which have earned their status as reliable reference points (Masterman n. pag.). Additionally, the book *An Exact and Circumstantial History of the*

[15] Notably, as confirmed by Alison Lumsden, this transaction was a first-of-its-kind financial payment for a poetic work, highlighting the interdependence of art and money ("Towards the Edinburgh" 127).

Battle of Floddon (1774) offered Scott a rich source of details that added vividness to his portrayal of the Battle of Flodden within his poem (n. pag.).

The vivid portrayal of the Battle of Flodden's locale within *Marmion* can be attributed not solely to his reliance on existing literature and historical texts but also to an intimate familiarity derived from personal experience. Scott's profound connection with geography stemmed from his early years spent on his grandparents' farm, near Branxton area where the pivotal Battle of Flodden took place. According to Aiton's observations, a perceptive reader examining the descriptive passages of nature in the first canto of the poem will identify the significant presence of adjectives that are "used as by one who had actually gazed long and lovingly on the high turrents, or if these had fallen, upon the mountains of Cheviot, and upon the River Tweed, whose murmuring under the window of Abbotsford, one quiet afternoon" (xxviii). Although Scott's first trip to the Northumberland region, the site of this historic conflict, took place when he was a teenager, he did not consciously begin a more thorough investigation of the region until he was twenty years old and travelling with his uncle (Bayne 9). This emotional impact of this visit ultimately catalysed Scott's writing of the poem, a process that began in 1806 and ended in 1808.

One notable aspect of the structure of *Marmion* is the fact that Sir Walter Scott wrote its final canto, which contains a wealth of vibrant depictions of the Battle of Flodden and the intense combat spirit exhibited by both factions while he served in the Royal Edinburgh Volunteer Light Dragoons (Calder, *Scott* 34). This affiliation with the volunteer cavalry holds particular significance as it signified not only Scott's profound affinity for the resurgence of contemporary Scottish military culture but also marked a turning point in his poetic journey. It enabled him to blend the powerful encounters he had on horseback with the high-adrenaline battle scenes he portrayed in the poem (Beshero-Bondar 78). More details about the subject can be found in Alexander Skene's memoirs, with whom Scott served in the Light Dragoons. Skene recalls Scott taking great pleasure from manoeuvring his black horse along the Portobello sands during breaks in their demanding training, with the rhythmic ebb and flow of the waves offering a harmonious accompaniment. Sometimes, Scott would urge his horse to speed

up, matching the swift movement as ocean mist surrounded him (Masterman n. pag.). In this instance, Masterman compares Scott's first-hand encounters with war and conflict during his time in the cavalry, as well as his concurrent writing of the verses of *Marmion*. Similarly, Bayne highlights Wordsworth's poetic inspiration derived from the tranquil ambience of his garden and its surrounding areas (23). This comparison highlights the significant impact of these experiences on the life of a poet, demonstrating their ability to act as sources of creative energy.

In Romantic poetry, poets typically expressed their innermost thoughts and sentiments through the perspective of a poetic persona. Nevertheless, Sir Walter Scott deviated from this convention by deliberately avoiding the explicit incorporation of his personal life and emotions into his literary works. In order to obtain a deeper understanding of Scott's emotions and viewpoints, it is necessary to examine his prefaces, correspondence with acquaintances, diaries, and introductions. Within the given context, *Marmion* can be identified as a unique and notable example, distinguished by the six epistles written by Scott himself. These epistles, strategically placed at the beginning of each canto, are addressed to some of Scott's friends, who include William Stewart Rose, Rev. John Marriott, William Erskine, James Skene, George Ellis, and Richard Heber. These introductory passages provide Scott with a comprehensive framework to explore various aspects, including the genre of metrical romance, political dilemmas, the scenic beauty of his residence near Selkirk, the subtle changes that occur with each season, and themes related to memory and the inevitable passage of time, as noted by Lauber (26) and Rubenstein (131).

In his introduction to the poem, Scott refers to his epistles in the following words: [E]pistles to my intimate friends, in which I alluded, perhaps more than was necessary or graceful, to my domestic occupations and amusements, - a loquacity which may be excused by those who remember that I was still young, light-headed, and happy, and that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" ("Introduction" 8). It is worth noting that Scott initially planned to release these epistles individually under the title *Six Epistles from Ettrick Forest* (Lauber 27). Afterwards, he likely developed an inclination towards enhancing the cohesiveness of the poem, using his poetic ability to

demonstrate his variety, and, notably, enhancing the attractiveness and market value of his work.

However, it is important to note that these epistles have faced critical criticism, primarily because they are perceived as disconnected from the central content of the poem. Some scholars argue that the inclusion of epistles in the poem is primarily driven by commercial motives. They claim that these epistles disrupt the poem's narrative flow and diminish the reading experience's overall appeal. Robert Southey expressed a similar opinion, saying, "the introductory epistles I did not wish away, because as poems they gave me great pleasure, but I wished them at the end of the volume, or at the beginning, anywhere except where they were" (315). Similarly, Lockhart expressed an akin view regarding the disruptive nature of the epistles on the overall coherence of the poem (I: 300). However, by adopting a more optimistic viewpoint, it becomes evident that the letters were specifically intended for individuals who had close personal relationships with Scott.

The epistles, abundant in personal and social details, were Scott's attempt to compensate for his focus on historical novels and romance, where his Romantic sensibilities were overshadowed. They shifted Scott's imaginative focus away from historical events and provided insights into Scott's personal life. Behind all the facade of an investigative historian, Scott is "someone who exults in his own energies but is also possessed and mastered by a clear, calm, modest mind" (Aiton xxvi). Indeed, it is reasonable to infer that Scott radiated a sense of joy and vitality to those around him (xxvi). In contrast to those who criticise, Richard Hutton advocated for the significance of Scott's epistles as valuable insights (56). According to Hutton, the depicted scenes in the epistles showcase Scott in a genuine and unpretentious manner, where he openly shares his thoughts and engages in friendly conversations with his selected friends (56). These conversations primarily revolve around his passions, such as outdoor activities, the picturesque border hills that transform with the passing seasons, his preferred tastes, and intellectual pursuits. Furthermore, scattered amid these conversations are reflective thoughts about the essence of existence and the transience of human life (56-57).

When exploring the thematic foundations of these epistles, one inevitably notices the parallels between their messages and those conveyed within the framework of the poem. While the epistles cover a wide range of topics, three recurring themes stand out when examined closely: Scott's nationalist sentiments, his deep involvement with medievalism and the romance genre, and his acute awareness of the inevitable progression of change. Scott does not expound upon these themes explicitly; instead, they are interwoven throughout his correspondences with his friends (McIntosh 147). It is as though Scott has placed his specific reflections on these topics into select passages within his pastoral letters. In this regard, particular attention is drawn to the opening lines of the "Introduction to Canto I," which assume an integral role:

> But oh! my Country's wintry state
> What second spring shall renovate?
> What powerful call shall bid arise
> The buried warlike and the wise;
> The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
> The hand that grasped the victor steel?
> The vernal sun new life bestows
> Even on the meanest flower that blows;
> But vainly, vainly may he shine,
> Where glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine;
> And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,
> That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallow'd tomb! (*Marmion* 57-68)

Within the poem's literary structure, the poetic persona assesses Scotland and England, identifying their unique characteristics while also emphasising the overarching shared identity inherent in a broader British context. The quotation above provides insight into Scott's concern regarding what he refers to as the "wintry state" of Britain, a sentiment he expressed as a citizen of the United Kingdom. Although Scott mentions important figures and historical events from Scotland in later sections of the epistle, it is evident from the beginning that his overall perspective is more closely associated with British identity. The shift in his position is particularly remarkable, given the historical backdrop. During the period under consideration, the United Kingdom was actively involved in the Napoleonic Wars, with Napoleon's presence posing a huge threat. Consequently, Sir Walter Scott's acknowledgement of the challenges faced by the nation can be understood as a reasonable response to the prevailing circumstances. Furthermore, the passage highlights Scott's firm stance as a fervent supporter of the

union, as evidenced by his praise of the British Admiral Horatio Nelson and William Pitt the Younger, who served as the Prime Minister during that period, for their significant contributions to the cause of Britain (Pikoulis 742). He further argues that these names, in addition to that of Charles James Fox, are engraved in the collective awareness of every British individual, highlighting the lasting importance of national figures.

Unsurprisingly, the measured and conciliatory stance adopted by Scott in the poem is similarly evident in the epistles. Aside from the verses that, as previously stated, lean towards an English sensibility, a notable passage can be found in the "Introduction to the Third Canto." Here, Scott delves into the valorous legacy of Scottish heroes, Robert the Bruce and William Wallace, who fiercely contended against English dominion (Burwick 1156). Scott says that he heard stories with the words "of woe or mirth, / of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms, / of witches' spells, of warriors' arm; / of patriot battles . . . / [of] Wallace wight and Bruce the bold" (*Marmion* 193-197), and with the lines "onward still the Scottish Lion bore, / And still the scattered Southron fled before" (206-207), he characterises the British, whom he had previously described as champions, as a treacherous crowd. This dynamic can be interpreted as an attempt to prevent the Scots from harbouring sentiments of inferiority while simultaneously serving as a reminder of the nation's historical triumphs against England. It is imperative to note, however, that Scott's aspiration to foreground Scotland's historical and cultural dimensions transcends the scope of the Anglo-Scottish relationship. Throughout history, Scotland has rarely emerged as the dominant military force opposing England. Consequently, Scott's creative effort aimed to elevate his homeland not through listing military conquests but by channelling the rich tapestry of its folklore and cultural values into his works. In this regard, the following lines in the "Introduction to Canto II" lends illuminative insight:

> Of such proud huntings many tales
> Yet linger in our lonely dales,
> Up pathless Ettrick and on Yarrow,
> Where erst the outlaw drew his arrow.
> But not more blithe that silvan court,
> Than we have been at humbler sport;

> Though small our pomp, and mean our game
> Our mirth, dear Marriott, was the same. (*Marmion* 52-59)

Upon examining the provided quotation, it becomes evident that hunting, particularly deer hunting, a tradition deeply rooted in Scotland since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, has not been overlooked by Sir Walter Scott (Wiseman 149). This traditional pursuit of deer hunting, prevalent in the Ettrick and Yarrow regions, seems to be a form of cultural diaspora that, in Scott's words, "lingers" as an enduring facet of the Scottish heritage. The choice of the term "proud" alludes to the historical association of hunting with the Scottish nobility. Of equal significance is Scott's reference to "The Robin Hood of Ettrick," signifying that this pursuit was not confined to the aristocracy but was also embraced by individuals considered "outlaws." It is worth noting that Robin Hood, an iconic figure in Scottish folklore, has retained his enduring appeal, making himself a prominent element that rekindles memories of the fading Scottish folkloric tradition.

Scott's works prominently feature a recurring motif, namely his commitment to reviving the fading cultural identity of his homeland. This heritage has been overshadowed and marginalised by the influence of England, leading to its gradual disappearance. Consequently, at a broad level, Scott's aspirations extend beyond the boundaries of national borders, aiming to develop a cohesive unity between the peoples of Scotland and England. On a specific level, his objective is establishing internal cohesion by bringing together individuals from diverse social backgrounds in Scotland. This vision finds expression in the "Introduction to the Sixth Canto," where Scott paints a vivid portrait of a Christmas Eve:

> On Christmas Eve the bells were rung;
> On Christmas Eve the mass was sung;
> That only night in all the year
> Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
> The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
> The hall was dressed with holly green;
> Forth to the wood did merry men go,
> To gather in the mistletoe.
> Then opened wide the baron's hall
> To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
> Power laid his rod of rule aside. (*Marmion* 30-40)

In these lines, Scott presents Christmas Eve as an important day that harmoniously unites every level of society. The religious rituals, the ceremonial lifting of the priest's chalice, the ringing of church bells, and an open welcome to vassals, tenants, and serfs to enter the baron's hall set this day apart. The presence of elegantly dressed women contributes to the overall festive ambience. The symbolism represented by the image of the priest raising the chalice holds great importance. It not only pays homage to the spiritual unity of the Scottish population, but also symbolises the temporary suspension of the existing social hierarchy, surpassing the divisions among different social classes (Pikoulis 747). The last line, "Power laid aside his rod of rule," emphasises the temporary surrender of authority, symbolising a brief suspension of monarchical control. Scott's perspective clearly demonstrates that he regards unity as a fundamental necessity. Mark Girouard expresses the significant impact of the descriptions in this scene with the following words: "Christmas . . . as it came to be celebrated in the nineteenth century, especially in country houses, was heavily indebted to Scott's description of a medieval Christmas in the introduction to the sixth canto" (36). Girouard's words unquestionably emphasise the effectiveness of Scott's descriptions in this poem.

In terms of content, the epistles feature another thematic element that engages Scott's affections: his profound fondness for the medieval epoch and the realm of romance. He believes that romance has a timeless appeal that can ignite readers' and poets' imaginations and leave them feeling deeply moved and captivated long after they read them. Scott conveys this sentiment to his friend William Stewart Rose in the first introduction with the following words:

> But thou, my friend, canst fitly tell,
> (For few have read romance so well)
> How still the legendary lay
> O'er poet's bosom holds its sway;
> How on the ancient minstrel strain
> Time lays his palsied hand in vain;
> And how our hearts at doughty deeds,
> By warriors wrought in steely weeds,
> Still throb for fear and pity's sake. (*Marmion* 249-257)

Scott enthusiastically praised his friend's exceptional ability to understand romantic literature, highlighting the lasting impact of ancient legendary stories on poets (Goslee 45). Within these narratives, the depictions of "warriors wrought in steely weeds" and their courageous efforts evoke deep sympathy. The medieval romances and narratives performed by minstrels in ancient times continue to hold a significant place in the literary canon, as perceived by Scott and should be regarded as having enduring relevance. After presenting these broad statements, Scott proceeds to examine more specific details in the "Introduction to Canto I":

> As when the Champion of the Lake
> Enters Morgana's fated house,
> Or in the Chapel Perilous,
> Despising spells and demons' force,
> Holds converse with the unburied corse;
> Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to move,
> (Alas, that lawless was their love!)
> He sought proud Tarquin in his den,
> And freed full sixty knights; or when,
> A sinful man, and unconfessed,
> He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
> And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
> He might not view with waking eye. (*Marmion* 260-272)

The deliberate integration of distinct characters and elements drawn from Arthurian legends, such as Morgana le Fay, Chapel Perilous, Dame Ganore, and the Holy Grail, serves as a strategic device employed by Scott to invoke a nostalgic sentiment and establish a personal connection with his readers (Goslee 45). As he initially delves into medieval subject matter, Scott connects with the longstanding tradition of medieval storytelling, using enduring motifs and concepts derived from Arthurian legend. By alluding to the Arthurian legend at this juncture, Scott underlines his knowledge in medieval literary traditions and their enduring allure. This use of diverse elements from legendary narratives and romances elevates the authenticity and appeal of his poetry and resonates with individuals who hold the Arthurian tales in high esteem.

In the first introduction, Scott explicitly discloses his inspiration from medieval romances and narratives, moving far beyond mere references to Arthurian tales. Perceiving his own poetic pursuits as a direct extension of the medieval storytelling

legacy, Scott extensively explored medieval literature. His correspondence with William Rose serves as a channel through which he articulates this profound connection to the medieval literary tradition: "Ytene's oaks—beneath whose shade / Their theme the merry minstrels made, / Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold, / And that Red King, who, while of old, / Through Boldrewood the chase he led" (*Marmion* 312-316). By alluding to Ascapart, an integral component of the English folklore tradition (Morris, "Rattlesnake" 110), and Bevis of Hampton, a medieval romantic narrative set within the confines of the Ytene[16], conveying their tales to attentive audiences, Scott emphasised the significance he attributes to romanticism while demonstrating his profound knowledge of the subject. In his correspondence with Rose, Scott mentions Bevis, the inspiration for the name of the horse Bevis used by Marmion in his ethereal encounter with the Elfin knight in the poem.

Moreover, Scott establishes an association between historical occurrences and mythical sagas, as evidenced by his reference to the untimely death of William Rufus, known as the "Red King," who died in a hunting expedition in the New Forest. This link is crucial because for Scott, who said that "the adventures told in romance are as fictitious as its magic, its dragons, and its fairies. The machinery was indeed imaginary . . . But the turn of incidents resembled, in substance, those which passed almost daily under the eye of the narrator" ("Essay on Chivalry" 544); the figures and events in legendary tales are born directly from everyday life. In the epistles, Scott incorporates allusions to both English and foreign romances, notably including works such as *Amadis of Gaul* (1508) and *Tirantlo Blanch* (1490). This deliberate interweaving of classical elements into his poetry serves a dual purpose: firstly, as a homage to literary predecessors, and secondly, as a strategy to captivate and involve individuals who possess extensive knowledge of the enduring tales of chivalry and adventure.

Scott prominently highlights another thematic element within the epistles: the concept of time. His discussion centres on the notion that social metamorphosis, political shifts, and the passage of time necessitate adjustment and evolution on the part of both

[16] Ytene, known today as New Forest, is the area where King William II of England was fatally shot with an arrow during a hunting expedition (Bickle 139).

individuals and nations. He emphasises the importance of appreciating and esteeming one's cultural heritage while recognising the necessity of adjusting to the constantly evolving environment. In this context, Rubenstein provides the subsequent analysis of the epistles:

> [T]hey do share the basic thematic concern of the narrative, the question of what resources human beings can command in order to accommodate themselves to mutability. Change is an inevitable fact of life to which each man must somehow adjust himself, and Scott confronts this difficulty in personal terms in the epistles and in psycho-social terms in Marmion's story. The opening lines of the poem, with their repetition of 'no longer' and 'no more' followed by the child's question whether spring will ever return, introduce this theme of inevitable change in a strongly elegiac tone. Scott infuses both the narrative and the introductory epistles of *Marmion* with the inescapable the consciousness that 'time and tide o'er all prevail' (*Marmion* 133), and both parts propose several more or less successful alternatives for dealing with this awareness. (Rubenstein 133)

Although there is no explicit correlation between the narrative of *Marmion* and its epistles, and Scott originally composed these letters independently, and with separate publication in mind, an underlying thematic unity between the epistles and the cantos in *Marmion*'s narrative emerges. The first epistle delves into themes of nationalism, the second into matters of romance, and the third addresses the necessity of keeping pace with the constant flux of human life. The inevitable nature of change is a pivotal aspect of life, necessitating adaptation for all individuals. This thematic framework, as explained in subsequent sections, serves as the backdrop against which Marmion experiences his downfall due to his inability to adjust to the shifting circumstances. Given the portrayal of Marmion as flawed or lacking sympathy in the narrative, it can be argued that his downfall is a symbolic representation of the shift from the previous conflict to a more encompassing and unified collective identity. This viewpoint promotes the moderation of intense patriotic enthusiasm, especially when it leads to conflict, to foster a stronger and more cohesive collective sense of identity. The dynamic nature of the cultural and intellectual climate, commonly called the *zeitgeist*, and the need to adjust accordingly are likewise evident in different forms within the epistles.

Scott uses the epistles as a means of conveying thematic elements related to temporality, transformation, and adjustment. He investigates how people confront the

inevitable nature of change, as well as the diverse factors, such as friendship, tradition, and poetry, that contribute to their efforts in acknowledging and reacting to the complexities associated with change (Rubenstein 141-142). In particular, he looks at how people deal with the fact that change is unavoidable. In the opening part of the first epistle, promptly following his praise of the political contributions made by William Pitt and Charles James Fox to the British nation, Scott says: "Rest, ardent Spirits I till the cries / Of dying Nature bid you rise; / Not even your Britain's groans can pierce / The leaden silence of your hearse" (*Marmion* 196-199). Scott's argument in this context revolves around the idea that, despite the notable achievements and contributions of Fox and Pitt to their country, time keeps moving forward, and Britain once again faces challenging times in the current situation. This highlights that success, like failure, is temporary.

In the Introduction to Canto IV, Scott explains that the ever-changing nature of life causes changes in people's desires and preferences: "Our youthful summer oft we see / Dance by on wings of game and glee, / While the dark storm reserves its rage, / Against the winter of our age" (108-111). Scott's assertion about life's inevitable challenges, represented by the metaphorical "dark storms," can be understood within the larger context of *Marmion*. This assertion is made through a personal and introspective encounter, seen in the phrase "youthful summer." Given that these "dark storms" allude to the longstanding historical tensions between Scotland and England, it is plausible to contend that the phrase "winter of our age" suggests a sense of wisdom and a departure from their previous struggle for independence, suggesting a harmonious unity between these two nations, where they cease to be enemies and, instead, become inseparable.

In the "Introduction to Canto V," according to Scott's observations, Edinburgh[17] has undergone a noticeable transformation, no longer retaining its former character as observed during the period of conflict: "So thou, fair city! Disarrayed / Of battled wall, and rampart's aid, / As stately seem'st, but lovelier far / Than in that panoply of war" (88-92). Scott asserts that the formerly present defensive structures encircling the city,

[17] In the "Introduction to Canto V," Scott, in his poetic portrayal of Edinburgh, uses the phrase "dauntless voluntary line" (*Marmion* 100). Dino Felluga suggests that here Scott is hinting at his voluntary service with the Royal Edinburgh Volunteer Light Dragoons (37).

which he affectionately refers to as a "fair city," have now disappeared. However, without these fortifications, this city has transformed into a more captivating and visually appealing urban landscape. Being a renowned Scottish writer closely associated with Edinburgh, his statement emphasising the appeal of novelty over antiquity highlights his deep admiration for historical traditions while advocating for the inherent value of revitalisation and flexibility. Here, it is important to recognise that Scott strongly believes in the power of poetry to help ease the challenges that come with the passage of time. He holds onto this belief even when things change and people and societies must adapt. According to Scott, poetry is a vital tool for preserving and sharing personal and community memories. In the "Introduction to Canto III," he continues to explore these ideas:

> Thus while I ape the measure wild
> Of tales that charmed me yet a child,
> Rude though they be, still with the chime
> Return the thoughts of early time;
> And feelings, roused in life's first day,
> Glow in the line and prompt the lay. (152-157)

Scott acknowledges that the narratives he was exposed to during his early years now constitute the cornerstones of his narrative framework. The preservation and transmission of these stories should not be regarded with shame or concealment; instead, they possess considerable integral value and should be preserved for posterity. Scott perceives their worth in shedding light on forgotten facets of history (Rubenstein 136). He highlights the profound importance of their existence and the substantial influence of their early life encounters with these tales. These emotional experiences act as catalysts, encouraging the creative process and thereby inspiring his artistic vision, significantly shaping Scott's literary works' thematic and conceptual foundations. In a larger sense, and drawing from Scott's own experiences, poetry is a sophisticated means by which countries can guarantee the historical values they hold dear, a goal to which Scott is devotedly dedicated.

The first canto of the poem "The Castle" starts in 1513, at a crucial point when Lord Marmion undertakes a diplomatic journey to the court of King James IV of Scotland, a task assigned to him by King Henry VIII of England. His primary objective during this

diplomatic effort is to amicably address the persistent issue of cross-border hostilities between England and Scotland through negotiation. As they set foot on Scottish land, Lord Marmion and his entourage receive a warm and hospitable reception at Norham Castle, the residence of the respected Scottish nobleman, Sir Hugh the Heron. Later, they are provided with the services of a palmer, who will guide them throughout their stay in Scottish territory. As the poem's narrative progresses, it becomes evident that the mentioned palmer is, in fact, Sir Ralph De Wilton. Clara da Clare, the wealthy lady both De Wilton and Marmion are in love with, is a key figure in the complex connection between their fates. In his quest to destroy De Wilton's reputation and orchestrate his exile, Marmion fabricates official documents. This trickery is part of Marmion's planned efforts to secure a marriage alliance with Clara. In a dramatic turn of events, De Wilton infiltrates Marmion's group, waiting for the moment to take his revenge. This canto holds significance both in introducing the characters, especially Marmion, and in terms of establishing the context, which is the Battle of Flodden.

In the second canto of the poem, titled "The Convent," the focus is on how Marmion embodies the qualities of an anti-hero. In the canto, it is revealed that Clara had feelings for De Wilton but fled to The Convent when Marmion wanted to marry her by force. Meanwhile, The Abbess of Saint Hilda is on her way to Lindisfarne with a group of nuns, where Constance de Beverley, who had run away from the convent because of her romantic relationship with Lord Marmion and later spent three years with him, is set to be executed. Constance escaped from the convent at a certain point, drawn in by Marmion's convincing manner. However, with time, she began to notice Marmion's growing interest in Clara. To win Marmion's love, she helped him create false documents related to De Wilton. Believing that Constance was no longer useful to him following her assistance, Marmion informed the convent authorities that Constance had sought refuge with him after her escape from the convent. Consequently, Constance is sentenced to capital punishment by being buried alive within a wall. However, before her death, she shares a detailed account of her story in the courtroom. During her testimony, she reveals a crucial fact: the documents incriminating Wilton were fake.

The third canto, titled “The Hostel,” marks a turning point as Marmion and his companions divert from their planned route and make a stop at an inn in Gifford. This is where the initial instances of regret unfold, gradually consuming Marmion for his misdeeds. The singing of Fitz-Eustace, Marmion’s squire, serves as a reminder of Constance for Marmion. Despite lacking knowledge of Constance’s execution, Marmion experiences a sense of remorse for the harm he has inflicted upon her. Simultaneously, he is consistently exposed to the Palmer’s intrusive gaze. Later, following an interaction with the landlord who tries to uplift the atmosphere, Marmion, motivated by a desire to relieve his accumulated frustration and remorse, departs from the inn in search of the Elfin Knight, a prominent figure within the Scottish ballad tradition (Barry 123). Later, Fitz-Eustace asserts that he observed Marmion’s arrival at the inn, exhibiting signs of untidiness and distress. While Marmion’s account of the events in this canto remains unrevealed, the dialogue between Marmion and Sir David in Canto IV provides insight into Marmion’s first-hand experiences on that particular day. Having departed from the inn to locate the Elfin knight, uneasiness came into Marmion as he set out on his mission. After being overcome with fear and falling from his horse, Marmion’s gaze fell upon a knight, whom he perceived to possess supernatural qualities. He incorrectly identified this knight, who ceased his sword-wielding motion towards Marmion in the final instant as the Elfin Knight. As revealed in the poem’s following sections, this knight is none other than De Wilton.

The fourth canto of the poem, titled “The Camp,” depicts Marmion and his group arriving at Crichton Castle, marking their ultimate stop before meeting with King James. The group is given the chance to observe the Scottish military forces’ actions under Sir David Lindesay’s guidance. This canto contains less action than the other cantos. However, the central focus of this section pertains to the stories narrated by Sir Lindesay, which integrate supernatural motifs and function as a device to foreshadow forthcoming occurrences in the poem. The significance of the part titled “Sir David Lindesay’s Tale” in Canto XII lies in its capacity to unveil historical insights, emphasise Scottish nationalism, and serve as a foreshadowing device.

In the fifth canto, “The Court,” Marmion and his companions traverse the Scottish army camp before arriving at King James’ s royal palace. This passage is crucial to observe the contrasting levels of sophistication between the Scottish and English armies. In this canto, it is seen that within the confines of King James’s Holyroodhouse Palace in Edinburgh, a festival has been organised to honour the Scottish chiefs. This event features minstrels who engage in the performance of melodic pieces, recitations, and the playing of harps. At some point, King James gets angry after noticing the mutual exchange of glances between Lady Heron, the wife of Archibald Douglas, the chieftain of the clan (who later emerges as King James’s mistress) and Marmion. Marmion clearly shows a disdain for the rules governing appropriate behaviour in these kinds of social interactions as he courts Lady Heron in a way that goes against the customs of hospitality. Thus, James orders Marmion and his group to be temporarily moved to Tantallon Castle, where Archibald Douglas will watch over them. After this, Archibald Douglas orders the return of some English nuns, specifically those mentioned in Canto II, including Clara, who were previously apprehended by Scottish military forces, back to English territory. The Abbess, having obtained the fake records concerning De Wilton, runs into the Palmer, whom she briefly observed during his encounter with Marmion’s group. She intends to absolve herself of guilt by disclosing to him the information she has about the forged documents. De Wilton (the Palmer) now has the relevant documents to clear him of wrongdoing.

The significance of the final canto, titled “The Battle,” lies in its role as the culmination of Marmion’s narrative journey and in serving as Sir Walter Scott’s conclusive reflections on the overarching theme of British identity explored throughout the poem. In the canto, De Wilton discloses his true identity to Clara and Douglas by presenting them with counterfeit documents he obtained from the Abbess. Douglas, recognising the righteousness and integrity of De Wilton, intends to bestow knighthood back upon him. At the same time, the Battle of Flodden starts, where Scottish and English forces face off in combat. The Scottish army is defeated, and King James loses his life. Marmion is wounded during the war, and even though Clara despises him, she gives him water in his final moments. Marmion, as he nears death, learns about Constance’s execution at the convent and fully comprehends the harm he caused to both Constance and De

Wilton. Marmion's corpse is mistakenly identified as that of a commoner, leading to his burial in an unremarkable grave, where he will remain unrecognised forever, while De Wilton and Clara are to be married.

In *Marmion*, Scott avoided directly recounting historical events in favour of narrating his story. Given the historical event of the Battle of Flodden as a basis, Scott just needed to attribute a fictitious significance and objective to it and afterwards recontextualise it inside a fictional framework. Calder suggests that one of Scott's greatest storytelling talents is his ability to balance two powerful forces: the need to give historical details a feeling of narrative coherence and the need to shape his characters' actions so that they fit the historical context and become true representatives of the society he is trying to depict (*Scott* 95-96). Scott's principal objective in his writing was neither to produce an all-encompassing and authoritative historical account nor to compose a scholarly work of history. Therefore, his lack of concern for precision in matters, such as the precise date of a war or the specifics of a costume, is unsurprising. His objective was to analyse and identify similarities, compare various incidents, and strive to identify the overall pattern underlying the apparent conflicts (Lauber 65). This in no way means that Scott did not take historical details into account when writing his works. It is only to state that he did not intend to portray them in their entirety. Indeed, Scott had a profound understanding of the importance of delivering a historically rich and captivating narrative, aiming to cultivate a strong sense of national consciousness. Ultimately, a writer's persuasive power lies in their skill to fuse a profound grasp of historical context with their creative abilities. When a literary work centres on a specific historical period, it naturally encourages individuals to view the depicted story as genuine. In the context of *Marmion*, this epoch corresponds to the period immediately preceding and encompassing the start of the Battle of Flodden in 1513.

Throughout centuries, Scotland and England engaged in a succession of conflicts driven by various factors such as territorial expansion and political manoeuvring. Nevertheless, it can be argued that Scotland mainly advocated for preserving its independence due to England's prevailing political and military superiority, which drove England to adopt an expansionist agenda. England posed a significant danger not just to France but also to

Scotland. Consequently, in 1295, Scotland and France entered a military partnership known as the Auld Alliance (Bonner, "Scotland" 5). The Battle of Flodden, a significant conflict in Scottish history, took place in 1513 following King Henry VIII of England's declaration of war against France. This war is well-known for its very high death toll. In the interests of the alliance, King James IV of Scotland launched direct hostilities against England. Bayne argues that James's choice was made hastily and without careful consideration (20). According to Lauber (29), this choice had a lasting and detrimental impact on Scotland. Despite the efforts of James's counsellors to dissuade him, he remained determined in his decision. According to Rubenstein, the Battle of Flodden marked a significant downturn for Scotland, contrary to the Battle of Bannockburn, which had previously served as a peak moment for the Scots (149).

On August 24, James IV led the Scottish army into Twizelhaugh, Northumberland, England. Subsequently, strategic strongholds like Ford, Norham, and Wark were seized (Bowden 187). The English military forces likewise proceeded in a northerly direction to meet the Scottish military forces, reaching Bolton on September 1 and arriving at Branxton, the designated site of the fight (Prince 14-15). On September 9, the Scottish army under James IV and the Earl of Surrey began battling in the morning. Under the command of experienced leaders, the English army emerged triumphant by the end of the day, owing to its larger troop size and superior military resources. The battle resulted in a significant loss of life for the Scottish forces, with casualties amounting to 20,000 soldiers. Among the deceased were notable figures such as "the king, one archbishop, two bishops, two abbots, and nine earls" (Prince 17) and "fourteen lords of parliament, [and] at least three hundred lesser gentry" (Sadler 86). Following the death of their leaders and aristocracy, the Scots found themselves confronted with a state of political instability, together with deficiencies in military and diplomatic capabilities, as well as concerns over their autonomy. The impact of this devastating conflict would extend into literature, resulting in the creation of poems such as "The Flower of the Forest" (n.d.), a tribute to the fallen Scottish troops. These poems later become essential parts of Scottish collective memory.

Undoubtedly, collective memory plays a crucial role in the collective awareness of communities by preserving historical events as they occur. Upon reading "Follower of the Forest," a Scottish person may feel sorrowful, remembering those who died at the Battle of Flodden. In *Marmion*, Scott demonstrates a dual approach towards depicting fight scenes, whereby he sometimes presents a true reflection of the event as it is remembered collectively while also incorporating changes to align with his narrative objectives and storyline progression. Prince provides more explanation, stating that "the events portrayed in *Marmion* have little to no relation with the actual events of Flodden. The English and Scottish armies fought each other, and the English won. Scott altered the rest of the conflict's facts for his own ends" (20). Sir Walter Scott, widely recognised as the father of historical fiction and renowned for his affinity for history (Ungurianu 382), presents a narrative in his poem that departs significantly from the actual events that took place at the Battle of Flodden.

Indeed, poets often alter or fabricate historical events in order to express themselves artistically or for political motivations. *Marmion* incorporates historical figures, events, and locations interwoven with Scott's own fictional narrative. Scott's choice to depict the protagonist of *Marmion* as an English nobleman was motivated by the need for emotional cohesion among the British people in light of Napoleon's territorial advances in Europe, as well as the participation of Scotland in the United Kingdom at the time this poem was written. In fact, this choice shows how easily historical events can be manipulated. When considering the conflict of Flodden, Scott deliberately chose not to portray the gruesome aspects of the conflict in a straightforward manner. Instead, he idealised and embellished the events, presenting a version of Britain that promoted the values of national cohesion and protection against foreign dangers.

Marmion's distinctive feature is undoubtedly its protagonist Marmion, who is "half a villain, whose morally compromised profile consorts with a set of tensions" (Burwick 425). Marmion, considered an anti-hero by literary circles, on the one hand, exhibits qualities expected of an honourable knight, in line with the chivalric ideals of valour, strategic skill, and thoughtfulness. His bravery on the battlefield and leadership distinguishes him as a valiant warrior, and his capacity for strategic thought

distinguishes him as an intelligent knight. In addition, he is not portrayed as a ruthless war-monger; he conducts himself with honour and dignity. It is important to note that Marmion's status as an anti-hero does not render him a wholly malevolent character with sinister motives. Perez argues that the portrayal of the anti-hero is characterised by a greater prevalence of flawed rather than virtuous actions. In essence, the anti-hero lacks inherent malevolence but exhibits a disregard for ethical considerations in pursuing their objectives (49). Similarly, Eino Railo argues that Marmion "emerges from the ranks of conventional tyrants, cast more or less in the same mould of terror-romanticism, to represent that romantic individual of stormy passions and conflicts, crime, heroism and ambitions" (223-224). Thus, Marmion takes on characteristics reminiscent of the anti-heroes found in Gothic literature rather than conforming to the archetype of a noble and chivalrous hero, for he is portrayed as a complex figure with dark and morally ambiguous characteristics. His pride, ambition, and willingness to resort to deceit and betrayal to achieve his ends reflect characteristics found in Gothic characters, depicting their inner conflicts and moral dilemmas.

Letellier argues that despite his having chivalric qualities, Marmion is "in the mould of Walpole's Manfred and Mrs Radcliffe's Montoni, a fearless but frightening hero whose integrity is edged in vanity" (75)[18]. Marmion is characterised by a strong sense of self-centred ambition, using people like Constance for his own benefit and viewing her primarily as a means to advance his own interests. His willingness to engage in deceit and treachery, such as forging false documents to frame De Wilton and attempting to marry Clara solely for her wealth, gives his character moral ambiguity. At this point, the following questions arise: Why does Marmion exhibit anti-heroic traits within the framework of a romantic poem? Why did a Scottish poet, committed to conveying Scottish national ideals, opt for an English protagonist? Additionally, what prompts the inclusion of the Battle of Flodden in this narrative?

While the precise motivations behind Scott's construction of the anti-hero Marmion remain unknown, one could argue that this choice is the only one that serves to

[18] Letellier argues that Matthew Gregory Lewis, a Gothic novelist, had an influential role in shaping Scott's work. He also maintains that there are resemblances between Monk in Lewis's novel *The Monk* (1796) and Marmion (85).

strengthen the concept of Britishness, which constitutes the poem's central message (Prince 18). As a Scot, Walter Scott did not place in the background of his poem the Battle of Flodden, which resulted in both an English victory and the deaths of tens of thousands of Scots, and which was one of the milestones in England's increasing oppression. With the decision to include this war, which the Scots see as an absolute catastrophe, Scott makes up for the Battle of Flodden decision in the poem by depicting the English Marmion as an antagonistic figure with anti-heroic and anti-chivalric qualities. In this way, he constructs a British identity without making individuals from Scotland and England feel excessively superior. Therefore, all of the scenes that are portrayed in the poem, Marmion's bad behaviour (though Scott maintains a moderate stance and does not entirely depict him as an evil and unrepentant figure), his later regret that is conveyed through supernatural and gothic narration, and his death at the end of the poem, serve to support Walter Scott's argument that peace must be established in Britain and that doing individual evil deeds will not result in positive outcomes.

It is possible that, in the absence of Napoleon's threat during the poem's composition, Scott would have taken a more confrontational stance towards England. However, the prevailing circumstances of the time, combined with his pragmatic worldview, resulted in *Marmion*'s intricate narrative structure. In the words of Pikoulis, it "is the hero of that unreconciled contradiction which marks Scott's own personality as it does his involvement in the relationship of past and present, Scotland and England, fact and fable" (748). In discussing the multifaceted structure of *Marmion*, Mayhead characterises Marmion as "a type in whom the proportion of good to evil, fair to threatening, varies from one specific example to another, but who always seems either to live under a curse or to be driven by an alarming obsessive energy, or both" (13).

Scott begins his portrayal of Marmion right at the start of the poem with these lines:

> Well, by his visage, you might know
> He was a stalworth knight, and keen,
> And had in many a battle been;
> The scar on his brown cheek revealed
> A token true of Bosworth field;

His eye-brow dark, and eye of fire,
…….
His square-turned joints, and strength of limb,
Shewed him no carpet knight so trim,
But, in close fight, a champion grim,
In camps, a leader sage. (I. V. 61-77)

Despite being portrayed as an anti-hero in the poem, Marmion is not entirely depicted as a villainous character by Scott, which reflects Scott's moderate politics. During the opening lines of the poem, Marmion is described as a captivating hero. As he proceeds with his group towards Sir Hugh the Heron's Norham Castle, the narrative conveys Marmion's martial abilities, revered leadership qualities among his troops, and imposing physical presence. In fact, even Sir Heron, a Scotsman, refers to Marmion as the "flower of English land" (I. X. 150), highlighting his esteemed status[19]. Prior to the fabrication of incriminating documents concerning De Wilton, Marmion demonstrated his talent as a formidable combatant by decisively defeating him in battle. The poem's final canto portrays a significant moment when Marmion, following Lord Surrey's directives, joins the army at the centre wing in preparation for the battle. This scene resonates with the cries of "Marmion! Marmion!" (VI. XXIV. 732) coming from the British forces positioned on Flodden Hill. As Marmion lay severely wounded on the ground at the end of the battle, even in his final moments, he fulfils his role as a commander by shouting at Stanley and Chester, who are tasked with defending the right and left flanks of the Scottish forces. He says, "Victory! / Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!" (VI. XXXII. 990-991). The poem undeniably presents various instances wherein Marmion demonstrates the attributes of nobility and valour. His allegiance to the King is demonstrated when he boldly undertakes a diplomatic assignment deep within the heart of Scotland as per the monarch's request (Remy 36). Furthermore, Marmion's generosity is praised by Sir Heron early in the narrative, as he promises to

[19] Rubenstein argues that the warm welcome extended by Scottish noble Hugh the Heron to the English protagonist Marmion at the poem's beginning is not solely due to Scott's pragmatic "middle-of-the-road policy." Instead, he suggests that Scott employs deliberate irony. In Canto V, Part XIII, a meaningful exchange of glances occurs between Marmion and Lady Heron in the presence of James IV. This silent communication, Rubenstein asserts, likely indicates a prior connection between the two characters. Given Lady Heron's role as James's mistress in the scene, it is plausible that Marmion and Lady Heron might have had a prior romantic involvement. Therefore, Sir Heron's praise of Marmion at the poem's beginning seems ironic (157-158).

respond to the favour shown to him by the Palmer, the guide assigned to navigate the Scottish territories.

The first indication of Marmion's departure from conventional chivalric hero portrayal is seen in Constance's words in Canto II. Having escaped from a convent because of her love for Marmion and now facing execution, Constance reveals the truth about Marmion:

> I listened to a traitor's tale,
> I left the convent and the veil,
> For three long years I bowed my pride,
> A horse-boy in his train to ride;
> And well my folly's meed he gave,
> Who forfeited, to be his slave,
> All here, and all beyond the grave.
> He saw young Clara's face more fair,
> He knew her of broad lands the heir,
> Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,
> And Constance was beloved no more. (II. XXVII. 502-512)

This statement, made by Constance in the final moments before the council before her execution, is a crucial revelation that provides insight into Marmion's mysterious aspects. From this point, a story begins that reveals how Marmion comes to represent what Oliver refers to as "knightly corruption" ("Crossing"18). Constance, who fled the convent three years earlier because of her deep affection for Marmion, reveals that Marmion misled her with false promises. After that, he put her in a submissive position and left her behind as he pursued Clara's lands in a "dangerously acquisitive" (Burwick 1156) manner. Nevertheless, Marmion's profound remorse concerning Constance does not fully manifest until the poem's conclusion, as only then does he discover Constance's tragic fate, her execution. At this scene, Constance discloses that Marmion fabricated documents in order to eliminate De Wilton, an English lord who harboured affection for Clara, all aiming to claim Clara's lands. She also admits her role in this evil plan. De Wilton, who infiltrates Marmion's entourage in disguise as a palmer in the first canto, will emerge as a catalytic figure, progressively fuelling Marmion's remorse for his malevolent actions. In the words of Enos Bronson, as of the third canto onwards, Marmion begins to "[bear] down remorse with pride and ambition" (15).

In the third canto, Marmion and his group make their way to the inn, where their arrival is marked by the Palmer's unsettling look, which initially startles Marmion. While he struggles with the mysterious ambience, his squire, Fitz-Eustace, attempts to ease the tension by singing a song, unintentionally heightening Marmion's unease. The song tells a melancholic story involving a knight and a lady. Even in his unawareness of the Palmer's true identity as De Wilton, Marmion is seized by an unexplained and sudden worry concerning Clara, as seen in his words: "Is it not strange, that, as ye sung, / Seem'd in mine ear a death-peal rung" (III. XIII. 210-211). Previously renowned for his courage and strong character, Marmion displays signs of fear, causing a momentary break in his usual rational behaviour. This departure from calmness becomes noticeable during the "Host's Tale" part of the canto, indicating a gradual decline in Marmion's mental faculties. As the innkeeper recounts the story of the confrontation between the Scottish King Alexander III and the Elfin Knight, Marmion abruptly departs the inn in pursuit of the non-existent Elfin Knight. This action reveals Marmion's attempt to hide the growing remorse within him, as pointed out by Felluga (46). It represents Marmion's growing lack of self-control, as evidenced by his erroneous belief that he can confront the Elfin Knight outside and engage in combat.

Rubenstein agrees with Felluga's assessment, assigning Marmion's tendency towards superstition to his increasing remorse: "Under the torture of remorse, recollections of past sins become a scourge, and the strongest men lose their self-possession and ultimately their self-control" (164-165). Marmion resolves to seek out the Elfin Knight, a choice likely influenced by this mythical figure's gloomy depiction, seemingly reflects the shadow of his own wrongdoings. Nonetheless, the opponent Marmion confronts outside is not the Elfin Knight as he initially assumed; it is, in fact, De Wilton. De Wilton ultimately defeats Marmion in the duel. When Marmion arrives back at the inn, his face displays concern. His appearance bears the scars of a duel, and there is a transformation in his stand that Fitz-Eustace describes as follows: "At distance, prick'd to utmost speed, / The foot-tramp of a flying steed, / Come town-ward rushing on; / First, dead, as if on turf it trode" (III. XXXI. 592-595). At this point, the reason behind Marmion's visibly troubled psychological state lies in Scott's portrayal of the English Marmion, who represents "the other" for the Scots, as an anti-hero. Indeed, exhibiting

anti-heroic traits, Marmion begins to experience remorse one by one and even loses his sanity to the point of seeing visions.

In the fourth canto, Marmion experiences a significant change in his character during his stay with Sir David Lindesay before he meets with King James. This transformation is influenced by the eerie and gothic atmosphere surrounding Crichton Castle, intensified by the unsettling stories shared by Lindesay. As they explore the Castle's ramparts, Lindesay mentions a mysterious apparition that appeared to King James in Linlithgow church. This apparition delivered a passionate warning, urging James to refrain from starting a war against Scotland (Pikoulis 744). Scott's remark about the futility of tensions between the two countries at this point is also noteworthy.

As Marmion listens to Lindesay's stories, his emotional response evokes a deep sense of empathy, marking a notable moment in the narrative. There is a noticeable change in Marmion's demeanour as the story concludes, with a pallor casting a shadow over his face. When the time comes for him to express his thoughts, he briefly hesitates before finding the will to reveal a significant shift in his perspective. He acknowledges that previously, he had centred his beliefs solely on the tangible aspects of the natural world. But now, his perspective has fundamentally shifted to include a belief in the supernatural. Filled with unease, Marmion struggles to recount the story of the Elfin Knight, a tale the innkeeper shared with him during their stay in Gifford. In this moving exchange, it seems as if Marmion is a penitent, while Lindesay assumes the role of a confessor.

Lindesay, who occupies dual roles as a courtier and poet, serves as a foil to Marmion. His advice to King James, warning him against a possible war, and his expression of pacifist attitudes during his conversation with Marmion highlight Marmion's own violations, fostering a richer understanding of Marmion's character for the reader, as Rubenstein observes (144). While Marmion opens up to Lindesay about his inner conflict, he holds back from sharing his uncertainties about the Palmer, Constance, or Clara, instead alluding to "feverish dreams" (IV. XVIII. 387) that have kindled a profound sense of regret within him. At this point, Lindesay serves as an intermediary,

conveying Scott's message of peace while initiating the process that will allow Marmion, who stands out with his excesses, to come to terms with some realities. Marmion's excesses in the poem can be read metaphorically as exemplifying the excessive and peace-destroying behaviour of England, to which Scott objected.

As the last canto begins, the growing threat of war closely parallels the growing influence of Marmion's nemesis (Bayne 28). Following King James's order, Marmion is assigned to accompany the nuns to Tantallon Castle. Enraged, Marmion does not take this request kindly, as he will remain under Archibald Douglas's supervision. Just as Marmion prepares to depart from the Castle, he thanks Douglas for the hospitality he received. However, Douglas refrains from clasping Marmion's hand, and his words convey a discomfort: "My castles are my King's alone, / From turret to foundation-stone- / The hand of Douglas is his own; / And never shall in friendly grasp / The hand of such as Marmion clasp" (VI. XIII. 404-408). Outraged by Douglas's remarks, Marmion, fuelled by intense anger, warns the older man that he might have turned to violence under different circumstances. The massive gates of Tantallon Castle slowly close to trap Marmion, but he escapes by evading the Castle's walls. At this point, Marmion's remorse, which began when the Palmer joined his group, intensifies along with his rage towards Douglas, leading him straight to the front lines of battle to join the British forces. It is this rage caused by his remorse that is the main reason why he will die in battle. It is important to remember that Scott purposefully included nemesis as the force propelling Marmion towards his destruction. If English Marmion had been shown as a chivalrous hero instead of an anti-heroic one and nevertheless dies, this would have directly opposed to Scott's middle-of-the-road policy, making the English angry.

Towards the end of Canto VI, Marmion experiences a series of significant revelations. From this point on, Marmion will gradually become aware of his evil actions, with each revelation occurring progressively. One evening, Blount, Marmion's other squire, noticed the Palmer leaving the group. At that moment, the Palmer dressed in a way that no one had ever seen him wear before; he looked like a noble knight instead of a pilgrim. At this very moment, Marmion realises that the Palmer is, in fact, De Wilton, and his unavoidable doom is approaching. At this juncture, Marmion utters the most

quoted lines in Sir Walter Scott's works: "O what a tangled web we weave, / When first we practice to deceive!" (XVII. 532-533). Marmion, as Mayhead characterises him, becomes a "Byronically doom-ridden[20]" (20) character. Marmion's life progresses as if destiny has orchestrated a series of unfortunate and tragic events. Remarkably ironic is the conclusion of the war, where Marmion, severely wounded and caught in the very predicament he had created, unexpectedly finds himself in the company of Clara.

Marmion's choice to bring Clara onto the battlefield instead of keeping her safe during the conflict reveals his belief that she would be a source of motivation in his seemingly hopeless situation. However, it is clear that this decision, made by Sir Walter Scott, was deliberate, meant to add tension and dramatic intensity. Clara takes on the role of a compassionate caregiver, tending to Marmion's severe injuries and providing comfort with a sip of water. After Clara delivers the news of Constance's execution, bearing the heavy burden of Constance's death and the wrongs he inflicted upon Clara and De Wilton, Marmion faints. If the poem were to conclude now, it might have carried a deeply emotional ending for the reader, signifying a solid retribution for Marmion's actions, as Michael Ferber proposes (175). However, Scott's aim in this poem goes beyond a flood of overwhelming sentimentality or a harsh, punitive tragedy. Marmion's heroic stature persists even in his final moments due to his commanding call for other leaders to charge. Within the verses, his death is depicted with vividness, embodying a "picturesque fantasy bolstered by the brio of the verse," as Vassallo observed (352). The metaphorical lens of this scene suggests Scott's call for reconciliation between Scotland and England despite their turbulent history. Throughout the narrative, the English knight, whose faults are continually disclosed for both himself and the reader, dies heroically. As a result, in the end, neither Scotland —which lost the war—nor England, represented by Marmion, are demonised.

[20] While Mayhead portrays Marmion as a Byronic hero, and there are certainly moments where Marmion exhibits traits associated with such a character, it is evident that Marmion does not fit perfectly into this classification. As Lauber underlines, Scott distinguishes himself from Byron by openly detailing the transgressions that prompt remorse in his protagonist (29). In contrast to the Byronic hero, Marmion's errors and the origins of his remorse are apparent to both him and the reader.

The poem exhibits a notable abundance of contrasts, which Scott consistently employs to balance Scottish and English elements. Despite possessing anti-heroic qualities and engaging in malevolent actions, Marmion ultimately dies in a way that preserves honourable ideals. The battle where he meets his end is the encounter where the English decisively defeat the Scots. Furthermore, towards the poem's end, Marmion's burial site becomes the target of plunderers, and beneath Marmion's tombstone rests an individual described as the "lowly woodsman" (VI. XXXVI. 1118). One of the most striking contrasts is that a "lowly woodsman" lies in the grave of Marmion, who is at the centre of the poem with his pride. Marmion's death serves as a reminder that human achievements and ambitions are temporary.

Upon examination, it becomes evident that Scott's narrative is not fundamentally oriented towards the propagation of Scottish identity. Instead, his primary objective is to emphasise the concept of Britishness, and this thematic emphasis is embedded in the central character of Marmion. Nevertheless, this primary intent does not imply an absence of Scottish cultural elements within the poem, particularly notable in the vivid depictions of medieval Scottish cultural aspects. Through Marmion's presence, Scott "paint[s] the manners of the time in the year of Flodden . . . with the castle, the convent, the inn, the court, the camp and the battle" (Henderson 10). Scott's literary efforts are marked by a "directive creative energy," where meticulous attention to detail transports the reader to the historical epoch in which the narrative unfolds (Calder, *Scott* 51). Importantly, these carefully added details blend with the story's narrative, forming an essential and harmonious element of the storytelling.

Crichton Castle, an ancient architectural relic from the fourteenth century now visited by tourists, provides the setting for Marmion's meeting with Lindesay before his audience with King James. As Marmion nears the Castle's gates, the burden of his guilt starts to weigh on him, creating a mental prison brought on by the wrongs that trouble his conscience. Interestingly, the appearance of Crichton Castle at this moment is far from being a grand, imposing fortress:

> That Castle rises on the steep

Of the green vale of Tyne;
And far beneath, where slow they creep
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
Where alders moist, and willows weep,
You hear her streams repine.
…….
Crichtoun! though now thy miry court
But pens the lazy steers and sheep,
Thy turrets rude, and tottered Keep,
Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
Oft have I traced within thy fort,
Of mouldering shields the mystic sense. (IV. X-XI 197-214)

As is seen, the streams flowing beneath Crichton Castle "repine," and the sounds of "weeping willow" are heard. This is very similar to Marmion, who initially displays an aura of confidence and pride in the narrative but later "weeps" at his situation. Far from its former splendour, Crichton Castle appears to have degraded to a lifeless place. Although it retains some of the historical significance it once had, it seems to be a place that has lost traces of its past, such as the muddy courtyard where animals once roamed and poets and musicians stayed. In the same way that the Castle itself is crumbling, the falling shields inside the walls seem to serve as reminders of Marmion's gradually eroding noble qualities. Similarly, even in the now lifeless castle, there are traces of the former historical significance, just as Marmion acted nobly even in death.

The portrayal of Tantallon, a renowned castle in Scotland, is particularly notable in the final canto. The depiction of the Castle takes on a harshness similar to Marmion's nemesis as the start of conflict approaches. Although Douglas, the Castle's owner, does not express overt hostility towards Marmion at this point, Scott's dangerous depiction of the Castle gives the impression that tension in the scene will soon rise (Rubenstein 145). The lines "Tantallon's dizzy steep / Hung o'er the margin of the deep" (VI. II. 25-26) suggest that Tantallon Castle is situated dangerously near a cliff, mirroring Marmion's unstable moral stance. The Castle's isolation is reflected in the lines: "The steepy rock, and frantic tide, / Approach of human step denied; / And thus these lines, and ramparts rude, / Were left in deepest solitude" (54-57). This suggests that Marmion finds himself in a solitary state, burdened by his own guilt. Neither Constance, who harboured deep affection for him, nor Clara remains in his company in the end.

The poem presents various Scottish locations, including the Border region, Holyrood Palace, and the River Tweed, as part of Marmion's journey. However, it is in Canto V that Scott prominently highlights elements of Scottish culture in this literary work, stirring a sense of pride among the Scots. In this specific scene, Scott begins by describing the feelings experienced by the Scottish soldiers when Marmion and his group arrive at their camp. Scott vividly captures the warriors' emotions, depicting their envy and astonishment as they witness the impressive weaponry Marmion and his companions possess. This includes the extraordinary length of their arrows and the power of their bows. Scott proceeds to describe the warriors coming from various regions of Scotland who rallied together to combat the English forces in response to the English's superior weaponry and gear. In this gathering, different groups are evident, consisting of a wide range of individuals, including experienced knights and hopeful squires, prosperous city-dwellers and Borderers. They are all deeply committed to the art of combat. Marmion carefully observes the physical features of these warriors as follows:

> Just then the Chiefs, their tribes arrayed,
> A wild and garish semblance made,
> The chequered trews, and belted plaid,
> And varying notes the war-pipes brayed
> To every varying clan;
> Wild through their red and shaggy hair
> Looked out their eyes, with savage stare. (V. V. 105-111)

In these lines, Scott alludes to two prominent facets of Scottish culture: the kilt and The Great Highland Bagpipe. Scott describes what Marmion sees in this scene as "garish" due to the various patterns and designs depicted on the kilts worn by warriors from different clans. The bagpipes held significant importance for these warriors, who, in contrast to the King's army, were characterised as more "savage," according to Scott's depiction. Bagpipes were frequently utilised in military settings, particularly within the context of battles, with the purpose of rallying and motivating the troops (Williams 102). The portrayal of the kilt and bagpipes, which continue to hold significance in Scottish military ceremonies, parades, and cultural events in contemporary times, serves as Scott's primary manifestation of Scottish identity within this poem. As Anthony Smith argues, "by use of symbols—flags, coinage, anthems, uniforms, monuments and

ceremonies—members are reminded of their common heritage and cultural kinship and feel strengthened and exalted by their sense of common identity and belonging" (16-17). Therefore, Scott's mention of the kilt and the bagpipe serve as an emblematic representation of Scottish heritage and a source of national pride in the poem.

In the poem, Scott's narration of Marmion's story, the significant Scottish elements mentioned above, and the political message he intended to convey could not have sufficed with a simple presentation. Indeed, all of these aspects needed to be conveyed with a technique and captivating details so that the poem would engage its audience. Within the poem, detailed descriptions of events and settings, as well as the incorporation of songs, supernatural elements, and gothic elements, all serve this purpose. Notably, the use of supernatural details and gothic elements was essential to the portrayal of Scotland, which had been romanticised since medieval times. Scott's structuring of the poem as a romance is precisely for this reason. Scott understood the importance of weaving intricate narratives and detailed descriptions into his work to transport his readers to the world of Marmion and the enchanting landscapes of Scotland.

Beginning with songs, it is a common practice in Scott's works to include songs as an essential narrative component. These songs typically comprise verses or text portions explicitly designed to be sung or recited within the storyline (Jackson 35). It is seen that Scott encouraged these songs to be adapted into music and their actual performance as songs. The musical arrangements or adaptations of these songs, as found in *Marmion* and other works by Scott, emerged as a primary source of inspiration for creating non-dramatic vocal music inspired by Scott's literary works. Consequently, musicians and composers have drawn inspiration from Scott's poems, particularly those designated as songs, and have composed music based on them (35). Throughout *Marmion*, various songs appear, with one of the most pivotal songs aptly titled "Song" emerging in Part X of Canto III. In this scene, Marmion, uneasy about the Palmer's presence, asks his squire Fitz-Eustace to sing, a request that Fitz-Eustace fulfils. The emotional impact brought forth by Fitz-Eustace's singing essentially captures the main reason behind Scott's inclusion of this song in the story:

> And thought how sad would be such sound,
> On Susquehana's swampy ground,
> Kentucky's wood-encumbered brake,
> Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
> Where heart-sick exiles, in the strain,
> Recalled fair Scotland's hills again! (III. IX. 142-147)

As can be seen, these expressions denote an emotional link to nationalism. The narrator initially explores how a piece of music can evoke strong emotions in various geographical settings, mentioning places like the marshy terrain of Susquehanna, the dense forests of Kentucky, and the vast waters of Ontario. In such distant locations, it is suggested that people experiencing homesickness might find solace in singing this song, conjuring up fond memories of Scotland's picturesque landscapes (Jackson 36). This passage creates a tangible sense of nostalgia and a yearning for Scotland among those displaced from their homeland. Therefore, the primary purpose of the song is to nurture Scottish nationalism, with a secondary function of reflecting Scott's characteristic balanced stance and his emphasis on uniting England and Scotland. This dual perspective is embodied in the English character Fitz-Eustace, who, in this song, praises the Scottish landscape and reflects Scott's idea of British identity. Strategically, Scott references far places like Ontario and Susquehanna in North America. This geographic diversity highlights the universality of homesickness, transcending national boundaries and reminding that such emotions are common to people, whether they are Scottish, English, or American (Jackson 36). In essence, through this song, Scott not only enriches his narrative and departs from conventional poetic norms but reinforces Scottish nationalism, hinting at the possibilities of peace between nations, particularly Scotland and England, by emphasising the shared experience of homesickness.

The extensive and diverse use of supernatural and gothic elements in Romantic literature is undeniable, as these elements play a pivotal role in the expression of the fundamental principles of Romanticism, namely, emotion and imagination. The significance of these elements is further heightened when considering the perception that Scott's works are mainly about Scotland and Scottish folk. Following the perception of English readers that the supernatural elements in his literary works were excessive, Scott said the following in *Quarterly Review* about his works: "The traditions

and manners of the Scotch were so blended with superstitious practices and fears, that the author of these novels seems to have deemed it incumbent on him to transfer many more such incidents to his novels, than seem either probable or natural to an English reader . . .” (435). Consequently, it is evident that Scott employs supernatural elements to strengthen a strong sense of Scottish pride and identity. His depiction of abbeys, ghostly apparitions, and other supernatural occurrences is a deliberate means of connecting the narrative to Scotland’s rich cultural and historical heritage. As Carol Margaret Davison and Monica Germanà argue, the Gothic’s connection to Scottish identity has to do with its role in revealing the dark and repressed aspects of Scotland’s history and as a means of resistance for the voice of the repressed, as well as its role in the slave trade and exploitation within the British Empire (4-8). Therefore, by intertwining the supernatural and the gothic with Scotland’s past, Scott emphasises that the nation’s history is steeped in mystery, valour, and the enduring spirit of its people. Through this approach, he addresses themes of Scottish nationalism and identity uniquely different from many other Romantic writers, making *Marmion* a powerful example of literature’s influence on shaping a nation’s self-image.

Illustratively, in Canto III, the innkeeper’s narrative detailing the construction of the Goblin Hall during his era, the legend of the Elfin Knight, and Marmion’s following thought that he had encountered the spectral figure of the knight all match Scott’s deliberate intent to incorporate supernatural elements into Scottish folklore. A striking instance is the Goblin Hall, a part of Yester Castle dating back to the thirteenth century, as expounded upon by the innkeeper in “The Host’s Tale.” Significantly, this architectural relic is linked with the enduring myth that the Castle’s construction involved spells and otherworldly forces (MacRitchie 440). Scott’s purpose here is evident: to present the supernatural as a channel for enriching the individuals’ understanding of Scottish tradition. It is clear that Marmion does not hold supernatural beliefs at the beginning. In the fourth canto, Marmion partakes in a dialogue with Sir David Lindesay, discussing the subject and clarifying that he had previously been a rational knight, lacking belief in the supernatural, until this specific event: “… Of Nature’s laws / So strong I held the force, / That never superhuman cause / Could e’er control their course” (IV. XVIII. 368-371). The Elfin Knight has two functions in the

narrative: first, it reminds the significance of the Elfin Knight in Scottish ballad tradition, and second, it acts as a supernatural element that terrifies Marmion because of his guilty conscience.

It is clear that, for Scott, incorporating supernatural elements goes beyond just enhancing the story's appeal and liveliness; it holds a more profound significance. Similar to the "Gothic Dramatist," Joanna Baillie (1762–1851), who had a significant impact on Scott's use of the supernatural and gothic, these elements are used to explore the characters' innermost feelings and thoughts, allowing for a more complex portrayal of their psychological states (Beshero-Bondar 86). Scott, who holds Baillie in high regard to the extent of likening him to "the next Shakespeare" (86) in the epistle prefacing the third canto, achieves a balanced integration of gothic and supernatural elements, avoiding excessive use. This delicate balance is what leads to the fictional nature of the Elfin Knight in the narrative. In reality, the entity Marmion presumes to be a spectre is none other than De Wilton himself, dispelling the idea of an actual supernatural being. While within that particular scene, it is narrated as if such an entity exists, and Marmion earnestly believes in its existence. Similarly, in the opening of Canto IV, the morning following the night during which Scott imagines encountering the Elfin Knight, it is seen that the armour worn by Marmion's soldiers have disappeared. Marmion is left contemplating whether this could be attributed to the actions of the ghostly Elfin Knight. However, Scott intervenes in the poem afterwards, restoring the balance between the realm of the supernatural and the physical world. He reveals to both Marmion and the reader that the stolen armour was, in fact, the work of De Wilton, rather than a ghostly entity.

Scott used the supernatural not only to serve a nationalistic agenda but also to enhance the narrative of the poem for various reasons (Calder, *Scott* 46). In Canto V, as the Abbess discloses the Palmer Constance's involvement in falsely accusing De Wilton and presents the forged letters, the Palmer is overcome by a sudden and intense tremor, eventually losing consciousness. At that very moment, both hear a faint and eerie sound resembling a distant trumpet call that gradually fades away. Filled with fear, the Abbess

observes peculiar apparitions on the city's cross, as if ghosts were raising shields and waving banners. This enigmatic occurrence leaves the characters in a state of shock:

> A vision, passing Nature's law,
> Strange, wild, and dimly seen;
> Figures that seemed to rise and die,
> Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
> While nought confirmed could ear or eye
> Discern of sound or mien.
> Yet darkly did it seem, as there
> Heralds and Pursuivants prepare,
> With trumpet sound, and blazon fair. (V. XXV. 719-727)

As it becomes evident, the Palmer and the Abbess experience a supernatural and surreal vision. They are confronted with an otherworldly spectacle that is strange, wild, and challenging to comprehend because it defies the laws of nature. In this vision, they observe several figures that appear and disappear mysteriously. These figures engage in enigmatic behaviour described as "gibber and sign," indicating that their actions are incomprehensible. The use of the supernatural, particularly the mysterious apparition witnessed by the Palmer and the Abbess, serves to intensify the sense of foreboding and intrigue (Letellier 85). This supernatural element adds mystery and suspense to the narrative, drawing one deeper into the story. It functions as a literary device that enhances the storytelling quality, creating an eerie and enigmatic atmosphere that mirrors the uncertain and tumultuous events of the plot. This supernatural vision aims to enrich the storytelling and capture individuals' imagination by introducing a sense of the uncanny and the inexplicable, thereby amplifying the poem's dramatic impact. Additionally, the mention of heralds, trumpets, and the preparation of banners and symbols creates a supernatural ambience that serves as a form of foreshadowing. This mention suggests the impending arrival of a significant and likely tumultuous event: the upcoming battle. The use of heralds and trumpets is a traditional way to signal the commencement of important events, often associated with warfare and chivalric contests. By incorporating these elements into the narrative, Scott foreshadows the impending conflict and builds anticipation, enhancing the dramatic tension in the poem.

It is possible to argue that Scott's use of the supernatural also directly feeds into, or results from, Marmion. In other words, both the supernatural in the narrative influences

Marmion's development, and it comes about as a result of the narrative itself. As supernatural elements not only add depth and complexity to Marmion's character but also provide a rich backdrop for depicting his moral flaws and the subsequent remorse he experiences. Scott's incorporation of gothic and supernatural details highlights the darker aspects of Marmion's persona, emphasising his pride, ambition, and moral transgressions (Bronson 15). For instance, Marmion hears Constance's voice in Flodden Field as he lies mortally wounded: "In the lost battle, / Borne down by the flying, / Where mingles war's rattle / With groans of the dying" (VI. XXXII. 972-973). Marmion's experience of Constance's voice from her grave during the Monk's prayer, instead of the Monk's own voice, introduces a supernatural element to the narrative and holds significant implications for the development of Marmion's character. His behaviours, motivated by a sense of pride and ambition, have resulted in acts of deception and betrayal. Despite the wounds he received on the battlefield, the ethereal song sung by Constance serves as a reminder to Marmion of how he physically abused Constance, and then sent her back to the convent, causing her death (Beshero-Bondar 87-88). The chaotic aftermath of the battle and the cries of those who are about to die reinforce this realisation. Including this supernatural element in the narrative also implies the presence of divine intervention or a moral judgement, thereby giving Marmion a symbolic opportunity for redemption. The utilisation of this particular scene by Walter Scott serves to enhance the emotional resonance of the poem and emphasises the significance of the supernatural in shaping human destiny. It represents a pivotal moment of spiritual reflection for Marmion, highlighting the necessity for introspection.

In the poem, the importance of gothic elements is equal to that of supernatural elements. Scott skilfully uses both of these elements with the intention to achieve multiple goals. Firstly, he employs gothic portrayals of different settings, such as ancient castles and decaying abbeys, to create a backdrop that draws the reader into a world of mystery and unease (Letellier 50). The rich and immersive atmosphere of these settings enhances the narrative's supernatural aspects, giving them greater depth and credibility. For instance, the following lines depict the atmosphere in the scene where Marmion believes he encounters the Elfin Knight:

> ‘Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
> Alone, and arm’d, rode forth the King
> To that old camp’s deserted round:
> Sir Knight, you well might mark the mound,
> Left hand the town,- the Pictish race 680
> The trench, long since, in blood did trace;
> The moor around is brown and bare. (III. XXIII. 434-440)

Scott purposefully creates a Gothic atmosphere in these lines, where Marmion goes outside to meet the Elfin Knight for several obvious reasons. Firstly, the Gothic ambience serves to heighten the supernatural element of the encounter. The mention of the “midnight bell,” signalling a time of darkness and mystery, immediately sets a foreboding tone. The description of the encampment as “haunted” and the presence of a “mound” all contribute to the eerie and mysterious nature of the setting, a defining characteristic of Gothic literature. Moreover, the reference to the trench bearing traces of the Pictish race’s historical bloodshed adds darkness and foreboding to the scene, a characteristic Gothic theme that emphasises the darker aspects of history. This connection to a violent past intensifies the sense of unease. Finally, Marmion’s solitary ride at midnight to a desolate and lifeless moor adds to the Gothic atmosphere (Goslee 59-60). The feeling of isolation deepens the sense of mystery and suspense, creating a captivating backdrop for the supernatural encounter with the Elfin Knight. The gothic atmosphere created by Scott in this passage sets the stage for the enigmatic event happening in the narrative. Likewise, in the second canto, the convent designated for Constance’s execution is employed for a similar purpose. Scott characterises the convent in the following terms:

> Victim and executioner
> Were blind-fold when transported there.
> In low dark rounds the arches hung,
> From the rude rock the side-walls sprung;
> The grave-stones, rudely sculptured o’er,
> Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
> Were all the pavement of the floor;
> The mildew drops fell one by one,
> With tinkling plash, upon the stone. (II. XVIII. 341-349)

In the lines describing the monastery where Constance is about to face her fate, Gothic elements are employed to create a vivid and foreboding atmosphere. The use of low, dark arches, “side-walls” emerging from the rugged rock, and the worn, rudely

sculptured “grave-stones” as the floor all contribute to a Gothic setting. This ambience serves multiple purposes within the narrative. Firstly, it enhances the emotional impact of the scene, making the setting more evocative, thus intensifying the engagement with the story. Secondly, it intensifies the suspense and danger at a crucial juncture in the story, when Constance is being put to death. Scott’s use of Gothic elements in this passage adds depth and drama to the story, showing his ability to create a haunting and memorable backdrop for a turning point in the narrative (Gamer 523). The situation where Constance is abandoned within the Castle’s confines, awaiting her tragic fate, embodies a gothic spectacle. Nevertheless, there are instances in the poem where it can be contended that Scott employs the gothic ambience to underline the significance of various locales and structures associated with Scottish cultural heritage. Notably, Tantallon Castle is one such example.

Sir Walter Scott’s decision to feature Tantallon Castle in the poem and to employ Gothic descriptions[21] can be attributed to the Castle’s profound significance in Scottish history and its inherent dramatic qualities. Tantallon’s historical legacy, particularly its involvement in pivotal conflicts like the Wars of Scottish Independence, is a compelling symbol of Scotland’s past (Caldwell 335). The Castle’s formidable architecture, marked by massive stone walls and a dramatic coastal perch, reflects the Romantic and Gothic sensibilities of that period. The description of Tantallon Castle within the poem begins with the statement that, “Tantallon’s dizzy steep / Hung o’er the margin of the deep” (VI. II. 25-26). This description conveys a sense of height and peril, a typical feature in Gothic literature. The term “dizzy steep” evokes a feeling of vertigo, emphasising the dangerous location often seen in Gothic tales. By showing “many a rude tower and rampart,” Scott further intensifies the Gothic ambience. This image evokes thoughts of imposing, weathered fortifications typical of Gothic buildings. The mention of a “Gothic entrance” and “turret square” heightens the Gothic atmosphere by suggesting an imposing and medieval architectural style.

[21] Griss mentions that Scott spent at least two evenings inside the eerie halls of Scottish castles Glamis (in 1793) and Dunvegan (in 1814) (103).

Furthermore, Scott introduces elements of heraldic symbolism in the passage, including the mention of "sculpture rude," a "stony shield" on the turret square, the emblem of the "Bloody Heart," and "three mullets" (stars). These symbols are important as heraldic symbols express a nation's values, heritage, and aspirations, making them important for national identity. Anthony Smith also emphasises the significance of symbols for nations (16). The symbols mentioned in the poem also reflect the elements often associated with the Gothic style and emphasise the historical and noble connotations of the Castle (Lillich 239). Scott's use of these Gothic elements in the passage creates a vivid and evocative portrayal of Tantallon Castle. The unsafe setting, rugged architecture, and heraldic symbolism contribute to the poem's Gothic tone, enhancing its historical and romantic themes while emphasising the distinctive character of Scottish landscapes and structures. It should be noted that Scott strategically aligns his description of the Castle with the unfolding story and the approaching conflict, enhancing the narrative's sense of foreboding and drama.

On the whole, Scott steers the narrative in *Marmion* towards a focus on Britishness. This message is conveyed primarily through the character of Marmion rather than the unfolding events or secondary characters. Against the tragic background of the Battle of Flodden for the Scots, Scott chooses an English knight as the central figure and portrays this character as an anti-hero rather than a hero, thereby introducing a moderate approach between the two countries. At times directly, at times indirectly, Scott elevates Scotland by vividly enriching descriptions of its landscapes and architectural wonders, in addition to the incorporation of gothic and supernatural elements inherent in Romantic literature. The looming threat posed by Napoleon at the time of Scott inspired this middle-of-the-road perspective in crafting the poem, ultimately shaping *Marmion* into a poem of unity and shared identity between England and Scotland. Scott, in *The Lady of the Lake*, written two years after *Marmion*, constructs his narrative entirely in the realm of Scotland, reflecting the values of his country. By adopting a middle-of-the-road policy, Scott demonstrates a balanced approach, this time not confined to Britain but directly to Scotland. The poem vividly portrays the interaction between the Scottish clans and the monarch, presenting both sides impartially and illustrating how they embody Scotland's values. While Scott undertook the task of reminding the Scots of

their rich culture, he also acknowledged Scotland's position in the United Kingdom when creating his works. He understood the importance of maintaining peace and unity, which prompted him to adopt this moderate approach.

CHAPTER 2

UNVEILING SCOTTISH HERITAGE: EXPLORING *THE LADY OF THE LAKE* (1810)

In contemporary reception, it can be asserted that Sir Walter Scott is often closely associated with his renowned novels *Waverley* (1814) and *Ivanhoe* (1819). In a comparable vein, when discussing Scott's contributions to poetry, one is immediately prompted to consider *The Lady of the Lake* (1810) as Scott's seminal poetic achievement (Lauber 21). The peak of Sir Walter Scott's poetic success was marked by the publication of *The Lady of the Lake,* following earlier triumphs with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) and *Marmion* (Shepherd 83). In *Marmion,* he delved into the historical context of the Battle of Flodden, adopting a balanced approach to depict the Scottish-English relationship. In *The Lady of the Lake,* which Shields describes as a "romantic story of a wandering knight, and a beautiful maiden, of fairy music, of prophetic mountain passes, of hunting, of love, and of war" (62), Scott made a pronounced shift in his literary focus, directing his attention exclusively to Scotland, thus forsaking his focus on England-Scotland dynamics in *Marmion*. The poem unfolds within the picturesque Scottish Highlands during the reign of King James V of Scotland (1513-1542). Within this setting, Scott incorporates elements of Scottish culture, notably highlighting the dynamics of Scottish clans and the captivating Highland landscape, while also navigating a "middle-of-the-road policy" between the clans and the royalty, enriching the narrative's cultural and geographical tapestry. Within the narrative, "to a romantic love story," Scott "adds a historical theme, the same theme which he later handled in several novels- the contrast between the tribal life of the clans and the civil society of the Lowlands which threatened it" (Calder, *Scott* 45).

In *Marmion*, Scott highlights the significance of diversity, especially the differences between the Scots and the English, as the cornerstone of a more profound unity. This unity is perceived as an essential requirement for the nation as it confronted the French, forming a strong alliance encompassing all of its citizens (Cronin 879-880). On the other hand, in this poem, Scott evokes the memory of the ancient clan culture of the Scots, depicting the customs and hostilities between the clans and the monarchy.

Simultaneously, he highlights the evolving nature of the era, emphasising the necessity for unity among the Scots themselves. Scott's strife to unite the diverse regions of Scotland in his poem evokes Anthony D. Smith's assertion that "nations must have a measure of common culture and a civic ideology, a set of common understandings and aspirations, sentiments and ideas, that bind the population together in their homeland" (11). At this juncture, Scott's middle-of-the-road policy resonates with Smith's assertion. According to Scott, even though the Lowlands, the Highlands, and every other region harbours distinct cultures and ideologies, it is imperative for them to converge under a shared umbrella for the betterment of the country. In this chapter, the emphasis will be on Scott's middle-of-the-road policy pursued in *The Lady of the Lake*, which stems from Scott's desire to promote the harmonious coexistence of these elements in Scotland.

In the poem, Sir Walter Scott emphasises the necessity of achieving national cohesion and solidarity as he portrays the dynamics involving Clan-Alpine, Clan Douglas, and King James V of Scotland. He emphasises the significance of these elements in the overarching thematic exploration of harmonious national unity. Khan articulates that linking the picturesque and enchanting landscapes to this romantic narrative set during King James V's era invites readers to encounter a living historical backdrop that merges time with a mystical Scottish land. According to him, the poem also underlines the significance of Gaelic language and clan associations, not just as familial guardians but as microcosms subject to the King's ultimate authority (59).

The Lady of the Lake captivates with its fresh and picturesque landscapes and the portrayal of its characters, who possess a romantic charm. Shields describes the poem as having a lot of energy, vitality from the open air and charm from the wild natural surroundings. Shields also argues that it is acknowledged as the most beloved and perhaps the consistently and vividly engaging of all of Scott's poems (64-65). Similarly, Walter Scott's son-in-law John Gibson Lockhart described the poem "as the most interesting, romantic, picturesque, and graceful of his great poems" (II: 242). Scott gave great attention to detail in his depiction of the Gaelic clan members' customs, traditions, and complex social dynamics, offering a profound understanding of the period's

cultural details. The poem elevated the Scottish Highlands to popularity and surpassed the sales of Scott's previous works. At its release, Scott became the most renowned and prosperous living poet in Great Britain (Lauber 17). According to Edgar Johnson, by the time the poem was published, "the general public were delirious about the poem," and that the poem "shattered all records for the sale of poetry" (qtd. in Mayer 173)

Scott had expressed his intentions for *The Lady of the Lake* in a letter he wrote to Anna Seward (1742-1809) in 1805 (Fertig 74):

> I have had for some time thoughts of writing a Highland poem, somewhat in the style of the *Lay*, giving as far as I can a real picture of what that enthusiastic race actually were before the destruction of their patriarchal government. It is true that I have not quite the same facilities as in describing Border manners, where I am, as they say, more at home. But to balance ray comparative deficiency in knowledge of Celtic manners, you are to consider that I have from my youth delighted in all the Highland traditions which I could pick up from the old Jacobites who used to frequent my father's house… (qtd. in Lockhart, II: 58)

As can be seen, Scott's primary aim was to write a poem that would provide a faithful and genuine portrayal of the traditions, daily practices, and way of life of the Highland people. He regarded Highland culture as a fertile and compelling subject for poetic exploration and was determined to depict this culture authentically in his literary works. His main objective was to portray the Highland people and their way of life as accurately as possible before their clan-based social structure collapsed. Although he recognised his comparatively limited understanding of Celtic customs compared to his familiarity with Border manners, he tried to overcome this obstacle by drawing on his memories of Highland traditions and the insights obtained from regular trips to his father's home by elderly Jacobite individuals. He also stated the following for *The Lady of the Lake* in the year 1830:

> The ancient manners, the habits and customs of the aboriginal race by whom the Highlands of Scotland were inhabited, had always appeared to me peculiarly adapted to poetry. The change in their manners, too, had taken place almost within my own time, or at least I had learned many particulars concerning the ancient state of the Highlands from the old men of the last generation. I had always thought the old Scottish Gael highly adapted for poetical composition. The feuds and political dissensions which, half a century earlier, would have rendered the richer and wealthier part of the kingdom indisposed to countenance a poem, the scene of which was laid in the Highlands, were now sunk in the generous compassion which

> the English, more than any other nation, feel for the misfortunes of an honourable foe. (Bacon 8)

Scott's fascination with the old customs, habits, and traditions of the original people of the Scottish Highlands was a significant motivator for the poem. As Rubenstein also contends, Scott's words exemplify his concern for preserving cultural traditions and his commitment as a poet to prevent the gradual disappearance of historical knowledge (86). He saw Highland culture as particularly suited to poetic exploration and attempted to express it in *The Lady of the Lake*. Furthermore, the considerable changes in Highland customs that occurred throughout his lifetime sparked Scott's interest, and he had the opportunity to gain insights into the old state of the Highlands from the preceding generation. This historical shift and his personal interest, provided a tremendous drive for his artistic pursuits. Moreover, the diminished significance of conflicts and disputes over politics supported his effort. Scott observed that more than any other nation, the English had learned to express a generous compassion towards the Highlanders' misfortunes, changing their views in a way that enabled the reception of such a literary work.

In August 1809, Scott started writing *The Lady of the Lake* during a vacation with his wife, Charlotte, and their daughter, Sofia, in the scenic surroundings of Loch Katrine in the Trossachs, which later became the poem's setting ("General Introduction" 13). While Scott declared his intention to write this poem in a letter to Anna Seward in 1805, he decided to postpone it due to familial problems. This postponement was motivated by his desire to learn more about Scottish culture and traditions. At the same time, his brother, Thomas, faced significant financial difficulties, necessitating immediate financial assistance (Emerson 252). Lauber asserts that *The Lady of the Lake* can be characterised as Scott's last work of literature, undertaken to satisfy his own artistic inclinations and generate financial gains (140-141). According to Grierson, after this poem, "everything [Scott] wrote was with a view to meet engagements already incurred, to cancel or renew bills falling due" (89). However, as is evident from Scott's statements, he genuinely desired to write this poem. When a relative of Scott cautioned him about the possibility of damaging his reputation if he released a new poem following the success of *Marmion*, Scott responded with the following lines from James

Graham's poem, "My Dear and Only Love" (1642): "He either fears his fate too much / Or his deserts are small, / Who dares not put it to the touch, / To win or lose it all" (qtd. in "General Introduction*"* 48).

Sir Walter Scott's standing in the literary world was so formidable that upon the publication of *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810, eight editions were printed in that very year, with a total of more than 20,000[22] copies sold (Lumsden and McIntosh 35). The poem also was translated into numerous languages (Moller 50). By the year 1836, the print run of the poem had risen to approximately 50,000 copies. The poem's extensive sales and name reached as far as America[23] ("General Introduction" 14). Moody argues that the poem surpassed its predecessors by a considerable extent. According to him, the poem was carefully and skilfully crafted, showing a more distinctive variety of effectively contrasted characters (55). Nevertheless, according to Shepherd's analysis, the poem's remarkable popularity can be primarily attributed to the enchanting portrayal of the Scottish Highlands, renowned for its magnificent natural landscapes and romantic allure (83).

The poem's success in popularising a romanticised view of Scotland created an increase in the nation's tourism industry. This led to a wave of travellers journeying from England to the Trossachs, eager to witness the captivating landscapes depicted within the verses (Nestor 61). Like Wordsworth had previously depicted and promoted England's Lake District, Scott was now undertaking a similar effort for the Trossachs (Oosthoek 104). Robert Cadell, one of Scott's publishers, elaborated on the poem's remarkable popularity:

> I do not recollect that any of all the author's works was ever looked for with more intense anxiety, or that any of them excited a more extraordinary sensation when it

[22] It is not possible to determine the precise number of copies sold in the first year of the poem's release. Stuart Kelly suggests this figure to be around 30,000 (81), Felluga estimates it at 20,300 (63), and Jackson approximates it to be around 20,000 (94).

[23] One of the reflections of the poem's widespread recognition in America is seen in the African-American abolitionist Frederick Douglass (Shepperson l307). According to Kelly, one of Frederick's acquaintances who had read *The Lady of the Lake*, inspired by the character of Douglas in the poem, advised Frederick to change his last name from Bailey to Douglass. Frederick had already visited Scotland and was so impressed that he changed his surname (148).

> did appear. The whole country rang with the praises of the poet - crowds set off to view the scenery of Loch Katrine, till then comparatively unknown; . . . and every house and inn in that neighbourhood was crammed with a constant succession of visitors. (qtd. in Lauber 30)

As can be understood, Scott's portrayals of the Scottish landscape, particularly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, attracted visitors from distant locations. The poem inspired a large number of people to explore these previously unknown terrains, resulting in a significant increase in tourism and the rapid growth of the Scottish tourism sector (Nestor 62). It transformed the landscapes of the country into highly recommended tourist attractions. As a result, nearby inns and residences experienced a rise in activity, serving as vibrant centres for a constant flow of visitors. This phenomenon substantially impacted the local economy, establishing the Trossachs as a highly desirable destination for tourists (Furniss 29).

It is irrefutable that *The Lady of the Lake* significantly contributed to the increased popularity of the Trossachs region. However, Scotland had already attracted English visitors as early as the 1760s (Durie, "Scott and Tourism" 48). The reasons for these visits primarily stemmed from factors such as travel limitations to Europe during times of war, which compelled travellers to explore more secluded areas of Britain, including Scotland. Part of these visits can also be attributed to the growing significance of Highlanders in military contexts and a changing perspective concerning the Jacobite cause, where it transformed from a liability into a valuable resource (48). Marjory Brewster agrees with Durie and claims that prior to the era of Sir Walter Scott, the works of Robert Burns and Hugh MacDiarmid may have already contributed to Scottish tourism (38). Hence, Scott may not have pioneered tourism in these regions. However, through *The Lady of the Lake* and its vivid portrayal of Loch Katrine and its surroundings, he encouraged an unprecedented influx of visitors to the country (Westover 142).

Caroline McCracken-Flesher points out that before the poem was published, the loch (the lake) received an average of approximately fifty to sixty carriages annually (18). Remarkably, within the first half-year following the poem's release, this number increased significantly, reaching 297 carriages. This increased activity had a

consequential impact, leading to an increase in Scotland's post-horse tax, reaching unprecedented levels due to the dramatic surge in traffic (18). Another striking feature is Ellen's Island, which is mentioned in the poem. Due to the large number of tourists interested in visiting Ellen's Island, a hotel was built in Callander, which is situated in Stirling ("General Introduction" 14-15). Queen Victoria's[24] visit in 1869 also contributed to the region, significantly increasing tourism (Özkul et al 10). Falconer goes as far as to claim that the present-day designation of Ellen's Island on all maps directly results from the widespread popularity of Scott's poem (10). Behind all of this was Scott's talent for portrayal. Shortly after the poem's publication, the *Quarterly Review* offered the following commentary on Scott's descriptive skills: "[Scott] sees everything with a painter's eye. Whatever he represents has a character of individuality, and is drawn with an accuracy and minuteness of discrimination which we are not accustomed to expect from verbal description" (qtd. in Hubbard 49). Scott's storytelling skill also opened the door for the poem to serve as inspiration for many works across various artistic domains.

Upon examination of this poem and a broader range of Scott's other works, it becomes evident that the widespread popularity of Scott's writings has significantly influenced many other artists. Catherine Gordon argues that from 1805 to 1870, the themes within Scott's literary works inspired the works of over three hundred painters and sculptors, leading to the display of over a thousand "Scott-inspired" pieces at prestigious venues like the Royal Academy and the British Institution (297). Additionally, he points out that businesses like Minton and Wedgwood led the way in increasing pottery production with Scott themes and profited from the trend. Publishers met the demand by releasing illustrated books, travel guides, and souvenirs (297). Regarding *The Lady of the Lake*, an English dramatist named Edmund John Eyre (1815-1901) adapted the poem for the stage and later staged this adaptation at Edinburgh's renowned Theatre-Royal in February 1811 (Burwick 1338). English playwright Henry Siddons (1774-1815) also adapted the poem for the stage (Slagle *16*). Deutsch's claim that *The Lady of the Lake* has inspired a wealth of operas and lyrical works is supported by the fact that the poem

[24] According to Prince, Queen Victoria would read Sir Walter Scott's works and wanted to visit the locations mentioned in his works. In fact, in 1859, Queen Victoria visited Loch Katrine, and during her visit, she recalled *The Lady of the Lake* as she heard music playing (35-49).

contains a number of songs that Sir Walter Scott placed at strategic points in the plot (331).

Shields states that many of the songs included in Scott's poetry, which cover a wide range from lively war tunes to emotionally moving melodies, simple but expressive lyrics, and great storytelling ballads, constitute some of the most successful portions of his poetry (40). According to Gerald Spink, Sir Walter Scott held an affection for "music that could stir strong emotions and electrify an audience," and he proactively "encouraged the collection of national Scottish songs" (61). In the poem, Scott's belief that music should emotionally engage is embodied in the song "Hymn to the Virgin[25]," which Ellen sings as she invokes the help of the Virgin Mary in the cave. Schubert's correspondences from Linz and Steyr in 1825 refer to the songs from the poem being a topic of discussion in private residences, characterised as contributing to a growing reputation, with particular emphasis on the significance of the song "Hymn to the Virgin" in the poem (Deutsch 331).

This song in the poem greatly influenced the Austrian composer Franz Schubert. He drew inspiration from the German version translated by Adam Storck, titled *Das Fräulein vom See*, to compose his globally renowned masterpiece (Deutsch 333). Schubert's composition has been performed by the internationally renowned vocal artist Luciano Pavarotti. The composition has also been arranged in a number of ways by different artists, including Franz Liszt. Notably, Ferdinand Schubert, Schubert's brother, also orchestrated it with Latin lyrics, a tenor solo, a chorus, and an orchestra for use in churches (334). The renowned Italian opera composer Gioachino Rossini drew inspiration from *The Lady of the Lake* in his composition of the opera *La donna del lago* (1819) (Gomlinson 47). English composer John Clarke-Whitfield also composed songs from various works of Scott, including "The Coronach" in *The Lady of the Lake* (Spink 61).

[25] In original "Hail, Mary!" is the beginning of the Roman Catholic prayer dedicated to the Virgin Mary" (Scott, *The Lady of the Lake* 326n219).

Before delving into the historical context of Scotland during the period depicted in the poem and a comprehensive analysis of its narrative, it would be ideal to provide a summary of the poem after elaborating on the significant impact that it has had in the realms of tourism and art. The poem starts with the captivating scenery of the Trossachs, featuring six cantos, with each canto taking place over a single day.

The poem introduces a stag-hunt scene in its first canto, "The Chase," set amidst the appealing landscape of Trossachs. After one of the hunters' horses dies from exhaustion while leading the chase, the hunter climbs the cliffs surrounding Loch Katrine. He then blows his horn to find his companions. Contrary to his expectations, he encounters a lady rowing a boat in the middle of the lake. Displaying hospitality to the lost hunter, the maiden leads him to her island home. The girl, Ellen, with Dame Margaret, the mistress of the house, graciously hosts the hunter. The hunter, who presents himself as James Fitz-James, is none other than the Scottish monarch, King James V. Although Ellen does not reveal her full lineage, she is the daughter of James of Douglas, a member of the Douglas clan who was once close friends with King James V of Scotland, but was later exiled. This canto is important because it captures the attention immediately with Scott's meticulous depiction of the Scottish landscape. It also serves as an introduction to important characters like Ellen and James Fitz-James (King James V), setting the stage for the subsequent development of each character's personality and relationships throughout the poem.

The political and cultural conflicts between the Lowland and Highland Scots are the central theme of the second canto, "The Island." In this section, as Fitz-James leaves the island by boat, Ellen and the old minstrel Allan Bane engage in conversation. Ellen, momentarily regretting her brief interest in Fitz-James, asks Allan to sing a song praising her lover, Malcolm Graeme. They continue the conversation and discuss the Douglas clan's gratitude to Roderick Dhu, the brave chieftain of the Alpine Clan who has been enduring an extended banishment due to violent actions. Despite Roderick Dhu's desire to marry Ellen, he is not optimistic because she does not reciprocate his feelings. Meanwhile, Roderick Dhu and his group are approaching the island. Ellen heads to the opposite shore to meet Malcolm Graeme and her father when she hears the

sound of her father's horn. Roderick finds out that King James intends to use the same degree of violence that was used against the Border chieftains to deal with the Highland outlaws. Moreover, he discovers that King James knows James of Douglas's whereabouts. Sharing his revelations with Douglas, Sir Roderick urges him to allow his daughter Ellen to marry him, proposing they could resist the King by uniting their forces. Despite the banishment of his clan by the King, Douglas remains firm in his loyalty to the monarch. Knowing that his daughter has no affection for Roderick, he responds negatively. As Roderick gathers Highland warriors for an attack against the King, Douglas, taking his daughter with him, plans to take refuge in a cave during the attack. After being turned down, Roderick fights with Malcolm and leaps into the river to escape the island.

In the third canto, titled "The Gathering," preparations are made for Roderick's uprising against the King. The Fiery Cross, serving as a signal to gather the warriors in the region, is circulated by Roderick's right-hand man, Malise. Upon hearing the war summons, everyone assembles at the designated area. Even Angus, who is in the process of getting married, and Norman, who is in the middle of burying his father, Duncan, respond to the call to arms. Meanwhile, Brian the Hermit uses various magical practices to ensure success in the upcoming battle against the King. On his way to the gathering, Roderick hears Ellen's voice singing an evening hymn to the Virgin as he passes the spot where Ellen and her father retreated. He does not interrupt her prayer but hurries on to the rendezvous. This section is crucial for demonstrating the traditions of Highland clans.

At the beginning of the fourth canto, "The Prophecy," Brian the Hermit engages in various mystical practices. He makes a prophecy about war, stating, "Which spills the foremost foeman's life, / That party conquers in the strife" (IV. 160). In the meantime, Douglas has abandoned Ellen and Allan Bane in the cave. Ellen, deeply saddened by her father's departure, tries to console herself with Allan's singing. Fitz-James, arriving at the cave, expresses his love for Ellen. Ellen admits her love for Malcom, but Fitz-James is so moved by her kindness that he presents her with a ring and promises that whatever she asks the King for will be granted. Later, Fitz-James departs from the cave with the

guide Murdoch. Along their route, they encounter Blanche of Devan, whose husband was killed by Roderick's Clan-Alpine. In her song, grieving for her husband, Blanche seems to warn Fitz-James about Murdoch and the other Highlanders. In response, Fitz-James confronts Murdoch, and during Murdoch's attempt to escape, an arrow he shoots accidentally hits Blanche of Devan. Fitz-James promises to exact revenge on her and ties a lock of her and her fiancé's blood-stained hair to his helmet. Walking alone through the night, he comes across a mountaineer's campfire. The mountaineer offers James refuge until morning, promising to guide him further on his journey.

The fifth canto, "The Combat," is a pivotal canto due to its inclusion of the climax, which signifies the peak of the poem's action. In this section, Fitz-James and the mountaineer advance at night. They engage in a conversation about Roderick Dhu, with Fitz-James describing Roderick as his enemy and revealing his desire for revenge. The mountaineer responds by expressing his displeasure, claiming that the King regularly mistreats Highlanders, which has a negative impact on their wellbeing. Growing increasingly angered during the dialogue, the mountaineer whistles and armed men emerge from all directions. Proudly, the mountaineer declares, "I am Roderick Dhu" (5.207). It turns out that Roderick has become the guide for King James, luring him into his territory and setting up an ambush. Following the rules of war, Roderick faces the King one-on-one in a duel and is badly hurt. Winding his horn, Fitz-James, accompanied by four mounted soldiers, sets out towards Stirling Castle along with the wounded Roderick. In the meantime, having left his daughter and Allan in the cave, Douglas arrives at Stirling Castle and endeavours to bring about peace by protecting Malcolm Graeme and Roderick from harm during the approaching battle. In order to do this, he participates in sports competitions inside the Castle and wins them one by one. Although Douglas personally receives a reward from the King, he remains unrecognised by the King. Provoked, Douglas reveals his identity to the crowd, and delivers a speech about the futility of war. He is later taken into custody, and placed in the Castle's prison. At the end of the canto, a messenger is sent to end the approaching battle between Lieutenant the Earl of Mar and Clan Alpine, as the royal forces have captured both Sir Roderick Dhu and James of Douglas.

In the final canto titled “The Guard-Room,” Ellen and Allan Bane are escorted to Stirling Castle by a soldier. Initially, the soldiers display a harsh attitude towards Ellen, but upon noticing that she carries King James’s ring, their attitude changes, and they lead her to a private chamber. Meanwhile, Allan Bane, who wishes to visit his master, Douglas, is mistakenly taken to Roderick’s cell by the soldiers. Witnessing the severely wounded Roderick in his final moments, Allan empathises with him. To console Roderick, he sings, recounting Roderick’s brave fight against the Earl of Mar. During this time, Ellen, waiting in the room, hears Malcolm’s cries from the cell where he is imprisoned. At that moment, Fitz-James, whom Ellen still does not realise is King James himself, comes to her and informs her that he will take her to the King. Upon entering the room where she is to meet the King, Ellen learns that Fitz-James is, in fact, the King of Scotland himself and that Douglas will be pardoned. Despite Ellen’s plea for Roderick’s release using the ring she possesses, the King informs her that Roderick has died. Later, James summons Malcolm and presents him with a gold necklace removed from his own neck. A clear indication of the overarching message of unity in Scotland that Scott intends to convey in the poem is present at the poem’s conclusion. Ultimately, the King and Douglas reconcile, and Ellen is to marry Malcolm.

The poem’s narrative takes place within the historical context of James V’s reign in the early sixteenth century, characterised by a period of strife between the Highlanders and the monarchy. James, who experienced the loss of his father during infancy at the Battle of Flodden, was raised as the stepchild of Archibald Douglas from Clan Douglas. Following the death of James IV, the Duke of Albany, who assumed temporary kingship, devoted a significant portion of his time to France rather than the kingdom (Fry 128). This prolonged absence led to a power vacuum, which then enabled Archibald Douglas’s attempt to govern the nation without formal authority (Terrell 115). Meanwhile, James V was growing up under Douglas’s extreme pressure. There were several attempts to free James V from Douglas’s grasp, but these were unsuccessful (Mason 98). At the age of sixteen, James V escaped from Douglas and took refuge at Stirling Castle, a castle known for its hostility to the Douglas family (Malden 23). Subsequently, all the assets of the Douglas family passed to the Crown, and the clan was declared an enemy. The fact that the Clan Douglas being banished by

the king in the poem arises directly from Walter Scott's grounding in these historical events. The Douglas depicted in the poem is a fictional uncle of the exiled Archibald Douglas, subject to the same exile and forced to hide on the secluded island in Loch Katrine offered by Roderick Dhu ("Notes" 480).

As James V regained control, he began a campaign of vengeance not only against Archibald Douglas but against the Douglas family. So much so that he developed a deep hatred not only for Archibald but also for Douglas of Kilspendie (the Douglas of the poem), with whom he had previously been on good terms ("Introduction" 19). In short, James became obsessed with the Douglas's (Emond 528). Indeed, as Scott reflects in the poem, when Douglas of Kilspendie returned to Scotland from England after his banishment, he wanted to see the King because of their old friendship. However, he was deeply disappointed that James remained firm in his resentment and did not favour him because of his oath against the clan Douglas ("Introduction" 20). *The Lady of the Lake* also reflects James V's practice of wandering anonymously in the Highlands, a behaviour that is now widely accepted, if not historically accurate (Stevenson 187).

James V had a regular practice of personally examining the condition of his people. Charles Rogers argues that James V often wore a farmer's disguise to blend in with the common people. He pretended to be a tenant farmer from the nearby village of Ballengeich by assuming the identity of the "Gudeman of Ballengeich" (151). By adopting this alias, James hoped to learn more about his people's daily lives than he would have been able to hear from his nobles or clergy[26]. Analysing Rogers's statements reveals that James was concerned about the condition of the Scottish people, and desired their well-being. However, when he assumed control, the country had been governed irregularly for a considerable period, and lawlessness had become prevalent

[26] At this juncture, Stevenson asserts that the primary reason for James's frequent anonymous travels within Scotland was his intention to engage in romantic escapades (187). Fry also argues that James is rumoured to have wooed numerous country girls, apart from anyone else, and to have had a multitude of mistresses among the upper classes, including Margaret Erskine (131). In *The Lady of the Lake*, Scott alludes to the theme of romantic entanglements both within the narrative and explicitly through the following lines: "Fitz-James knew every wily train / A lady's fickle heart to gain" (3.177).

throughout Scotland. In response, James took measures to address the country's internal issues. Initially, in 1528, he signed a five-year truce with England to focus on Scotland's internal affairs. Subsequently, he embarked on a process to control the excesses of clans, particularly those near the English border ("Introduction" 20). John Knox states that during a critical period when the King needed to balance both widespread support and authority, he was "called of some, a good poor man's king; of others he was termed a murderer of the nobility, and one that had decreed their whole destruction" (40). Ian Whyte elaborates:

> In 1597 [James] ordered all chiefs to produce feudal charters for their lands and to be answerable for the behaviour of their inhabitants. He may have hoped to be able to forfeit lands held without written title and plant Lowland colonists on them. Recognising the difficulty of imposing direct central control on the region, James made the clans responsible for policing themselves, getting chiefs and landowners to subscribe to bands in which they agreed to answer for the conduct of their clansmen and tenants. James' response to the problem of control in the Highlands was based on a violent unreasoning hatred for the 'uncivilised' Highlanders. He saw genocide as a prime solution with the extermination of the most lawless elements, the dispossession of chiefs and tacksmen and the plantation of Lowlanders. (102-103)

As can be observed, driven by an intense and irrational contempt for the "uncivilised" Highlanders, James reacted angrily to the issues in the Highlands. This prompted him to consider drastic measures as a remedy. He eliminated the most criminal elements by removing the chiefs and tacksmen and replacing them with the Lowlanders. Nonetheless, in the aftermath of these actions, as Alison Cathcart posits, James effectively established control in the country, ushering in a period of relative peace and stability unprecedented in recent memory (248).

In establishing order within the country, James resolved conflicts between clans and the Crown and addressed conflicts between the Highland and Lowland clans[27]. Although the poem does not explicitly touch on conflicts between Highland and Lowland regions,

[27] It is important to understand that internal conflicts within both the Highland and Lowland clans were common, even though historical narratives frequently highlight conflicts between them in Scotland. For instance, clan disputes between the Lowland clans Hamilton and Douglas are noteworthy. These internal conflicts might have resulted from a number of factors, including territorial disputes, rivalries between individuals, and problems with succession. Thus, conflicts between and within Highland and Lowland clans must be acknowledged in order to have a nuanced understanding of Scottish history (Mason 98).

the characters and actions of Douglas (Clan Douglas is a Lowland Clan) and Roderick (Clan Alpine is a Highland Clan) in the poem reveal differences between Highland and Lowland cultures. It is necessary to examine the Scottish clan system in order to gain an understanding of these distinctions.

The development of the Scottish clan system, lasting until the eighteenth century, was profoundly shaped by Scotland's complex and rugged topography. Durie contends that "plate tectonics and glaciations produced three distinct landscapes: the Highlands and Islands of the north . . . the flat Lowlands, and the undulating Southern Uplands more commonly called the borders are ("Clans" 1). The administrative issues in Edinburgh were a significant barrier to efficiently controlling the entire country, particularly given its geographical diversity. As a result, especially the Highlands became a suitable environment for the emergence of numerous clans or families, which embraced self-rule within a feudal structure (Aslan 71). According to Whyte, these clans were established primarily to protect themselves, as they lacked support from the protective umbrella of the central government (98-99). They were generally subordinate to the King and were microcosms within the larger Scottish context, forming their own administrative structures. Characterised by their close-knit communities, they developed unique social, economic, and political systems, each contributing to the rich tapestry of Scottish history.

The Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland are fundamentally distinguished by both the ancestral origins of their inhabitants and the lifestyle differences shaped by geographical conditions. Historically, the northern and western Highlands were inhabited by communities with roots in the ancient Picts and Gaels, forming Highland clans and a unique way of life characterised by close-knit communities and strong kinship (Morris, "Picts" 191). In contrast, the flatter terrain of the southern Lowlands, influenced by a mix of cultural and ethnic factors, housed a more varied population impacted by historical events like invasions by Germanic tribes and Romans. This diverse demographic composition, unlike the Highlands, did not create a deep-rooted clan system in the Lowlands. Instead, the social structures and governance in the Lowlands

were influenced by a wide range of factors, including feudalism and interactions with neighbouring regions.

Geographically, the challenging terrain of the Highlands, marked by rugged mountains and islands, shaped a lifestyle focused on self-sufficiency and communal support within isolated communities. Conversely, the flatter landscapes of the Lowlands facilitated more extensive agriculture and trade, leading to distinct economic practices and social structures (Durie, "Clans" 9). Besides, the relatively higher accessibility of the Lowlands to the United Kingdom and Europe has resulted in the emergence of divergent development trajectories in these two regions (Aslan 65). James Reed contends that the perception of the Highlanders as wild and the Lowlanders as relatively civilised was initially formulated by the Scottish chronicler John of Fordun (46). In his *Chronicle*, completed in 1380, John of Fordun observes the following:

> The people of the coast are of domestic and civilised habits, trusty, patient and urbane, decent in their attire, affable and peaceful, devout in Divine worship yet always prone to resist a wrong at the hand of their enemies. The highlanders and people of the islands, on the other hand, are a savage and untamed nation, rude and independent, given to rapine, easy-living, of a docile and warm disposition, comely in person but unsightly in dress, hostile to the English people and language and owing to diversity of speech even to their own nation, and exceedingly cruel. (38)

According to James Miller, Fordun's characterisation of Lowlanders as civilised and peaceful while labelling Highlanders as uncivilised and wild was just a bias (177). However, for centuries, prejudice and stereotyping were fuelled by Fordun's descriptions (Laplace 19). These Northern "savages," tightly connected, constituted a "mainly Gaelic-speaking clan society that played a prominent part in the Jacobite risings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (Miller 177). Consequently, after John of Gordon, the Highlanders would be perceived as different and inferior, particularly because of their language, military prowess, and lawfulness (Whyte 94). The following also points out some of the differences between the Highlanders and the Lowlanders:

> The language of the Highlands, the Gaelic, was totally different from that of the Lowlands, which resembled English. The dress of the mountaineers also differed from that of the Lowlanders. They wore a plaid or mantle of frieze, or of a striped stuff called tartan, one end of which, being wrapped around the waist, formed a short petticoat, which descended to the knee, while the rest they folded around

> them like a sort of cloak. Their feet were covered with buskins made of rawhide; and the usual head covering was a cap called a "bonnet." They went always armed. Their weapons were bows and arrows, large swords, poleaxes, and daggers for close fight. For defence they had a round wooden shield, or target, stuck full of nails and their great men had shirts of mail composed of links of iron. The common men sometimes wore a jacket of leather, having plates of metal stitched into it, but usually had no armour. ("Introduction" 13-14)

The paragraph emphasises critical cultural differences between the Lowlanders and the Highlanders, particularly in language, clothing, and weaponry. The language divide is highlighted by the presence of Gaelic in the Highlands and a language similar to English in the Lowlands. The description of the Highland attire, including the distinctive plaid or tartan, provides insight into their clothing traditions, highlighting a clear distinction from the Lowlanders. Furthermore, the Highlanders' use of weapons like bows, arrows, swords, and shields highlights a martial aspect of their culture, distinguishing them from the Lowlanders. Dziennik ascribes the Lowlanders' relative lag behind the Highlanders, particularly in martial ability, to the Lowlanders' intention of cultivating an image of greater peacefulness and civility. Consequently, the Lowlanders intentionally distanced themselves gradually from the martial attributes associated with Scottish national identity, leading to a direct association of the Highlanders with Scottish identity instead of the Lowlanders (118). For instance, although tartans and bagpipes' roots lie in the Highlands, their impact and connection have expanded beyond the Highland area to include the entirety of Scottish identity. Now, the Lowlands would be recognised for commerce and the Highlands for warfare (119). Rather than examining how outsiders perceive the Lowlanders and the Highlanders, Whyte elucidates their attitudes towards one another:

> There was an element of racism in Lowland views of their Highland neighbours; they saw them as alien, describing their language as 'Irish' rather than 'Gaelic.' Highlanders in turn saw Lowlanders as invaders and usurpers who had driven them from the fertile plains, a suitable pretext for raiding and driving off their cattle. Highland society perpetuated kin-based institutions like blood feuds and bonds of manrent, which were fast disappearing from the Lowlands in the early seventeenth century . . . To the Lowlander the Highlander was increasingly a figure of ridicule, tempered with menace. (94-95)

The Lowlanders were perceived as "invaders" by the Highlanders because the Lowlanders were closer to the monarchy. In particular, the settlement of Lowlanders in Highland areas as a strategic initiative contributed to this perception. Similarly, in 1597,

1607 and 1608, various Lowland entrepreneurs attempted to colonise the mountainous terrain of the northern Isle of Lewis (103). The organised displacement of Highlanders from their land started with the Highland Clearances, spanning from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century (Davidson 306). Highland clan traditions were undermined as landowners compelled the Highlanders residing on their lands to relocate, aiming to maximise profits through sheep farming in those regions (Ross 215). In the poem, before Roderick Dhu fights James V and is seriously wounded, he tells the King: "These fertile plains, that soften'd vale, / Were once the birthright of the Gael; / The stranger came with iron hand, / And from our fathers ref the land. / Where dwell we now? See, rudely swell / Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell" (V.203). As seen, Roderick conveys a sincere lament to King James V, recounting the historical displacement of his people. Roderick evokes a past when their lands were vast plains and gentle valleys. In Roderick's words, the "iron-handed" refers to the Scottish monarchy's interventions in the Highlands.

In the poem, although at first glance it seems that the story is primarily about the three suitors fighting for Ellen, Scott's primary goals are to explain the relationship between King James V and exiled James Douglas and to outline the political system of the time through the Roderick-James V dynamic. Scott intends to provide a comprehensive and inclusive portrayal of Scottish society through this structure, encompassing diverse aspects of Scotland's past and reinforcing the sense of national identity. His intention to create a narrative that unites the entire country is demonstrated by the story's singular focus on the Scottish King, James V, which transcends regional differences between the Highlands and Lowlands. In the poem, Scott tries to highlight a sense of unity and a shared historical consciousness within Scotland, much like in *Marmion*, where he attempted to foster a sense of Britishness by uniting the Scots and the English. In doing so, Scott, as is his customary approach, has again adopted a moderate policy, refraining from portraying the Highlanders negatively in the face of the monarchy. According to Burwick, Scott's works, in general, tend to "sympathi[s]e with the unruly desires of the politically and culturally dispossessed," and in *The Lady of the Lake*, he does not portray Roderick and the other Highlanders negatively (1156).

Like his approach in his other narrative poems, Scott's use of medieval romance in *The Lady of the Lake* serves a purpose more than just aesthetic; it is a deliberate part of a larger national plan to strengthen and promote the Scottish identity. He uses medieval romance as a tool to introduce themes that are ingrained in the history and culture of Scotland. By integrating Gaelic customs, clan dynamics, and strikingly depicting the Scottish terrain, Scott aims to cultivate a shared sense of Scottish identity. The romance genre was specifically chosen because of its narrative flexibility, which enabled Scott to combine mythical elements, historical details, and romantic themes to create a work of art that spoke to the many facets of Scottish heritage (Balesi 45). Stewart provides the following analysis of *The Lady of the Lake* in terms of romance:

> As opposed to a realistic novel, romance is a 'fictitious narrative in prose or verse; the interest of which turns upon marvellous and uncommon incidents.' *The Lady of the Lake* fits this, admittedly general, description. The poem begins with a marvellous hunt, where the stag runs all day long and draws the leading huntsman into the mysterious world of the Highlands. After this, nothing actually impossible occurs, but the impression remains that James is moving through a supernatural world in which anything might happen – until he returns to the Lowlands. (5)

Neither in this poem nor in his other literary compositions did Scott try to employ the medieval romance tradition in its entirety. However, by examining Stewart's remarks, it can be asserted that the poem aligns with the characteristics of a romance in multiple aspects. Firstly, the work demonstrates a concentration on extraordinary and uncommon occurrences, evident in the introduction of fantastical elements such as the stag's magical-sounding run, leading to the exploration of the Highlands. This infusion of the supernatural contributes to the romantic ambience of the narrative. Secondly, the poem captures a heightened sense of emotion and adventure, characteristic of the romance genre. The protagonist, James V, embarking on a journey through the mystical Highlands, introduces a quest-like dimension to the narrative. Thirdly, the romantic theme is highlighted by the interplay of historical facts and mythology, blending elements of the past with imaginative narrative.

Goslee expands on this and argues that in the poem, medieval romance is presented through the influence of James V, both a literary character in literature and a real historical king. This approach gives the poem a greater awareness of social and

historical contexts than the typical courtly romances described by Erich Auerbach in *Mimesis* (1946) (69). According to Goslee, while the poem still follows the basic structure of a knight going through trials to prove himself, it also delves into the sociological and economic aspects usually left unexplored in most romances (69). As an obvious example, the poem starts with a scenario that echoes the hunting scenes depicted in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Remy 25):

> The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
> Where danced the moon on Monan's rill
> …….
> For twice that day, from shore to shore,
> The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
> Few were the stragglers, following far,
> That reach'd the lake of Vennachar;
> And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
> The headmost horseman rode alone.
> ……
> Two dogs of black St. Hubert's breed,
> Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
> Fast on his flying traces came. (I.34-39)

Marcelle Thiébaux asserts that hunting, particularly stag hunts, was widely regarded as the most esteemed recreational activity during the Middle Ages. Consequently, stags were frequently depicted as the primary target of pursuit in medieval epics and romances (19). One of the social activities that knights did when they were not fighting was the chase (Remy 25). At the very beginning of the poem, Scott begins with a scene in which a deer drinks from the moonlit Monan stream on an evening when James V and his companions are hunting. The narrative tells of the stag swimming across Lake Vennachar with only a few men in pursuit. The group's two black St Hubert dogs, unique in courage, endurance and quickness, follow the deer's tracks closely. Goslee provides a more comprehensive analysis by highlighting the shared characteristics between the poem and medieval romances:

> Moving just beyond their consciousness of this rather general romance - world is a more specific pattern of allusion to Arthurian romance, particularly Malory. Though the narrator makes this explicit only in calling Ellen *the Lady of the Lake*, he in fact parallels at several points Arthur's first encounter with the Lady of the Lake in the *Le Morte d'Arthur.* A stag hunt as prelude, a magical lake and island

> presided over by a lady, a magic and mysterious sword, and the king's promise of a boon to the lady, all appear in both Malory and Scott. (70)

The poem's title immediately captures attention. According to Nestor, the title serves as a model, creating anticipation for merging medieval and particularly Arthurian romance,[28] involving the disguised King and Ellen Douglas in the first canto (69). According to McIntosh, the portrayal of James V as a heroic figure in the poem invites comparisons to the legendary King Arthur. This association not only underscores the depth of James V's character within the narrative but connects him to the Arthurian archetype, known for his chivalrous deeds and noble leadership (153). The common elements between the two poems are the deer-hunting scene in the first canto, the presence of an enchanted lake and an island ruled by a lady, the presence of a magical and mysterious sword, and the King's promise to bestow a favour on the lady (Goslee 70).

In fact, Sir Walter Scott exhibits "complex and shifting attitude to the romantic imagination" (Davis 439) towards romance. Hence, a comprehensive examination of Scott's utilisation and placement of medieval romance in this poem would result in an inaccurate analysis and represent an erroneous approach. The explanation for this can be found in the fact that Scott has prioritised his subjects and messages over a close examination of his poetic skill and technique in his works. This theme change illustrates how much importance Scott places on the content and significance of his writings as opposed to the finer points of his literary craft.

As for the analysis of *The Lady of the Lake*, examining the prominent characters, namely James Fitz-James (James V), Sir Roderick Dhu, and Douglas, can offer a solid foundation for understanding how Sir Walter Scott explores his national agenda through various aspects in the poem. Scott weaves a compelling story and a critique of historical facts by combining elements like Fitz-James, Roderick, and Malcolm Graeme's romantic involvement with Douglas's persistent attempts to win James V's forgiveness.

[28] Jerome Mitchell points out that, despite Scott definitively stating that the title of the poem is taken from *Le Morte d'Arthur*, the mention of the lady of the lake in the chivalric romance *Palmerin of England* (1807) by the Portuguese writer Francisco de Moraes (c.1500–1572) should not be forgotten (62).

This dual narrative approach adds layers of emotional depth and complexity to the story while reflecting the many diverse aspects of Scottish society. Scott creates a narrative that explores the complexities of human nature and societal dynamics within the historical setting through the characters' romantic relationships and redemption struggles. His portrayal of these characters, with Fitz-James representing calm royalty, Roderick embodying the savage and wild nature of the Highlands, and Douglas symbolising loyalty to the King from the Lowlands, suggests an attempt to show the unity and diversity that should exist in Scotland, while the differences between these characters reflect the multifaceted nature of Scottish society of the time. To Scott, despite the differences in their nature, these people should be recognised as symbolic representations of real people who served Scotland. At this point, Scott will pursue a middle-of-the-road policy in the poem, portraying these different components of Scotland equally and seeking peace between them.

The central role of the King is notable within the narrative, initially surrounded by an air of mystery and intimidation as a royal figure. However, a transformative revelation unmasks James V, portraying him not as an intimidating monarch but as a handsome wanderer who comes to the aid of a maiden. This thematic approach parallels Scott's treatment of the English King Richard II, similarly disclosed as the Black Knight in *Ivanhoe* (1819) (Khan 69). After James separates from the group at the beginning of the poem, he encounters Ellen, and after that, he is described as follows:

> On his bold visage middle age
> Had slightly press'd its signet sage,
> Yet had not quench'd the open truth
> And fiery vehemence of youth;
> Forward and frolic glee was there,
> The will to do, the soul to dare,
> The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
> Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
> His limbs were cast in manly mold,
> For hardy sports or contest bold. (I.53)

At the beginning of the poem, examining the physical characteristics described above about James V, who initially presents himself as a hunter under the name Fitz-James, it becomes evident that this individual is not an ordinary figure. Similar to *Marmion*, it is

apparent in this poem that Scott does not place significant emphasis on identity revelations. Indeed, at a certain point, it becomes clear that Fitz-James is none other than James V himself. While defining James in a confident and dignified manner, Scott also alludes to the wrinkles on James's face due to middle age, signifying the King's wealth of experience. Moreover, in the continuation of these lines, the use of terms like "high-born heart" (I.53) and "martial pride" (I.53) not only serves to accentuate the royal qualities of James V but also reinforces a sentiment of national pride and strength (Remy 36).

Faced with unrequited love for Ellen, James does not deviate from his chivalric heroism. Upon encountering Ellen after getting lost during the hunt, he is so captivated by the lady that he says: "And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace / A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace, / Of finer form, or lovelier face!" (I.50). Similarly, Ellen's beauty seems to affect James even in his dreams on the night she stays as a guest in the house on the island. Just before the war between the forces of the King and Clan-Alpine, James offers to guide Ellen to a safer place, hidden in the cave, expressing his intention to ensure her safety. Despite Ellen politely rejecting his advances when he discloses his intentions, James gives her a ring and says, "Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine; / Each guard and usher knows the sign. / Seek thou the King without delay; / This signet shall secure thy way; / And claim thy suit, whate'er it be, / As ransom of his pledge to me" (IV.178-179).

It might not be expected for a king, even incognito, to respond with such graciousness after being rejected by a lady. Nestor asserts that Ellen's response corresponds with the societal norms of the nineteenth-century context in which the poem was published (69). She decides to be respectable by marrying Malcolm Graeme instead of having an illicit relationship with Fitz-James. Perhaps James V might not have been as tolerant in real life, but Scott portrays James possibly driven by national concerns. James is depicted differently from a hero like Marmion, who takes advantage of women. After giving the ring to Ellen, he will politely kiss her hand, return to Stirling, and await the approaching war.

James is portrayed as a king primarily concerned with the integrity of his country above all else. The dream he has after being captivated by Ellen's beauty is narrated as follows: "The fever of his troubled breast. / In broken dreams the image rose / Of varied perils, pains, and woes: / His steed now flounders in the brake, / Now sinks his barge upon the lake; / Now leader of a broken host, / His standard falls, his honor's lost" (I.66). At this moment, James lies down on a bed of mountain heather. He cannot sleep, though, because he is disturbed. He has terrifying visions and a string of dashed hopes. These visions include his own role as the commander of a defeated and disgraced army, as well as his horse faltering in the wilderness and his barge sinking in a lake. Then, he has another dream in which he meets up with old friends, even the ones who have passed away. This confuses and disturbs him because these friends appear as vividly as if they had never been apart. These dreams reveal James's internal struggle as he struggles to differentiate dreams and reality. As the narrative unfolds, it is seen that the source of this internal conflict stems from the tensions between James's rule and the clans. These tensions pose a threat not only to the Scottish monarchy but, more significantly, result in the loss of human life. This is highlighted by the dream in which James envisions his companions dead.

James's appreciation for his country's people, exemplifying his role as a king who cares deeply about his people, is unmistakable in his conversations with Blanche of Devan during their return to Loch Katrine alongside Murdoch. Blanche suffered a profound mental breakdown after the tragic loss of her husband, who was killed by Clan Alpine on their wedding day. James's discovery of Murdoch's attempted ambush causes chaos, which results in Blanche being severely injured by Murdoch's arrow. Demonstrating remarkable empathy, James tries to console her in her final moments. In a sincere promise, Fitz-James pledges to use the lock of Blanche's hair, a symbol she gives him, as a symbol of his determination to seek retribution against Roderick Dhu, the source of her anguish. As Remy propounds, Blanche is the catalyst for James, as after this vow James decides to kill Roderick (29). This portrayal is in tandem with Walter Scott's national agenda, presenting James as a compassionate and exemplary Scottish king who prioritises the well-being of his people.

However, there is another point to be noted at this point. Right before James's one-on-one combat with Roderick, it is evident that James is not determined to kill him. Scott refrains from depicting King James as vengeful or vindictive, even though he has sworn to avenge Blanche, and regardless of the circumstances, he avoids the portrayal of James killing one of his own people. James now suggests finding an alternative to resolve their feud without resorting to violence:

> To James, at Stirling, let us go,
> When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
> Or if the King shall not agree
> To grant thee grace and favor free,
> I plight mine honor, oath, and word,
> That, to thy native strengths restored,
> With each advantage shalt thou stand,
> That aids thee now to guard thy land. (V.212)

James is offering Roderick, the head of Clan Alpine, a diplomatic solution. He advises travelling to Stirling to speak with the King. James promises favourable circumstances for Roderick to defend his territory and swears to assist him in regaining his natural strengths. This attitude shows that James is open to working with others and finding a peaceful solution. Scott here presents James V as a leader striving to diffuse unnecessary tension and promote harmony with the Highland clan, Clan Alpine. Roderick dismisses the idea, asserting that the fate of his cause depends on the outcome of their battle. He mentions a prophecy stating that the side shedding the enemy's blood first will be victorious. With Roderick's refusal, Scott has succeeded in depicting Roderick as a high-tempered warrior in accordance with the general perception of the Highlanders, adhering to historical accuracy. Simultaneously, by ensuring Roderick's death in combat, Scott portrays James V as a man of his word and a symbol of justice as James fulfils his promise to Blanche (Rubenstein 93).

In the fifth stanza, following his return to Stirling Castle, James directs the news of the capture of the gravely injured Roderick to be reported to the Earl of Mar, the commander overseeing the confrontation against Clan Alpine. He wants Mar to put an end to the fighting. James's expressions clearly show that he is opposed to more bloodshed among his countrymen: "The tidings of their leaders lost / Will soon dissolve

the mountain host, / Nor would we that the vulgar feel, / For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel" (V.237). Scott employs James in the last canto to create a resolution that integrates the themes of love, forgiveness, and the greater good, ultimately achieving his main objective of highlighting Scottish unity. James V's portrayal as an upright monarch becomes more apparent as he extends forgiveness to his long-time friend, Douglas, putting the needs of his people before his own grievances. This act of forgiveness paves the way for a united Scotland, and represents the resolution of past grievances. The story is further complicated by James's unselfish choice to permit Ellen to wed Malcolm Graeme despite his own feelings for her. Scott uses these character interactions to highlight how crucial it is to put the good of the country ahead of one's own interests. Characters such as Roderick, a member of the Highland clan, are not reduced to caricatures, which supports Scott's method of illustrating the complex aspects of Scottish identity and history.

The matter of not caricaturing Roderick is also evident in Scott's portrayal. Scott did not only depict Roderick in a manner that completely diverged from the Highlanders, but he also refrained from reducing his portrayal to biases and stereotypes. Rubenstein argues that after *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Scott progressively moved away from character typification, transforming his characters into more individual and agency-driven figures (86-87). Although Roderick may seem like a stereotypical troublemaker in the poem, Scott does not unfairly characterise him as evil. While Roderick may have killed a knight at Holyrood, Scott allows the Highland events to be narrated from Roderick's perspective: "These fertile plains, that soften'd vale, / Were once the birthright of the Gael; / The stranger came with iron hand, And from our fathers reft the land. / Where dwell we now? See, rudely swell / Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell. / Ask we this savage hill we tread" (V.203). After all, Roderick, raised with the belief that his lands were taken by the King and the Lowlanders, attributing the hardships in their lives to the actions of the King and Lowlanders, grew up by this truth, and became the Clan Chief. Scott's permission for Roderick to express these sentiments can be read by Scott's role as someone who gives voice to the oppressed.

Therefore, Roderick is not an anti-hero. He does not inflict harm on those around him, and despite not receiving reciprocation from Ellen, he is not one to harm her either. His stance at this point mirrors that of King James. Both are individuals who, for the sake of their causes, set aside personal grievances and remain determined to follow their own paths, not pursuing evil. In a similar vein, although Ellen describes Roderick as "wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave" (II.85) on the battlefield, she does not deny depicting his personality as brave and generous. Even though Roderick believes that his marriage to Ellen and the union of the Lowland Clan Douglas with his own clan would further advantage him against James V, he refrains from engaging in malicious actions after James Douglas refuses to give Ellen to him. Despite being hurt by this rejection, he does not seek revenge against either Douglas or Malcom. Roderick inevitably faces challenges after the rejection of his desire to marry Ellen, and he even becomes mentally scattered, mistakenly separating from his soldiers while preparing for the war against the King. However, like James V, his priority remains with his own people (Rubenstein 89). Kelly asserts that in Scott's works, even his "fiercest characters are granted nobility alongside their savagery" (81). Thus, Roderick is not portrayed as excessively savage or lawless.

As understood from the lines "It was but with that dawning morn, / That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn / To drown his love in war's wild roar, / Nor think of Ellen Douglas more" (III.148), Roderick is determined to set aside his love for Ellen and engage in a battle against James V, who poses a threat to his clan. Nestor argues that one reason Ellen chooses Malcolm Graeme over James or Roderick is to divert attention from James, who represents royalty, and Roderick, who represents the Highlanders in the poem, in order to highlight the larger themes of the Scottish nation and the Highlands 72). Therefore, Ellen's preference of Malcolm, whose voice is heard at very few points in the poem, signifies Scott's intention for the messages conveyed in the poem not to be obstructed by the romantic relationships between Ellen and the characters of James V or Roderick Dhu (72).

Also, after ambushing James V, rather than employing cunning strategies or deploying his soldiers to subdue him, Roderick chooses to confront James V in a single combat.

This decision highlights his sense of personal honour. In a fair one-on-one fight with James, Roderick exemplifies nobility and chivalry, surpassing the political and interpersonal issues. Indeed, the fact that the seriously wounded Roderick, confined in Stirling Castle, inquiries about the fate of his loved ones, including Ellen, his clan, mother, and the Douglas family, sheds light on his genuine concern and care for those close to him. This portrayal adds depth to Roderick's character, going beyond the initial depictions of him as a high-tempered and warlike Highlander. Including such details reveals a more compassionate side to Roderick, challenging any simplistic categorisations and presenting him as a character with complex motivations and connections. Therefore, although Scott depicts Roderick as a Highlander, and thus different from the Lowlander Douglas or King James at specific points in the poem, both in his high-temperedness and his warlike disposition, he also presents him as a man of honour, strength, and loyalty to his clan. From Scott's perspective, Roderick, akin to King James, embodies the essence of Scottish values.

In the poem, Scott delineates Douglas, who, much like James V symbolising the Scottish crown and Roderick representing the Highlanders, captures attention through his actions. Douglas is portrayed as robust, intelligent, loyal, and peaceful. As Rubenstein defines, Douglas is a man "of mature wisdom with a strong sense of fidelity to a just cause and unswerving personal loyalties to friends and family" (103). Even though there was a complex relationship between the Lowlands and the Scottish monarchy, this relationship was often more amicable than the often-turbulent interactions with Highland clans. In the poem, it can be argued that Douglas, who was formerly close to King James and is ultimately forgiven by the King in the end, represents the amicable Lowlands through his character.

Despite being an unfavourable noble in the poem, disowned by his noble peers, and having suffered damage to his reputation, Douglas maintains his loyalty to the King. Even though James V has personally disowned him, he does not wish to be involved in the war Roderick Dhu intends to wage against James. Additionally, displaying the role of a good father, he refuses to marry his daughter Ellen against her consent, despite Roderick's proposal:

"Roderick, enough! enough!" he cried,
"My daughter cannot be thy bride;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be—forgive her, Chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear" (II.107)

Douglas exhibits a notable degree of loyalty and chivalry (Remy 37). His denial of Roderick's permission to wed his daughter Ellen emphasises his dedication to her welfare and contentment. The statement, "My daughter cannot be thy bride" (II.107) conveys a paternalistic attitude, suggesting that he places Ellen's emotions above any potential advantages that could result from the possible union between clan Douglas and Clan Alpine (Rubenstein 105). Moreover, Douglas's words, "Douglas never will level a rebellious spear" (II.107) emphasise his firm allegiance to King James. This exemplifies his chivalrous commitment to a code of loyalty and honour, notwithstanding personal adversities.

Regarding Douglas's nonviolent approach, the first example can be found in the scene where Roderick attempts to harm Malcolm Graeme out of jealousy after his proposal to Ellen is rejected. Roderick's hatred of James is coupled with his anger at being unable to marry Ellen. In response to this attitude, as evidenced by his line, "Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar, / It may but thunder, and pass o'er" (II.104), Douglas advises Roderick to abandon the conflict with James, assuring him that despite his intense anger, it is a brief emotion that will pass. Douglas's peaceful stance becomes more inclusive towards the end of the poem. His speech to the folk after winning the competitions at Stirling Castle serves as both an appeal for his own forgiveness by the King and the folk and a call for the Scots to avoid shedding each other's blood:

My life, my honor, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland's laws.
……..
Oh, no! Believe, in yonder tower
It will not soothe my captive hour,
To know those spears our foes should dread,
For me in kindred gore are red;
To know, in fruitless brawl begun
For me, that mother wails her son;

For me, that widow's mate expires. (V.233)

From Douglas's words, he appears to express a deep sense of sacrifice and loyalty to Scotland. He offers his life, honour, and cause freely to Scotland's laws, indicating his commitment to the well-being and interests of his country. His words express his concern about the potential consequences of continued conflict. Douglas is deeply troubled by the idea that spears meant for enemies could be used against his own family, and he does not find comfort in the idea that others might suffer on his behalf. The mention of a mother wailing for her son and a widow losing her mate emphasises the human cost and tragedy associated with the conflicts that arise for his sake. Ultimately, what he says is that he wants to spare his fellow Scots from unnecessary pain and loss and that he is advocating for a cause bigger than himself. Douglas therefore, operates in a somewhat civil diplomatic capacity (Beshero-Bondar 89). In fact, it is observed in this scene that the crowd responds quite sympathetically to Douglas after his words. The fact that the crowd shows sympathy for Douglas can be interpreted as a reflection of Scott's portrayal of the Scottish as people who want peace and unity. This seems to be in harmony with Scott's theme, which emphasises the value of maintaining national harmony and resolving internal disputes within Scotland.

Scott does not downgrade Douglas's military and bravery abilities to those of Roderick or James V. According to Lumsden and McIntosh, Douglas's successive victories in tournaments at Stirling Castle could almost be seen as a threat to the power of King James (45). Until the end of the poem, Douglas, who refrains from intervening in the war and even abstains from any physical violence, participating suddenly in the tournament at Stirling Castle challenges the potential perception of "cowardly Douglas," which could be attributed to his decision not to engage in the conflict and hide in a cave with his daughter. Indeed, Douglas's desire to seek shelter during the battle does not indicate cowardice but stems from his loyalty to the King. In spite of his old age, Douglas, believing that he will demonstrate his strength to the King, takes part in the archery competition, where he "bent a bow of might, - / His first shaft centred in the white, / And when in turn he shot again, / His second split the first in twain" (V.226). Douglas wins by demonstrating his strength and wrestling ability, and the King rewards him with a golden ring. Consequently, these features of Douglas reflect Scott's

attempt to depict a diverse spectrum of Scottish society, emphasising the importance of each group, whether Lowlanders or Highlanders, to the overall Scottish identity. Scott intends to convey that these diverse elements are integral to the broader Scottish cultural and national identity. In reality, Scott's notion that the various distinct elements constituting the essence of Scotland should amalgamate might not be entirely implausible. Benedict Anderson posits that societies are "imagined" entities, as they comprise individuals who, despite being connected through shared language and rituals, are unfamiliar with each other and ignorant of each other's lives and perspectives (6). The extent to which Scott truly believed in the realisation of the internal unity he aimed for Scottish society to achieve at this point can be debatable. However, it is clear that his efforts were motivated by noble intentions to promote such unity.

In the exploration of national identity, Sir Walter Scott's poetry, in general, stands out for its striking emphasis on the natural splendours of Scotland, vividly portrayed through his detailed descriptions. According to Oliver, Scott goes beyond being a mere "writer about social history," evolving into a storyteller of the environment itself ("Trees, Rivers, and Stories" 280). According to John Hayden, the vivid and picturesque quality of Scott's expressions is so lively that any other form of versification would diminish their impact (53). In the context of this poem, the narrative takes place in the wild and picturesque terrain of the Highlands of Western Perthshire, a region north and east of Loch Lomond that Scott deeply cherishes for its wild beauty (Shields 62). The mountains surrounding Loch Katrine and the natural sounds surrounding them create an evocative auditory atmosphere throughout the poem (McCue 44). Scott's descriptions serve as a notable feature of the work as it paints a captivating representation of Scotland, emphasising its scenic beauty and promoting the nation in an enchanting manner. In fact, this poem stands out with Scott's description of the natural beauties of Scotland before any message it contains. The fact that Scott wrote this poem as a medieval romance adds even more attraction to these descriptions, as it does to all of his other narrative poems.

Scott's meticulous portrayal of the Highlands and, in general, the Scottish landscape strengthens the characters' connection to their cultural heritage, intensifying their sense

of Scottishness. Scott's depiction of Scotland's natural beauty serves a larger purpose, fostering a profound sense of national identity and pride. These landscapes, woven into the broader fabric of Scottish culture, emphasises the influential role of the country's topography in shaping its people and forging a collective identity. In the article "Whig Tartan" (2012), Dziennik references Charles Withers, who posits that the Highlands acquired national associations because, as a geo-historical location, the region was essentially formulated in the perceptions and imaginations of those external to it (119). Looking at Withers' claim, it can be argued that the vibrant and picturesque Scottish landscapes portrayed in the works of various authors, including Sir Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, Robert Burns, and Hugh MacDiarmid, have, at a particular juncture, transcended the boundaries of reality, assuming an almost utopian perception of the country.

In *The Lady of the Lake*, Sir Walter Scott intertwines nature descriptions into the narrative, establishing a connection between the story and the natural setting. He paints a vivid picture of the beautiful Scottish landscape, referring to Scotland as Caledon, the ancient name for Scotland, saying, "in ancient days of Caledon" (I.32). By using the term "Caledon," Scott implies that the narrative and depictions of nature will take place within the historical context of ancient Scotland, creating a fairy-tale-like atmosphere. Scott here appears to be attempting to increase interest in the subsequent nature descriptions by using this enchanting narrative tone. Therefore, the hunting scene at the beginning proves to be a highly efficient means for Scott to express the splendour of the Scottish landscape. Instead of functioning as a passive background, nature engages in evolving the narrative, actively contributing to the unfolding of the story (Reed 16). The poem goes:

> The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
> Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
> And deep his midnight lair had made
> In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
> ……
> With anxious eye he wander'd o'er
> Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
> And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
> By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
> But nearer was the copsewood gray,

That waved and wept on Loch Achray,
And mingled with the pine trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Benvenue. (I.34-37)

The portrayal of the deer near Monan's rill, beneath the moon's dance, establishes a tranquil setting. Specific locations like "Monan's rill" and "Glenartney hazel shade" evoke an authentic sense of place. Scott blends nature with the stag's movements, depicting its midnight lair in Glenartney's hazel shade, reflecting its wild nature. The stanza details the stag's journey, highlighting the copsewood near Loch Achray, pine trees on Benvenue's cliffs, and refuges like Lochard and Aberfoyle. According to Murray Pittock, the deer is like a "picturesque tourist" and is not only an innocent animal but somewhat similar to a traveller discovering the scenic wonders of the Scottish wilderness (193). This notion extends beyond simple landscape appreciation; the deer metaphorically guides the reader on an immersive journey through nature. As the narrative occurs, the hunters chasing the stag further enhance the natural setting. Therefore, nature becomes a place that "reproduc[es] an organic and vital context for human activity" (Reed 16).

Regarding Scott's descriptive talent in the poem, perhaps the distinctive scene where he depicts Loch Katrine and its surrounding scenery stands out. Right at the beginning of the third canto, where Roderick Dhu initiates preparations for the battle against James V, a serene landscape in the Scottish Highlands at the break of summer dawn is reflected: "The summer dawn's reflected hue / To purple changed Loch Katrine blue; / Mildly and soft the western breeze / Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees; / And the pleased lake, like maiden coy" (III.116). The description of the scenery continues:

The water lily to the light
Her chalice rear'd of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemm'd with dewdrops, led her fawn
The gray mist left the mountain side,
The torrent show'd its glistening pride;
Invisible in flecked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer coo'd the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love. (III.117)

This scene is important because it accurately shows the calm and beautiful Scottish countryside, capturing the essence of a romantic and stunning place. Scott's skill at description is on full display in these lines, as he vividly describes Loch Katrine at dawn. The lake turns a mesmerising purple-blue in the morning light, and a light western breeze rustles the trees and "kisses" the water. The water lily raising its silver chalice, the doe guiding her fawn to the lawn covered in dewdrops, and the mist revealing the mountainside are just a few examples of how Scott incorporates the natural elements. The scene comes to life with the melodies of the thrush, blackbird, and lark, as well as the soft cooing of the cushat dove. Scott's concise yet vivid descriptions bring the beauty of Scotland's countryside to life. In summary, one of the descriptions that turned Loch Katrine into a tourist destination after the publication of this poem is encapsulated in these lines by Scott.

In the poem, alongside descriptions that directly evoke a positive atmosphere and paint an almost utopian picture, there are also narratives of the "picturesque" that Uvedale Price investigated. The picturesque, as studied by Price in his *Essays* (1810), with its emphasis on ruggedness and unpredictability, provides an excellent framework for comprehending the rich natural depictions within the poem (223). According to Hubbard, picturesque elements, according to Price's definition, would include "rugged mountains, waterfalls, [and] ruins" (54). The terms "ruggedness" and "unpredictability" in Price's definition indeed fit in with the Scottish landscape and Scott's descriptions in the poem. Ruggedness, which delineates the craggy, irregular, and stern qualities of a landscape or terrain, is seen in the following lines:

> Twas all so close with copsewood bound,
> Nor track nor pathway might declare
> That human foot frequented there,
> Until the mountain maiden show'd
> A clambering unsuspected road
> That winded through the tangled screen,
> And open'd on a narrow green,
> Where weeping birch and willow round
> With their long fibers swept the ground.
> Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
> Some chief had framed a rustic bower. (I.57)

The rough and wild nature of the Scottish landscape is captured in these lines. Copsewood densely surrounds Loch Katrine's shoreline, creating a secluded and private setting. The lack of clear trails or paths highlights the wild terrain, highlighting the untamed beauty of the Scottish landscape. Fitz-James is led by Ellen to a complex and secret path that is referred to as a "clambering unsuspected road," which emphasises the harshness of the area. Weeping birch and willow trees with long, sweeping fibres surround the site and lead into a narrow green space, making the wild and untamed look of the area more apparent. The allusion to a chief's "rustic bower," constructed as a refuge in dangerous times, emphasises how harsh the Scottish landscape is by nature.

The rugged beauty of Scotland's Highlands is also revealed inside the cave where Ellen and Douglas seek shelter:

> It was a wild and strange retreat,
> As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
> The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
> Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast
> ……
> The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
> At noontide there a twilight made,
> Unless when short and sudden shone
> Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
> ……....
> Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
> Seem'd nodding o'er the cavern gray. (III.145-146)

Images of untamed wilderness are evoked by the description of the retreat as a "wild and strange" location favoured by outlaws. The dell, which resembles a gash on a warrior's breast, alludes to a harsh and challenging terrain, emphasising the rugged nature of the Scottish Highlands. Scott's use of the names of trees like "oak" and "birch" to create shade paints a picture of a dense and diverse forest that adds to the rugged ambience. The light gives the landscape a dynamic quality, emphasising its rough and uneven features. The mention of suspended cliffs nodding over the cavern adds to the sense of impending danger and emphasises the ruggedness of the surroundings. In addition to evoking a fantastical atmosphere in the poem, Scott's depiction of this "goblin-cave" (III.127) accurately captures Scotland's rugged and challenging landscapes.

The “ruggedness” (223) Uvedale Price described in his definition of the “picturesque” is seen to work in tandem with the “unpredictability” Scott emphasised in this poem. The natural descriptions that come before the mountaineer (Roderick Dhu) ambushes Fitz-James and gradually leads him into his own territory in the mountains are especially noteworthy:

> At length they came where, stern and steep,
> The hill sinks down upon the deep.
> ……..
> “And oft both path and hill were torn,
> Where wintry torrent down had borne,
> And heap’d upon the cumber’d land
> Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
> So toilsome was the road to trace. (V.198-199)

The lines preceding Roderick Dhu’s ambush of Fitz-James vividly depict the rugged and unpredictable nature of the Scottish landscape. It can be suggested that the descent of Roderick and Fitz-James from the top of the hill suggests an element of unpredictability. Phrases such as “wild retreat” and “gash on a warrior’s breast” emphasise the harsh and formidable characteristics of the environment, capturing the essence of picturesque ruggedness. The element of unpredictability surfaces as Fitz-James is led into the seemingly tranquil mountains, hiding unforeseen dangers. It is this unpredictability that sets the stage for Roderick’s ambush, highlighting how the landscape’s mountainous nature plays a pivotal role, especially for Fitz-James, leading to the dramatic turn of events.

In addition to the landscape in the poem, Scott emphasises the Scottish landscape and the traditions and customs as well. The first of these is the minstrelsy and harp tradition, which Scott draws attention to by declaring, “Harp of the North!” (I.32) in the very first line. By saying this, Scott performs a sort of invocation to minstrels, akin to the invocation to the muse often seen in epic poems. In this invocation, he captures the spirit of the traditional Scottish minstrels, whose tunes were complemented by harp. Julia Bacskai-Atkari contends that through the use of the ancient harp, the narrator also adopts the identity of a similarly ancient poet, prepared to recite the remaining portion of the poem (327). In ancient Scotland, the harp was not just a musical instrument but a

national emblem of their Gaelic origins. It added beautiful music to celebrations and gatherings, becoming an essential part of Scottish culture (326).

Scott directly addresses the function of the harp in ancient Scotland as follows: “Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon, / Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd, / When lay of hopeless love, or glory won, / Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud. / … / Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed; / For still the burden of thy minstrelsy / Was Knighthood’s dauntless deed, and Beauty’s matchless eye” (I.32-33). In these lines, Scott narrates how the harp, extensively utilised in the past, effectively conveyed the impact of its melodies on listeners, whether portraying stories of unrequited love or triumph. According to Scott, both noblewomen and chiefs were captivated by the music of the harp, and minstrels emphasised the values of knighthood and the allure of women. Consequently, the harp, in Scott’s view, plays a powerful role as a storyteller in the cultural and historical context of ancient Scotland.

The embodiment of minstrelsy in the narrative and its personified form is consistently represented by Allan Bane, who remains by Ellen’s side throughout the poem. Allan Bane is a constant presence beside Ellen from the beginning to the end of the poem, never excluded, even in the most critical moments of the narrative. Bane is fulfilling the minstrels’ task of bringing joy to people at different points in the poem. One such example occurs in the second Canto when Fitz-James departs from Ellen and Allan Bane. Ellen, who has affection for Malcolm Graeme and is affected by Fitz-James, requests Allan to sing, believing that recalling Graeme will restore her joy. A similar situation unfolds in the cave. When Douglas abruptly leaves the cave without explanation, Ellen becomes increasingly frightened and anxious for her father. Right at this moment, although Allan does not sing, he intervenes again by making a speech to comfort Ellen. One of Allan’s most notable actions in the poem is prompted by the severely wounded Roderick, who requests a song with the words, “Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play, / With measure bold, on festal day, / . . . / Strike it! —and then, (for well thou canst,) / Free from thy minstrel spirit glanced, / Fling me the picture of the fight, / When met my clan the Saxon might” (VI.257-258). In response to this plea, Allan sings the song “Battle of Beal’ an Duine” (VI.259), describing how Clan Alpine

bravely fought against King James V's forces, attempting to soothe Roderick in his final moments. This highlights the profound impact of music and verse, portraying minstrels as entertainers and carriers of emotional weight.

In the song Allan Bane sings for Roderick, a characteristic that medieval minstrels possessed indirectly: a historical memory. Although medieval minstrels did not have the explicit task of directly conveying history, their creativity was based on constructing narratives around historical stories, thereby engaging in knowledge transmission. Accordingly, McLane suggests that in Scott's works, minstrels embody roles that extend beyond mere performance; they are, at different points, "ancient oral poets," seventeenth-century professionals, and still-living relics (434). McLane's proposition implies that Scott's minstrels, in certain instances, go beyond the role of entertainers. They adopt the persona of "ancient oral poets," akin to the poets of old who used oral storytelling to impart cultural history and stories. As "still-living relics," these minstrels become cultural and historical ambassadors through their songs and oral traditions (434). Therefore, the song Allan Bane sings for Roderick, recounting the battle between Clan Alpine and King James's forces, becomes a form of historical information transmission. In the future, Bane might recount this song to another gathering, and through the art of storytelling, he will, in a sense, engage in a transfer of memory.

The accuracy of Bane's story he tells to Roderick may be questioned, given that minstrels, whose primary objective is to entertain, could embellish events to enhance the beauty of their tales. Additionally, Bane resorts to exaggerations to comfort Roderick. Nevertheless, his storytelling will contribute to the collective memory. In this context, Bane's description of Clan Alpine's battle formation with lines such as "Their light arm'd archers far and near / Survey'd the tangled ground; / Their center ranks, with pike and spear, / A twilight forest frown'd; / Their barbed horsemen, in the rear, / The stern battalia crown'd. / No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang, / Still were the pipe and drum" (VI.260) may not contain entirely accurate details. However, it is crucial to provide a general idea and contribute to the overall historical information.

In this poem where Scott highlights the essence of Scotland, it is only natural that details from the traditions of medieval Scotland would not be overlooked; in this context, the objects most prominently brought to the forefront in the poem are Scottish clan tartans (kilts) and the Fiery Cross. Such symbols and traditions are important indicators of a country's nationality (Smith, *National Identity* 38). Scott depicts Scottish life through these symbols, allowing these customs to be experienced. The fiery cross and kilt are essential elements integrated into the narrative. Together, they make a literary tapestry that shows the pride and spirit of Scottish heritage. The poem also mentions dirks, pipes, broadswords, and a traditional Highland dance called Strathspey, important elements defining Scotland (Strachan 327; Feys 357). However, the kilt and the fiery cross emerge most prominently.

According to Margot Rashba, when people think of Scotland, the mental imagery is often centred around two main elements: tartan, a traditional woven fabric with specific patterns, and the kilted warrior, a figure wearing a traditional Scottish kilt associated with strength and bravery (1). With its complex designs and vibrant colours, tartan[29] in Scotland was not a simple decorative element but a representation of Scottish identity, displaying the multitude of clans and their histories (5). Along with the kilt, the clothes and armour worn by characters in Scott's works are the most crucial elements that stimulate imagination. Tuckett further explains tartan, a finely woven woollen material traditionally worn in the Scottish Highlands and provided strong shielding and warmth to those who wore it. It was frequently used as bedding and clothing, as well as a protective layer for animals (184). Highlanders found the practicality of the kilt, with its seamless and unconstructed design, well-suited to their subsistence lifestyle (Loranger and Sanders 243).

Initially, the kilt emerged as a symbol of Scottish distinctiveness, countering fears of cultural assimilation into England. By the 1760s, the kilt had become a powerful symbol

[29] Although the origin of tartan is unknown, Sally Tuckett explains that modern Scottish kilts were believed to have been invented in the eighteenth century by an English industrialist Thomas Rawlinson, whose goal was to make clothing more practical for workers (183). The modern kilt is different from the traditional kilt.

of martial virtue, symbolising a mutually beneficial relationship with the British[30] state, aligning regional actors with trade and imperial expansion (Dziennik 119). The kilt visually represented hierarchy and social order within Highland regiments, offering wearers access to different masculinities. Highland elites strategically used Highland dress imagery to advance personal interests and assert the region's inclusion in the British nation (Dziennik 120). With its military connotations, the kilt played a crucial role in defining the Highlands as a military region, allowing elites to gain political capital and support British expansion (121). The aesthetics of Highland dress, especially the kilt, were not just a reflection of tradition but a vital element in projecting power, instilling pride, courage, and discipline among soldiers (Loranger and Sanders 249)

In the lines below, Scott mentions tartan as well as the traditional Scottish music, pibroch:

> Nearer and nearer as they bear,
> Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
> Now might you see the tartans brave,
> And plaids and plumage dance and wave:
> Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
> …….
> Ever, as on they bore, more loud
> And louder rung the pibroch proud.
> At first the sound, by distance tame,
> ……..
> Then, bursting bolder on the ear,
> The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear. (II.88-89)

The scene describes Sir Roderick and his men from Glengyle approaching Ellen's Island. The scene is filled with traditional Scottish details, such as the proud exhibition of kilts, plaids, and bonnets, symbols of clan identities. A martial element is added by mentioning spears, pikes, and axes, emphasising the preparation for combat. The scene is given life and cultural vibrancy by the dynamic description of plaids and plumage waving and dancing. The sound of the pibroch, a traditional Highlands musical form

[30] Sir Walter Scott played a significant role in organising and orchestrating George IV's visit to Edinburgh in 1822, a pivotal moment for tartan in the early nineteenth century. During this period, tartan transformed into the attire of the regimental Highlander, symbolising loyalty to Britain in the fight against Napoleon. The organisation aimed to strengthen Scottish loyalty by connecting the Stuart line to the Hanoverian dynasty through tartan and its symbolism (Rashba 18).

performed on the bagpipes, adds a captivating soundscape (McCellan ii). Initially described as sounding "by distance tame" (II.89), bagpipes introduce the Highlanders' approach, indicating a strategic communication method for a controlled advance. As the lines progress, the bagpipes intensify, "bursting bolder on the ear" (II.89), assuming a more dominant role and signalling a change in mood. In short, Scott here not only vividly depicts the visual richness and cultural symbolism encapsulated in tartan but also honours pibroch, a quintessential element of Scottish music.

In the poem, Scott also mentions the belted plaid, a garment distinct from the kilt; it is wrapped across the shoulder and possesses a more clothing-like quality despite being made from tartan fabric like the kilt. In the seventeenth century, this significant attire emerged, characterised by a large rectangular cloth. It featured a unique style involving a skirt beneath the belt and securing the surplus fabric over one shoulder. This adaptable and effortlessly worn garment proved well-suited for outdoor activities, serving dual purposes as clothing and a blanket (Rashba 6-7). Dziennik contends that belted plaids, integrated into military uniforms, carried considerable symbolic weight. They instilled pride, courage, self-esteem, and discipline among soldiers (130). In the poem, the belted plaid is worn by the young Highland chief Malcolm Graeme, who generally remains absent[31]. Malcolm, described as "of stature tall, and slender frame" (2.98), wears "the belted plaid and tartan hose" (II.98), which covers his muscular physique.

Scott explicitly highlights the significance of the Fiery Cross tradition in his narrative, using it as a cultural touchstone that highlights the scope of the Scottish heritage historically and acts as a thematic base, giving the larger story more depth and resonance. To the extent that the narrative details the Fiery Cross almost the entire third Canto, along with the summoning of clan members to engage in the war against James V. Antonia Spencer explains that the Fiery Cross served as a means to assemble clans during periods of urgency or military readiness (163). Once utilised as a rallying signal

[31] Scott explained why Malcolm Graeme remained so distant from the narrative although the trio of James V, Roderick Dhu, and Malcolm Graeme being involved in one of the main stories narrated, which revolves around the effort to win the love of Ellen: "… the canvas was not broad enough to include him considering I had to groupe the King, Roderick, and Douglas" (qtd. in Millgate 28).

in the Highlands, the Fiery Cross[32] has evolved into a crucial ritual associated with Scotland (Healey 293). In adherence to this custom, if a chieftain desired an abrupt gathering of his clan, he dispatched a rapid and reliable messenger carrying a distinctive symbol known as the Fiery Cross. This symbol comprised a crude wooden cross, with its ends dipped in the blood of a goat. All eligible clan members who witnessed this symbol were compelled to promptly appear armed at the specified meeting point (Scott, *The Lady of the Lake* 322n166). Scott, while elaborating on this tradition in the poem, first describes the staining of the cross with goat's blood with the lines, "Twas all prepared-and from the rock, / A goat, the patriarch of the flock, / Before the kindling pile was laid, / And pierced by Roderick's ready blade" (III.124) and continues:

> The monk resumed his mutter'd spell:
> Dismal and low its accents came,
> The while he scathed the Cross with flame;
> …….
> From Brian's hand the symbol took:
> "Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
> The crosslet to his henchman brave.
> "The muster-place be Lanrick mead
> Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!" (126-129)

In this scene, Brian the hermit initiates the ritual by preparing the cross, followed by burning it. His mystical incantations highlight the gravity of the ritual (Spencer 163). The narrative gains momentum as Roderick's henchman, Malise, takes on the fiery cross, marking a symbolic shift in responsibility. The urgency reaches its peak when Brian urges Malise to carry the cross to Lanrick mead swiftly, the clan's gathering point, highlighting the imminent and critical nature of the coming war (III.129). Roderick's war summons through the Fiery Cross hold such significance that, upon receiving it, everyone converges at Lanrick mead. This assembly includes Angus, in the middle of his wedding, and Norman, amidst burying his father, Duncan, both promptly responding to the call to arms (III.134). In the following lines and for the majority of the third canto, it is observed that Scott carefully describes this traditional practice associated with the Highland culture.

[32] The tradition of cross burning in the Ku Klux Klan originated from the Fiery Cross tradition in Scotland, though in Scotland, this tradition did not carry a racist connotation (Healey 293).

At this juncture, Gamer introduces a different interpretation, asserting that Scott's depiction of the Fiery Cross not only revives Scottish culture but, considering the political climate of the period when Scott wrote the poem, it also serves as both a tribute to British preparedness against French invasion and a celebration honouring the chivalry and military prowess of ancient Scotland (531). Although Scott does not emphasise Britishness in this poem as he does in *Marmion* and leans more towards Scottishness; according to Gamer, the Fiery Cross scene, particularly, goes beyond being a manifestation of Scott's patriotism. Written during a decade when the Scots were troubled by invasion fears, in Gamer's view, this poem also catered to the English readership whose wartime anxieties because of Napoleon fuelled a strong appetite for narratives infused with patriotism and romance (532).

Spencer also provides an illuminating commentary on the Fiery Cross. He suggests that the Scottish fiery cross tradition leans more towards a pagan ritual than a Christian one (163). Rubenstein concurs with Spencer and characterises the cross as a "symbol of sepulchral yew (113), connecting it to themes of death and possible pagan elements. Rubenstein contends that the use of the Fiery Cross, associated with violence and blood-lust, distorts the Christian ideals of peace, compassion, and renewed life. This highlights its foreboding and pagan-esque essence in contrast to Christian symbolism (113). Scott depicts Brian as the instigator of these pagan elements, subsequently exploring his past. Born in a mysterious valley surrounded by ancient bones, Brian has turned to mystical practices throughout his life, witnessing numerous prophetic visions. In fact, Scott contributes to the enchanting supernatural atmosphere of the poem by delving into these details. The supernatural plays a crucial role as it lends depth to Scott's portrayal of the Scottish cultural elements in the poem, much like in his other works. It enhances the readability and allure of these elements, making the poem more engaging and resonant with Scottish cultural traits.

Furthermore, in *The Lady of the Lake*, Scott enhances the portrayal of Scottish values by employing a captivating supernatural ambience within his poem. The supernatural elements in the poem intertwine with the Scottish landscape. The poem contains numerous vivid descriptions of the Scottish landscape throughout significant sections.

Thus, this infusion of the supernatural serves to elevate the poem's allure, "invit[ing] readers to experience a piece of living history through a place, [and] … connect[ing] the time with a location of magic and wonder" (Khan 69). Nestor argues that the poem utilises elements of fantasy, the supernatural, and the unconventional to emphasise that the poem's depiction of the Highlands is not a direct reflection of reality but rather a fictionalised portrayal within the realm of national culture and identity (64). As Scott did in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*, this poem also incorporates supernatural imagery into its narrative (Shepherd 83). With this imagery, McIntosh argues, the supernatural also "operates as a geographical variant of Scott's engagement with the historical process, by means of which he juxtaposes two competing discourses of political and ideological reality: Lowland versus Highland cultural identity" (152). She further argues that the supernatural helps Scott navigate the complex cultural shifts and the prevailing uncertainty regarding the concept of national identity in Scotland after the Flodden battle, the period within which the poem is situated (152).

In fact, within the poem, there is a subtlety in the portrayal of the supernatural. Unlike the explicit depictions of otherworldly encounters or magic typically evident in medieval romances, such elements are not overtly illustrated. In the poem, for instance, during the scene where Brian the Hermit sets fire to the Fiery Cross, there is no direct mention of him performing magical actions. However, the narrative technique, characterised by its mysterious and enigmatic style in this scene as well, subtly implies mystical undertones. Consequently, the supernatural elements within the poem, as Khan also suggests, emerge more from the infusion of mystic and supernatural attributes into the descriptions rather than explicit occurrences (69). This treatment creates an atmosphere that evokes a sense of the inherently supernatural.

There are numerous supernatural references in *The Lady of the Lake*. However, the majority of these allusions are found in the first canto, where Scott's first prayer to the Harp of the North ends with a passionate cry (Nestor 66): "Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway, / The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain. / Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!" (I.33-34). After Scott's invocation to the "Enchantress," the atmosphere created by the supernatural is first observed in the stag hunt scene and the

descriptions of Ellen's Island. As Stewart points out, the poem starts with a stag hunt scene that almost conjures a magical atmosphere. Fitz-James is in pursuit through the mysterious and rugged landscape of the Highlands, and although there is not an overtly impossible event in the poem afterwards, the potential for a mysterious occurrence remains until the poem's end (5). Then, after losing his way and encountering Ellen's Island after passing Loch Katrine, it is seen that "the island setting of the opening stanza becomes itself part of the machinery of the supernatural" (McIntosh 152).

In Fitz-James's eyes, the island is described somewhat like a "fairy dream" (I.44). It is depicted as follows: "The rocky summits, split and rent, / Formed turrets, dome, or battlement, / Or seemed fantastically set / With cupola or minaret, / Wild crests as pagod ever decked, / Or mosque of Eastern architect" (I.43). McIntosh contends that the language evokes an otherworldly narrative within these lines, transporting readers to a mystical realm beyond the ordinary (152). Scott further intensifies this sense of mystery by drawing parallels between its splendour and ancient marvels such as the pyramids, the Tower of Babel, and Eastern architecture (I.11) (152). This mystical island, as seen in the lines "And mountains, that like giants stand, / To sentinel enchanted land" (I.48), is described as if protected by the mountains. From this point on, Fitz-James appears to enter an abstract world. It is evident in his exclamation upon meeting Ellen Douglas, as he declares having discovered "a fay in fairy land!" (I.55) and names her rowboat a "fairy frigate" (I.56). According to Goslee, Ellen's mention of Allan Bane foreseeing the arrival of a "guest of fair degree" (I.56) and her subsequent invitation of Fitz-James to the "enchanted hall" (I.59) signify an embrace of the roles often observed in romance (69).

McIntosh also argues that the island is the quintessential symbol of a society lost or detached from ordinary existence (154). Scott's linguistic portrayal of Loch Katrine and the island, with their supernatural elements, captures the essence of the Highlands as a unique ideological terrain, which implies that the Highlanders navigate a distinct cultural, political, and legal reality compared to the rest of Scotland (154). Therefore, according to McIntosh, Scott did not aim solely to portray the Scottish landscape enchantingly by strengthening the supernatural elements. He also touched upon the

historical reality of the Highland-Lowland divide. From this standpoint, it is essential to note that Scott, while portraying the Highlands - Lowlands difference, also creates a specific supernatural image for Roderick Dhu.

Scott portrays Douglas and Fitz-James, representing the Lowlands, as characters who behave more calmly and rationally within the poem, while Roderick, although not an anti-hero per se, is depicted with rougher, almost anti-heroic, impulsive actions. Ultimately, while Scott depicts these clans and the King of Scotland as significant parts of Scotland, he had to distinguish them from each other at some point. As Northrop Frye mentions in *The Mythos of Summer* (1957), there are differences between protagonists and antagonists in romances; while "the enemy is associated with winter, darkness, confusion, sterility, moribund life, and old age, and the hero with spring, dawn, order, fertility, vigour, and youth" (244). Indeed, Frye's assertion regarding the presence of antagonists in romances exhibiting the traits above cannot be directly applied to Roderick. Moreover, Roderick does not qualify as an anti-hero, for if he "is anarchical he is also regal. Furthermore, if he is vindictive he is also generous, if he is jealous he is also faithful, if he is unmerciful he is also liberal, and if he is murderous he is also undeniably brave" (McIntosh 155-156). Furthermore, Scott did not directly utilise medieval romances in their entirety but altered them from various perspectives. However, in the poem, his depiction of Roderick Dhu at certain points aligns with Frye's notions of "darkness," "confusion," and "moribund life" (Frye 244), distinctly creating a mystical and supernatural atmosphere.

First of all, Roderick's full name, "Roderick Dhu," refers to Roderick being a gloomy and distempered nature as "Dhu" in Scottish Gaelic means "Black" (Shields 64). Roderick, "whose fierce, compulsive belligerence dominates the poem" (Pikoulis 748), embodies intense and untamed feelings, like the wild power of nature. His strong emotions seem darker despite his good qualities, as seen in the lines "wildly while his virtues gleam, / They make his passions darker seem" (II.85). Upon James declaring his intent to kill him, there is a visible manifestation of "dark lightning" flashing from his eyes. Upon Douglas's refusal to marry his daughter with him, Roderick's wounded pride renders him supernaturally gloomy in appearance; he becomes like "the ill Demon

of the night" (II.108). At this point, McIntosh suggests that Roderick's resemblance to an evil supernatural entity gains strength through his association with the "moody Elfin King" (4.169) depicted in the "Ballad of Alice Brand" (III.167) (157). Like the Elfin King, Roderick is displeased to see a knight-errant enter his realm.

Another scene in the poem where a supernatural atmosphere is created is when the life of Brian the Hermit is recounted before the ritual of the Fiery Cross takes place. Even though it is suggested indirectly that Brian performs some supernatural rites when he lights the Fiery Cross, his life story is more compelling in terms of the mystical intensity of the atmosphere (Nestor 75). Brian's story begins as follows: "Of Brian's birth strange tales were told. / His mother watch'd a midnight fold, / Built deep within a dreary glen, / Where scatter'd lay the bones of men, / In some forgotten battle slain" (III.120). As is seen, the lines have a supernatural feel to them, creating an eerie atmosphere. The haunting atmosphere is evoked by references to the midnight fold, where men's bones lay scattered from a forgotten battle. The narrative continues, enhancing the mystical atmosphere with the imagery of "knot-grass" (III.120), which restrains a once-powerful hand and with the imagery of "blind-worm" (III.120) leaving its slime on limbs that defy time. Moreover, the narrative features a young woman isolated in a dark and desolate valley, devoid of her previous joy and lacking her usual hair adornment, indicating an eerie and supernatural quality. Besides, as Nestor posits, Brian's physical features also contribute to his mystic and nearly in-human presence in the following description (75-76): "His grisled beard and matted hair / Obscured a visage of despair; / His naked arms and legs, seamed o'er, / The scars of frantic penance bore" (III.118-119). These instances within Brian's story paint a picture of supernatural connotations woven into the poem's eerie backdrop.

Clearly, in *The Lady of the Lake*, Scott directly focuses on Scotland. His role involves reviving the customs and traditions of Scotland, bringing vitality to the cultural legacy of his native land. The poem portrays the world of Scottish rituals and the complex relationships between clans and royalty rather than the English-Scottish relations. The significance of Scottish-English unity against external threats in *Marmion* transforms, through Scott's moderate approach, into the importance of internal unity within

Scotland. Scott advocates for harmonious relationships between the Scottish kingdom and clans, promoting amicable interactions. Furthermore, he passionately advocates for unity in response to external dangers, building an effective alliance against possible risks. All these messages are vividly conveyed through Scott's use of the supernatural and the story accompanying the narrative, as well as the abundant incorporation of Scottish customs and traditions such as the harp, the kilt, and the Fiery Cross. Although Scott was a Lowlander born in Edinburgh and a member of the upper class, he did not adhere to the expected pro-power and pro-royal policies. During his time, the clan system had ceased to exist, with Scotland having been incorporated into Great Britain and now governed from Westminster. Consequently, for Scott, there was no reason for individuals of diverse Scottish ancestries to engage in internal conflicts. This understanding of Scott is also reflected in *The Lady of the Lake*, where a middle-of-the-road policy is pursued by maintaining an equal distance from the Crown, the Highland clan, and the Lowland clan.

CONCLUSION

After Scotland and England passed the 1707 Act of Union, there was a change that eventually led to the Scots losing their sense of cultural identity because of England's continued dominance in Great Britain. Sir Walter Scott became well-known a century after this important treaty, using his pen as a potent tool to negotiate the complex web of domestic politics. During this time, Scotland faced numerous complex issues that disrupted their sense of identity and social norms. The forced suppression of their distinctive Gaelic language, an imposition that severely damaged their cultural and linguistic legacy, was one particularly serious problem. Long-lasting wars reduced Scotland's military might, and other limitations, like those placed on Highlander attire, further jeopardised the country's unique identity. Sir Walter Scott emerged at this crucial point as a ray of hope.

In order to preserve the Scots' cultural and national identity, Scott took the initiative to revive their sense of pride in their past. His expertise was in using his historical imagination to bring the past back to life and resurrect it. He achieved this by writing poetry and novels in the medieval literary genre of chivalric romance, which fit nicely with his nationalistic goals. During this time, Scott's literary journey shifted back and forth between Scottish nationalism and a broader, more inclusive sense of British unity. Although he was deeply committed to protecting Scotland's rich cultural legacy, Scott also understood that national identities in Britain were constantly changing. Since Scotland and England had been formally united for more than a century, the turbulent history between the two countries, which was characterised by decades of conflict, should not have been repeated. In the middle of this social shift that Scotland has experienced since 1707, Scott took on the ardent role of a cultural guard, defending the spirit of medieval Scotland in the pages of his books and poems.

Through detailed descriptions and emotive narratives, Scott created a vibrant portrait of Scotland's historical richness, legacy, and, above all, unique character. He did not promote division or incite hostility towards England in this description. Instead, he adopted a cautious and moderate stance. His writings generally combined a more comprehensive British identity with Scottish pride. They did not support a negative

image of England or minimise Scotland's distinctiveness. Essentially, Sir Walter Scott's literary career captured the shifting currents of national identity by existing at a pivotal moment. He did not ignore the political climate of his day or try to erase his nation's past. He created a legacy that harmonised Scotland's varied aspects with Britain's cohesive spirit by balancing Scotland's multifaceted essence with the harmonious spirit of Britain through the weaving together of diverse identities within his works. He wished for the stability of the period he lived in regarding both Scotland-England relations within Britain and the King and clan relationship in Scotland not to revert to the chaotic times of the past, as he "believed that social and political progress had reached its end in his own age and that any further change would necessarily be for the worse" (Lauber 95). This was the main reason for his middle-of-the-road policy.

Scott's works act as a canvas on which Scottishness and, occasionally, Britishness are reflected. Romance appealed to him because it could do two things well: it could capture cultural and historical details in great detail and could depict heroic chivalry in a way that would captivate people and elevate the idea of knighthood. By selecting this genre, he incorporated Scotland's disappearing customs into poetry, captivating with an alluring story and assisting in accomplishing his narrative objectives. However, in each work, he followed a different set of tactics. In *The Lady of the Lake*, he delves deeply into Scotland's internal affairs, highlighting Scottish Highland customs and landscapes while concentrating on the relationships between clans and the King. Therefore, being Scottish became very important in the context of this poem and became the central theme that ran through the story. In *Marmion*, Scott does not limit his depiction of Scotland to just Scottish people. He advocated for the unity of Britain by exploring the connections between Scotland and England. The poem's creation was shaped by the threat posed by Napoleon, which led to this balanced approach.

The story of Marmion, sent on a diplomatic mission to Scotland by King Henry VIII, serves as a backdrop for Scott's moderate approach, a testament to his narrative neutrality where neither Scotland nor England takes precedence. One notable aspect of this poem is that Scott, as a Scottish poet, chose an English knight as the protagonist while concluding the poem with the Battle of Flodden, one of the most catastrophic

battles in Scottish history. Although Scott chose Marmion as an English knight, he embellished his character with positive and negative traits, thus adopting a moderate approach.

He portrays Marmion as a character capable of regret over time despite his exploiting Constance for personal gain, conspiring against De Wilton to seize Clara's lands, and causing the loss of his knighthood. His fellow fighters revere Marmion, considering him a symbol of strength in the martial arts. His existence on the battlefield inspires respect in those who fight beside him. At the poem's end, he is depicted as an honourable knight trying to command his army while facing death. His death somewhat lessens the impact of the Battle of Flodden on Scotland, even though the Scots lost the battle. The English anti-heroic knight Marmion, perhaps, did not deserve to survive for purposes of poetic justice. Therefore, Scott's choice to embed the Battle of Flodden into the poem seems justifiable. While Marmion's death might symbolise the end of England's malevolence, the poem concludes with the country's victory for English readers. Additionally, when narrating war scenes in the final canto, Scott equally portrays the bravery and sorrow of both English and Scottish soldiers, reflecting Britishness and conveying the idea of not causing discord between the two countries.

Scott's methods for conveying his national agenda are equally significant. In *Marmion*, reflecting his moderate approach, he strengthens his narrative using the supernatural and gothic elements prevalent in the romantic tradition. Unlike *The Lady of the Lake*, which specifically portrays Highland traditions, Scott, through Marmion's story, aims to advocate setting aside Scotland-England tensions and uniting as Britain against global threats. He heavily relies on these elements to make this message more effective and the poem more captivating. They are used in the description of Highland scenery and architectural structures in Scotland, such as Crichton Castle and Tantallon Castle, to intensify the overall atmosphere of the poem and also narrate Marmion's increasing remorse towards the end. Additionally, while depicting Scotland's landscape (including the Border region, Holyrood Palace, and the River Tweed), these elements elevate the narrative, serving as a form of promotion for the country and supporting Scott's narrative favouring Britishness over radical Scottish nationalism.

In *The Lady of the Lake*, Scott departs from the England-Scotland narrative. He deeply engages in a direct portrayal that captures the essence of Scottish landscapes, traditions, and people. Notably, as early as 1830, Scott had explicitly expressed his desire to capture the essence of the Highlands in this poem vividly. Nevertheless, his inclination toward moderation resonates throughout this narrative. While in *Marmion*, Scott's moderate stance revolves around the Scottish-English dynamic, this poem extends to the interplay between the Highland clans and the Scottish monarch. In his portrayal of the complex relationship between the Scottish Highland clans and the monarchy, Scott fairly represents both sides as exemplary of Scotland's fundamental values. Unlike the thematic emphasis on unity against external threats seen in *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake* advocates unity within Scotland. Essentially, in this poem, Scott seeks to bring forth Scottish customs, reviving the traditions of his nation. Simultaneously, he takes a position encouraging peaceful interactions between the Scottish kingdom and the clans, advocating for unity against external threats.

The poem portrays a cross-section of the historical tension between the monarchy and the Highland clans. Scott depicts the Alpine Clan, representing the Highland clans, and Roderick Dhu's hostility towards King James V and his subsequent rebellion, King James' approach to these conflicts, and the attitude of Douglas, emblematic of a Lowland clan, towards these events. This depiction not only alludes to historical events but serves as a vehicle for Scott's reflection on the idea that these elements representing Scotland should promote unity rather than hostility among themselves. Through the representations of James V, Douglas, and Roderick Dhu, Scott aims to create a rich and detailed depiction that reflects the diverse facets of Scottish society. He portrays not only the rebellious spirit of the Highland clans but highlights the collaborative relationships between the Lowland clans and the monarchy. This elaborate portrayal seeks to fortify Scotland's collective identity by weaving together different historical elements, thus strengthening the fabric of a unified national identity. Like in his other works, Scott uses a variety of supporting instruments to enhance the impact of his storytelling and get his points across.

His most frequently employed instrument in accomplishing his purpose in the poem is the description of nature and the Scottish landscape. He paints the Scottish landscape in a vivid and alluring way, capturing its essence. This is evident in Scotland's popularity, particularly the Trossachs region depicted in the poem, gained due to a surge in tourist interest following the poem's publication. Especially within Uvedale Price's definition of the "picturesque," the notion of "ruggedness" aligns directly with the Scottish landscape. Scott's descriptions not only showcase the Scottish landscape but also add an air of suspense and unpredictability to the poem, as scenes portraying tension between clans and the King are set amidst these rugged locations. Scott's use of the natural world and the landscape becomes a subtle but effective vehicle for illustrating the careful balance he finds between the monarchy and the clans.

In the poem, Scott unveils various facets of Scottish customs and traditions. Right from the beginning, he delves into the stag hunt tradition involving James V, illustrating the longstanding custom. He gives the minstrelsy tradition life through the character of Allan Bane, which enriches the Scottish heritage that is depicted in the poem. The depiction of the Scottish kilt, emblematic of cultural identity, and the Fiery Cross tradition among the Highland clans show Scot's strife to resurrect fading Scottish values. Additionally, Scott highlights the significance of the traditional Highland music known as pibroch, revitalising these age-old customs and traditions that define the essence of Scottish identity. Through the incorporation of these cultural elements, the portrayal of historical figures like James V, the integration of historical occurrences into the poem (such as James V's secret wanderings in the Highlands), and the vivid depiction of the Scottish natural landscapes, Scott elevates his homeland within the verses of the poem. At this juncture, it is crucial to note that, similar to *Marmion*, Scott also employs supernatural elements. However, in this poem, rather than relying on supernatural apparitions, these elements are interwoven into the descriptive narratives, creating a supernatural atmosphere within the natural settings. This method adds depth and mystery to the atmosphere without using overt supernatural entities, giving the already rugged Scottish landscape an otherworldly feel.

In connection with Scott's national concerns, it is evident in this poem, as in *Marmion*, that he follows a middle-of-the-road policy. The Highland clans representing Scotland's history, the Lowland clans, and the monarchy are portrayed fairly, not straying too far from historical realities. For instance, Roderick Dhu, embodying a representative Highlander whose existence has been threatened by the monarchy and Lowland clans in Scottish history, is portrayed initially as rebellious, unpredictable, and a formidable warrior Highland chief, fitting the general perception. However, Scott presents this seemingly rebellious character in a direct confrontation with James V, letting Roderick express his emotions and thoughts. After this dialogue, in which Roderick explains how the monarchy continuously seized and oppressed the clan lands, Roderick's rebellion against the King appears justified. Moreover, Roderick is depicted as honourable, principled, and just, especially in his one-on-one combat with James V and several instances throughout the poem. Scott chooses not to portray Roderick Dhu as a wild outlander against King James V.

When it comes to King James V, it is observable that Scott reflects historical realities at specific points and bends history at others, once again maintaining a moderate approach. Historically, James V was known to travel through the Highlands incognito, observing the happenings in his country and understanding his people's concerns. In the poem, James is seen hunting in the Highlands in disguise and displaying a positive character. However, in his approach towards the clans, Scott might have altered historical facts, portraying James as more benevolent and peaceful towards the Highlanders to maintain the idea of Scotland's internal unity throughout the poem. In reality, as Whyte suggests, James viewed the Highlanders as a problem that required a solution akin to genocide (103). When facing his enemy, Roderick Dhu, in the poem, James is depicted as not willing to fight but rather offering a peace proposal. Similarly, after Roderick is gravely wounded and brought to Stirling Castle, James sends a messenger to Clan Alpine, urging them to cease the battle to prevent further bloodshed.

One could interpret Scott's deliberate choice to present James V in a more positive light as an effort to preserve the unity theme he wants to get across in the poem. The message of unity that Scott sought to convey would have been undermined if he had portrayed

the King as evil. In addition to showing James V's unwillingness to fight only the Clan Alpine, Scott also demonstrates his readiness to give up on Ellen when her feelings for him were not returned, putting his main objective of easing tensions in the nation above all else. In a similar vein, Douglas, speaking for the Lowland clan, declines to fight alongside James V even after Roderick convinces him to. As a result, Scott successfully promotes a middle-of-the-road policy within the framework of Scottishness by showing the monarchy, Highlanders, and Lowlanders as complementary parts of Scotland rather than independent entities.

Overall, after the Act of Union in 1707, England came to dominate Great Britain, and Sir Walter Scott played a crucial role in navigating Scotland's cultural decline. His literary skill, evident in chivalric romances, brought Scotland's dying traditions back to life while combining Scottish pride with a more inclusive British identity. Adhering to a careful policy of compromise, Scott refrained from fostering discord or hostility towards England, instead carefully balancing Scotland's unique cultural heritage with its position within a united Great Britain. He profoundly influenced early nineteenth-century literature and the revival of Scottish heritage in the British Empire. His lasting legacy as a creator of historical novels, combined with the richness of his narrative poems and his multifaceted perspective on Scottish identity, provide invaluable insights into the complexities of national identity during his era. The poems under consideration in this thesis, *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*, serve as critical pieces through which Scott adeptly captures some core examples of Scottish culture, creating stories that harmonise the dynamics of Scotland and England.

The constant ambivalence and middle-of-the-road policy in Walter Scott's life, literary career and political thought made him a boundary-pushing figure, outside of any particular category. Not quite a romantic, not quite a rationalist; not quite a Scottish nationalist, not quite a British defender; not quite a master of poetry, not quite a novelist; not quite rich, not quite poor; not quite a defender of power, not quite a defender of the poor; not quite popular, not quite forgotten. Although he is considered the founder of the historical novel, he has been questioned and criticised by many critics for many technical deficiencies in his works. The ambivalence, the moderate policy

situation that has surrounded Scott's entire life and forms the fundamental finding of this thesis, has been expounded upon in this study through both Scott's personal life and his literary career, particularly with the analysis of the poems *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field* and *The Lady of the Lake*. This thesis aims to revitalise the fields of Scottish and Scott studies by providing a new perspective on Scott's poetry—a domain that, unlike his extensively researched novels, invites a wide range of exploration. The hope is that this renewed focus will not only enrich our understanding of Scott's poetic contributions, but also broaden the scope of literary exploration within the larger tapestry of British literature.

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