Bonds and Borders

Bonds and Borders:
Identity, Imagination and Transformation in Literature

Edited by

Rebecca DeWald and Dorette Sobolewski

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For Paul
—Dorette

Für meine Mutter
—Rebecca

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INTRODUCTION

REBECCA DEWALD
AND DORETTE SOBOLEWSKI

Bonds and Borders. One might think of the US-Mexican border or the Israeli-Palestinian border dispute as the foremost points of concern, and indeed, "Border Theory" is born out of such particular situations. The reader of this volume might be surprised to find neither of these particular borders mentioned in any of the essays. The scope of contributions, instead, ranges from revisiting older works from colonial times to discovering current narratives in post-9/11 literature; from the search for a national identity in Welsh poetry to self-transformation and the trans-cultural journeys of individuals in the literature of translation; and from the cosmopolitanism of Black Britain to gendered readings of Arab-American war narratives. All these different essays exemplify the relevance of bonds and borders in literature and contribute in their own individual ways to the discourse between literary studies and Border studies.

"Bonds and Borders: Identity, Imagination, and Transformation in Literature" is a collection of essays which has emerged out of papers presented at the 8th Annual Conference of the Graduate School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Glasgow in June 2010. The aim of the conference was to explore the challenges and opportunities created by migration and mobility across national, cultural, and geographical boundaries from interdisciplinary perspectives. The contributions enabled a dialogue about "Bonds and Borders" in a variety of areas, such as Literature, Linguistics, Politics, Museum Studies, Contemporary Art, as well as Performance Art and Ethnology. This multi-disciplinary nature of the conference was beneficial to experiencing approaches of individual disciplines to a common theme, and formed the backdrop for a number of papers from the field of Literature which stood out conceptually and offered themselves to be merged into a cohesive unity. These papers have been expanded into the essays that form this collection. As individual essays, they provide interpretations of their subject matter, and as a

collection, they form a literary array of the theme "Bonds and Borders in Literature."

Despite this variance, certain themes often overlap in these essays. One example is the leitmotif of the subaltern in the essays by Kang-yen Chiu, "Reading the Subaltern in Scott" (Chapter One), and Joanna Neilly's "Who is the Subaltern? A Consideration of the 'Oriental Woman' in the Work of E.T.A. Hoffmann" (Chapter Two). Chiu's essay deals primarily with Sir Walter Scott's presentation of "socially/politically marginalized characters (i.e. the subaltern) in the Waverly Novels." His discussion draws on the Subaltern Studies Group and Frantz Fanon's postcolonial studies and argues that, although deeply rooted in the Scottish Enlightenment, Scott's depictions of the subaltern go far beyond in an effort to strive for "an ideal way to depict losers." To achieve this, he divides those losers into three social, political, and ethnic groups who "frequently have close affinity with each other when facing a common hegemonic power." Scott's contemporaries recognized this approach as revolutionary; a recognition which has been overlooked or even denied by more recent analyses of his work. In some ways, this essay is intended to rectify those misconceptions and concludes with a demonstration of "Scott's bold and forward-looking vision."

With its focus on German Romanticism, Neilly's analysis also dissects previous understandings of the subaltern and challenges, like Chiu's, existing conceptions of the subordination of minorities. Neilly focuses on the depiction of women in selected works by E.T.A. Hoffmann, using Edward Saïd's theory of Orientalism as the key element in her argument. Departing from the notion that oriental themes and figures, often used in juxtaposition to European counterparts, created women as subalterns during the Romantic movement, Neilly proceeds to argue that women in Hoffmann's writing do not fall into this category. After providing the necessary insights into postcolonial theory by and after Saïd, Neilly proposes that, while such criticism may be valid to a certain degree, it is possible "to view German Romantic responses to the Orient, and the corresponding images of oriental femininity, in a more positive light." She goes even further in stating that "opposition to the traditional European, patriarchal mode of thought" is a basic trait of Hoffmann's work. The essay then compares a wide range of Hoffmann's western and oriental female characters and concludes that his female oriental figures are anything but subalterns.

Another sceptical view of Saïd's Orientalism, and the question whether it has become an anachronism, is offered by Daniel O'Gorman in his essay "'His Open-sesame, His *Passe-partout*: Deconstructing 'Difference' in

Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence*" (Chapter Three). His argument is that Salman Rushdie's latest novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*, "ultimately attempts to combat […] the recent, overly relativistic appropriation of Edward Saïd's concept of Orientalism by proponents of left-wing journalistic discourse." The framework of his analysis of the novel is Jacques Derrida's notion of the *passe-partout*, the ornamental matting placed between a picture and its frame to create a transitional space between the two. O'Gorman then places Rushdie's novel and its analysis of conflicting ideas of East and West in a post-9/11 context, thus showing them to constitute a *passe-partout*, a space which simultaneously binds and separates. This duality is repeated in the settings of the novel; Florence and the city of Fatehpur Sikri in the Mughal Empire of Akbar the Great. Both setting and narration provide the vehicles for Rushdie's questioning of "the borderline between fact and fiction" and his juxtaposition of East and West as used in the discourse which has emerged since 9/11. O'Gorman draws on actual and fictional examples from both within and outwith Rushdie's novel. In this sense, his own analysis serves as a *passe-partout* between the realms.

O'Gorman questions reality in that he asks what constitutes reality in literature and how such reality is shaped by the author or, indeed, by the context of the text. The essay "Borges and Borders: Identity, Imagination, Translation" (Chapter Four) by Rebecca DeWald joins O'Gorman's approach in trying to penetrate the borders of text and context. Such context is a determining factor in DeWald's analysis of the short prose text "Borges and I" by Jorge Luis Borges. This text has been published multiple times, in a variety of journals and collections, alongside different neighbouring texts. Every new context sheds a different interpretative light on the cryptic text which is situated on the border between fact and fiction: the narrator is Borges who recounts his life with "the Other," also Borges, and eventually concludes "I don't know which one of us is writing this page." The translation of the text into English further complicates the multiplicity of the source text, and adds to the effect of it. DeWald compares three translations of Borges's text into English and draws on Walter Benjamin's proposition that every translation of a source text brings it closer to perfection. "Borges and I" thus serves as an example of an inclusive approach to literary and translation theory, incorporating practicality into a theoretical framework and penetrating borders of text and context determining the meaning of the text itself.

Both O'Gorman and DeWald use the literary text as the basis for their analysis; Tom Coles reverses such an approach in his essay "Literary Cartography: An Approach Examining the 'Cognitive Mappings' of

Readers of British Popular Fiction" (Chapter Five) with his innovative approach to explain a variety of contexts in literary trends in British popular fiction. Coles's approach is based on computer processing of data obtained from a corpus of literary texts to provide a statistical analysis of their settings. This information is then used to identify topological trends in British popular novels from the 20th century, taken from Clive Bloom's *Bestsellers*. The data can be grouped by longitude and latitude, as well as time period. The results are the identification of common settings for novels published in Britain in a particular year or decade, as well as the shift of these settings over time. Coles then provides potential explanations for the existence and nature of such trends, and concludes by offering theoretical explanations for the emergence and significance of those. Ultimately, such an analysis can shed light on the relevance of a specific geographical area that has captured the interest of writers at certain times in history.

Coles's approach is based on British popular fiction, but could most certainly be expanded to other genres. In American fiction of the 1930s, the South was unquestionably an area of regional interest to American writers. Such regionalism provides the framework of Dorette Sobolewski's essay "The 'Grand Design' of Southern Class: Race and Class Constructs in Southern Society and William Faulkner's Literature" (Chapter Six). Sobolewski's interdisciplinary approach of historical research and literary analysis connects case studies such as John Dollard's groundbreaking work *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937) with William Faulkner's writings to demonstrate the enforcement of borders in the American South in the 1930s. Her focus is on the manifestations of a post-Civil War Southern code of conduct that regulated interactions between whites and Blacks in the South. To provide this analysis with a manageable locus, Sobolewski views these constructs within the context of the Southern plantation mansion in recognition of the fact that such locations served as significant social settings in both Southern literature and reality. Her analysis of Southern Literature illustrates the existence of an authoritarian code of social etiquette which "strongly determined the scope and limits of interaction both within and between races and classes." Faulkner's didactic approach in explicitly depicting Southern race and class interactions to the reader is in itself a tool to overcome the controlled borders of Southern society.

As in Sobolewski's essay, a key theme in most essays in this collection revolves around the breaking of societal borders in literature. Such borders have multiple, often simultaneous manifestations, with race, gender, nationality, and ethnicity, only being a few examples. Both Natasha

Mansfield's essay "Female Voices: Tracing Feminine Agency in the Arab-American War Story Narrative" (Chapter Seven) and Bianca Leggett's "Narrating Nationhood: Travel, Identity, and the Case for Cosmopolitanism in Contemporary Black British Fiction" (Chapter Eight) are in themselves bond-makers intended to illuminate the borders which are experienced by the protagonists in the analysed texts. A rejection of often assumed racial and gender boundaries can be seen as central to Mansfield's essay in which she analyzes female agency in a number of Arab-American war stories, most notably David Williams's "Arabic Lessons." Stories which view war and personal experiences of it are seldom narrated by women. Yet in Williams's story, dealing with the Lebanese Civil War (1975 – 1990), the voices of women and children are not only present, they dominate the narrative process over and above those of the male characters. Through his choice of perspective, Williams is able to discover and investigate "how women may negotiate the right to an alternative expression and experience of war." This negotiation does not occur, however, without considerable tensions between the sexes within the narrative which can even lead to trauma. This considerable dichotomy is further increased by the ethnic tensions engendered by the cultural and historical setting: the main locus of the novel is not the war-torn country itself, but rather the Lebanese diaspora in Boston. Mansfield successfully establishes that "reflexive texts such as Williams's "Arabic Lessons" contribute to and comment on both sides of the cultural hyphen [...]."

In addition to the common thread of breaking societal borders, such a culture hyphenation is, as shown in Bianca Leggett's essay, a leitmotif in Black British novels published between 1985 and 2005 which often examine the "unified sense of identity" through travelling. Leggett analyzes a contradiction inherent in the quest for a personal sense of identity among people of visual minorities in cultures in which they are not indigenous, in this case second generation Blacks in Great Britain. Because they occupy a "third space," all of these protagonists must resolve for themselves the question of whether to embrace "hybridity and transnationalism," or to succumb to the limitations of a cosmopolitan identity. Leggett proposes that finding a sense of "belonging continues to be a more self-conscious and fraught business for Black Britons than for their white peers." She identifies the stages of such a quest as one of self-delusion through the invention of one's personal genealogy, then the disillusionment when confronted with an idealized mother culture, and finally the inability or unwillingness to adapt to an essentially foreign value system. All of these short-comings are encountered by the protagonists and all of them face fundamental challenges in deciding how to cope with them. Ultimately,

the characters encounter a personal history "which inflicts pain rather than induces healing." According to Leggett's final analysis, though, "these stories argue the importance of understanding the complexities of homelands," rather than falling victim to a simplistic rejection of them.

The recurring theme of the homeland is also at the core of the literature of migration analyzed in Juliana Díaz Baldocchi's essay "A Translation of the Self: An Analysis of Identity through Language in Literature of Migration" (Chapter Nine). While Leggett's focus is on literature of second generation immigrants, Baldocchi pays close attention to the various ways in which migration influences or even essentially alters the migrant's perception of self in a new linguistic and cultural context. Focusing on young immigrants, Baldocchi analyses different genres (teenage novel and picture book) across a variety of cultures: a Polish girl emigrating to Canada, a Turkish girl moving to Switzerland, a Pakistani girl being dislocated to the US. Through her analysis of these seemingly disparate personal histories, Baldocchi interprets the adaptation of the protagonists to their new social environments as a "translation of self." To provide her literary analysis with a theoretical foundation, Baldocchi incorporates Mikhail Bakhtin's theory that the self is created in dialogue and demonstrates the emotional and psychological impact which such a new context can cause in young persons, often leading to a trauma. Accompanying the descriptions of such distress are presentations of various strategies which teenagers adopt in their efforts to cope. Although the result is often a split identity, torn between cultures, new bonds are also created which challenge societal borders.

One might argue that there are certain societal borders that cannot or should not be challenged, as the forming of new bonds might lead to a destruction of existing values and of national identity. The complexity of innate borders and the notion of dual identity is the concern of Rory Waterman's essay, "'An Elsan Culture threatens us': R.S. Thomas, England, and the Struggle for Welsh Identity" (Chapter Ten). Waterman discusses R.S. Thomas's difficult relationship with his Welsh-English identity and its expression in his poetry. Born into a monoglot English-speaking household, Thomas spent most of his childhood travelling between North-Western Wales and English ports. He considered himself Welsh, but only ever wrote prose in Welsh: his poetry was written in English, as he did not consider his command of the Welsh language good enough to employ it in poetry. Yet, his political agenda insisted that "someone born in Wales who does not speak Welsh is 'not Welsh.'" Paradoxically, the impossibility of reconciling his demand for Welsh poetry writing with his use of English in his own work eventually led his

writing to flourish. As Waterman says: "The 'curse' of being 'Anglo-Welsh' was his saviour, enabling him to propagandise to 'his' people as well as to the English across […] the Marches." His defence of the borders between English and Welsh culture led him to connect, across borders, with Scottish writers, namely Hugh MacDiarmid for his opposition against England.

This essay collection, although not conceived and/or constructed as a whole, gains particularly through disunity: topics cross over where one would least expect them to; borders are trespassed in order to give rise to new ideas and points of study. In the final analysis, then, these essays by young researchers from a variety of disciplines and geographical backgrounds effectively work as a unit to dissect, subvert, challenge, or perhaps validate pre-conceived understandings of identity in an international society. They present a polydialectic approach to Literature and the supposedly borderless society of the Western world and its profound impact on individual identity.

"Bonds and Borders: Identity, Imagination and Transformation in Literature" would not have been possible without the support of so many that we would like to extend a few words of gratitude to the following people: Fiona Darroch, Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Sandra McNeill, and the Graduate School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Glasgow for having given us the opportunity to organize the conference which led to this project. Thanks to the organizational committee, Kang-yen Chiu, Eilidh Hall, Namiko Kikusawa, Annabel Rhodes, and Victoria Woolner for their patience, ideas, and leg-work. They formed a committee without which the conference simply would not have happened. Tom Costello and David McCourt's creativity have given "Bonds and Borders" a face.

We would also like to thank our keynote speakers, Mike Gonzalez and Alison Phipps, for their truly inspiring talks which made clear to everyone that bonds and borders are, fortunately and unfortunately, not just abstract phenomena which happen elsewhere, but rather concerns which pervade all of our lives, as individuals as well as parts of a group. Alison is also to be thanked for her support through GRAMNet, the Glasgow Refugee, Asylum, and Migration Network, whose day-to-day task it is to make legal and societal bonds and restrictions more bearable.

An enormous amount of gratitude is devoted to the many anonymous peer-reviewers of *eSharp*, the online journal for interdisciplinary postgraduate research based at the University of Glasgow, whose scrutiny and expertise in their respective fields helped improve this collection, as did Paul Boggs's impeccable linguistic knowledge. We would also like to extend our thanks to Cambridge Scholars Publishing and their faith in this

collection of essays. They have made this project a joy and a most rewarding experience. And finally, to the authors: it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with such talented and dedicated young researchers, all of whom are making their own important contributions in their efforts to overcome Borders and create new Bonds.

CHAPTER ONE

READING THE SUBALTERN IN SCOTT

KANG-YEN CHIU

This essay is a theory-based study of the socially/politically marginalized characters (i.e. the subaltern) in the Waverley Novels. It is designed to demonstrate Sir Walter Scott's pioneering skill in giving voice to those who are not party to the ruling discourses in society. The theoretical foundation of this study is primarily based on the critique by the Subaltern Studies Group and also on Frantz Fanon's postcolonial discourses of resistance, which, as this essay argues, is strongly related to the Group's equally sympathetic attitudes towards subaltern peoples. Moreover, the main thrust of Fanon's penetrating negative critique of colonial systems is also considered here as the precedent for the Group's theoretical basis. This essay concludes by offering five elements of the subaltern typology to demonstrate Scott's bold and forward-looking vision in depicting the subaltern as individuals with real strength and various identities, rather than treating them as powerless and voiceless. In addition, the analysis of these features of the subaltern is intended to serve as a contribution to the Group and Fanon's theoretical approaches.

According to Montserrat Guibernau, there are five dimensions—psychological, cultural, territorial, political and historical—which can operate to determine one's national identity or to place a person in a specific social-political situation.[1] Identity in the Waverley Novels, as Alison Lumsden argues, "is continuously posited as complex and fluid, consisting not of fixed epistemic models, but rather of residue and excess, constantly resisting closure."[2] I agree with Lumsden, since the identities of many of Scott's characters are contingent on their situation, such as Rob Roy whose name, behaviour, and even character alter when he has his foot on his "native heath."[3] However, it has to be noted that Scott also recognises that for some characters identity can be fluid, but for others no such chance is available: their identity is rigidly constrained. In accordance with the historiography of the Scottish Enlightenment,[4] Scott's

own novels are, in a sense, acts of hospitality, in which he invites his readers to join a future dominated by a single group, a new group which is victorious despite retaining all its exhausted old traditions. Although the novels are all great acts of hospitality, they often contain the paradox of a hegemony which sullies the concepts of hospitality because people can only enter into the future on one set of terms. Scott shows that, because of this political conditionality of hospitality, the losers are left outside the gate. In other words, people who are considered as incompatible with the new British State and those who refuse to be subsumed are simply excluded. By contrast, the subaltern characters in Scott's novels exhibit the merit of hospitality in a much more unconditional way than that offered by the great invitation of the State to the future. By using this unconditionality of hospitality to challenge conditionality, Scott's novels interrogate the Scottish Enlightenment's teleology of civility. This essay attempts to argue that the Waverley Novels are texts striving for an ideal way to depict losers, and all the little narratives of hospitality in Scott's works are ways of arguing against the core acts of hegemonic hospitality. Indeed, the losers are frequently depicted as those who are determined to resist such hegemonic power. These losers in the Waverley Novels can be divided into three groups which include socially underprivileged people (i.e. the poor and the proletariat), the politically defeated people who are marginalized because of the discourses of empire and State unification (i.e. the Scottish Highlanders and the Jacobites), and people with an Oriental background or those who themselves have been orientalized, such as gypsies, Indians, Jews, and Kurds. These three socially, politically or ethnically marginalized groups are seemingly unrelated to each other; but they, in effect, frequently have close affinity with each other when facing a common hegemonic power. For example, the Jacobites often have a cross-class alliance with people from the lower orders of society, such as the smuggler Nanty Ewart's relationship with the Jacobite leader in *Redgauntlet* (1824). Moreover, the definitions of these three groups also overlap in many cases. For example, it is important to note that Scott often uses the metaphor of gypsies to represent the Scots. In *Rob Roy* (1817), Andrew Fairservice, the Lowland gardener, states that "It's a mere spoiling o' the Egyptians,"[5] as he gives a personal comment on the Scottish experiences of the impact of the Union of Parliaments in 1707. Andrew calls the Scots "the Egyptians" since, on the one hand, according to the traditional national foundation myth, Egypt was the origin of the Scots as a people. On the other hand, this implicit message also suggests the internal orientalization of the nation through the process that Michael Hechter has called "internal colonialism."[6] Accordingly, Scott's stories of the gypsies

who came from Egypt (as was thought in the eighteenth century) are frequently the reflection of the Scots' own songs of lament.

Although Scott is often seen, overly simplistically, as a man with conservative views and fearful of the mob's threat to the best interests of the ruling class, his serious attention to the issues of the heterogeneous group of the Other in his works cannot be ignored.[7] Contrary to the bland and passive heroes, such as Waverley in *Waverley* (1814), Brown/Bertram in *Guy Mannering*, and Lovel in *The Antiquary* (1816), those supporting characters from the lower orders of society, such as Meg Merrilies (the gypsy tinker) in *Guy Mannering*, Edie Ochiltree (the beggar) in *The Antiquary* and Wandering Willie (the blind fiddler) in *Redgauntlet*, are consistently and powerfully portrayed as multi-faceted personalities. They are "individuals, with a life of their own,"[8] argues David Hewitt. Moreover, in his significant two-part study of "Scott's Achievement as a Novelist," David Daiches also notes that: "It is, as a rule, the unheroic characters who have the most vitality."[9] Furthermore, the best songs in the Waverley Novels, argues Fiona Robertson, are performed by socially marginalized characters such as Davie Gellatley in *Waverley*, Elspeth Meiklebackit in *The Antiquary*, and Madge Wildfire in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* (1818).[10] Regarding the portrayal of these characters, Hewitt argues powerfully that:

> It is long since critics thought it right to praise Scott for his treatment of social class and of the poorer members of society; it was recognised as revolutionary by his contemporaries, and it becomes wearisome to have to restate what is obvious but we do him a great injustice if we do not accept that this is indeed his greatest achievement.[11]

Hewitt, as the quotation shows, makes it clear that Scott's depiction of "the poorer members of society" was recognized by his contemporaries and critics as a revolutionary and great achievement. Regarding Scott's deep concern with the condition of oppressed peoples, Murray Pittock, in his reading of Rebecca, the Jewess in *Ivanhoe* (1819), argues that "Scott's realization of repressed, destroyed, exiled or alienated identities may not at all points be innocent of contemporary caricature or lazy cliché, but is nonetheless extraordinarily sensitive, and renders him in that dimension of his work a postcolonial novelist."[12] Indeed, Pittock's cogent argument concerning Scott's sympathetic handling of the traumatic experiences of the Jews can also be extensively applied to Scott's expression of his general concern about other disadvantaged groups in the rest of his major works. The positive portrayal of the subordinate characters in Scott's works is mentioned earlier in this essay, but the significance of these

characters has not yet been assessed. The way in which Pittock studies the Jews in *Ivanhoe* (i.e. a postcolonial reading of the colonized) is the method that I will apply to the reading of the rest of other subordinate characters in Scott. The theoretical foundation of this study is based on the critique developed by the Subaltern Studies Group, and this essay argues that this critique is an effective channel for exploring the vitality of the subaltern characters in the Waverley Novels. Subaltern is a term derived from the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci's usage in the *Prison Notebooks* (a series of the author's notebooks written in 1930s) which refers to those groups of inferior rank in society who are subject to the hegemony of the ruling classes. Subaltern classes may include peasants, workers, indigenous peoples, and any other disadvantaged groups who are denied access to hegemonic power. "Since the historical unity of the ruling classes is realised in the State," argues Gramsci, "their history is essentially the history of States and of groups of States."[13] Recognising the need for a subaltern history, Gramsci therefore directs his attention to reconstructing the historiography of the subaltern classes. He affirms that the history of the subaltern classes is just as important and complex as the history of the dominant classes, although the history of the former is much neglected by authority and that of the latter is usually recognised as the official history. This awareness of the significance of history from below in Gramsci's work was also illustrated by E. P. Thompson in his pivotal work, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), where the author claims that "I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the 'obsolete' hand-loom weaver, the 'utopian' artisan, and even the deluded follower of Joanna Southcott, from the enormous condescension of posterity."[14] In addition to Thompson's work, Carlo Ginzburg, in *The Cheese and the Worms* (1980), also attempts to retrieve the subaltern history that is "in silence, discarded, or simply ignored" according to the views of a medieval miller.[15] The term "subaltern" was adopted in the early 1980s by the Subaltern Studies Group (or Subaltern Studies Collective) of historians, founded by Ranajit Guha and other mainly Indian scholars, to promote a systematic discussion of subaltern subjects in South Asian Studies. The objective of the group is to shift the public's attention from a sole focus on the élite culture to the history of the "people" in South Asia. Its primaryily concerned with ways in which Indian history can be written outside the historically dominant frameworks of both colonialism and élite nationalism. Guha contends that:

> The ordinary apparatus of historiography has little to offer us here. Designed for big events and institutions, it is most at ease when made to operate on those larger phenomena which visibly stick out of the debris of

> the past. As a result, historical scholarship has developed […] a tradition that tends to ignore the small drama and fine detail of social existence, especially at *its lower depths*.[16] (emphasis added)

Drawing attention to "the small voice of history,"[17] the Subaltern Studies Group intends to offer a revision to both colonialist and bourgeois-nationalist historiography, which it regards as the ideological by-product of British rule in India, and to provide an alternative history that is based on the distinct point of view of the masses. The group's assumptions have been subsequently taken up and developed by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and other postcolonial theorists. Their research focuses on the exploration of the issue of whether the voice of the subaltern was either silenced or distorted during the imperial era by the power of the imperial élite. The essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" is Spivak's negative response to both this immediate concern and poststructuralist philosophers' positive claim that underprivileged people can have their autonomous voices.[18] She argues, from a Marxist point of view, that the subaltern is "a divided and dislocated subject whose parts are not continuous or coherent with each other" and thus cannot speak.[19] Linda Smith, who agrees with Spivak's argument, also claims that: "For indigenous peoples fragmentation has been the consequence of imperialism."[20] In addition to this immediate concern, Spivak asserts that there is a major weakness in the formulation of an unproblematically constituted subaltern identity, as a single voice cannot simultaneously contain many other speaking voices. She therefore draws attention particularly to female experiences in a postcolonial context, and to many other marginal voices, such as those belonging to politically marginalized groups who have less access to the means by which they can create their own representation.

The study of subaltern voices in Scottish literature was carried out by Douglas S. Mack in his *Scottish Fiction and the British Empire* published in 2006. In the first chapter of the book, entitled "Introduction: 'Can the Subaltern Speak?'," Mack argues that, in Scotland as in India, there was a vigorous struggle between the élite and the subaltern class writers for control of the power to narrate and the authority to muffle other narrative voices. According to Mack's point of view, members of the Scottish élite who were close to the core of British imperial power were both quick and eager to adjust themselves to the new British norms in order to earn immediate profit; however, the subaltern classes who had limited access to the imperial enterprise mostly had an urge to maintain a distinctive Scottish identity. According to Mack, the imperial élite in Scottish literary circles was primarily made up of writers like Sir Walter Scott and John Buchan whose significant contribution in their writings was to generate a

collective British identity; however, subaltern Scottish writers like James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, challenged imperial Britain's assumption of an integral identity by presenting an alternative subaltern voice. At the end of the chapter, Mack summarizes: "The Waverley Novels could be, and were, interpreted and appropriated in all sorts of ways of political positions, but one of the crucial aspects of their political potency was their symbolic legacy in *the master-narrative of British Empire*."[21] (emphasis added) Mack was suspicious about the representability of the authentic subaltern voices in the Waverley Novels, as their creator was deemed as complicit in Britain's imperial enterprise. Subaltern characters in Scott's works simply cannot speak according to Mack's understanding. In fact, they have no voice. Because of this sweeping generalization, *Scottish Fiction and the British Empire* has its key focus on subaltern characters produced by authors with roots in non-élite, subaltern Scotland, and has in fact overlooked the immense significance of various subaltern voices inherent in Scott's work. This essay argues that the subaltern voice may be covert or marginal, but it is by no means muted in Scott. The significance of the subaltern voice in the Waverley Novels, in fact, lies in its demand for liberation from the suppression by the dominant narrative. This is discussed in detail in the final part of this essay.

Scott's writing of the subaltern is, in short, resistant to such suppression, which is consistent with the essential feature of the historiography as written by the Subaltern Studies Group, the inherent combative form of historicism. The writing of the Group, as Jane Hiddlestone notes, "is broad in its range and militant in its call for attention to the ongoing oppression of the people."[22] Scott's Waverley Novels, therefore, can be read as a variant of Subaltern Studies Group texts of combative historicism. Moreover, this essay argues that both the distinguishing characteristic of Scott's own work on the representation of the subaltern as well as the focus of the Group, in practice, correspond closely to what Fanon called a "literature of combat" in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1967), which was published twenty years before the founding of the Subaltern Studies Group.[23] Although the theories of the Group do not derive directly from Fanon, closer analyses demonstrate that they are conceptually very close to the latter's thinking and attitude. For revolution to be thoroughly successful, Fanon firmly believes that the voice of the people needs to be heard. This specific expression of the people, as Fanon argues, is found in "the occult sphere" of the community which is understood to be:

> entirely under magical jurisdiction. By entangling myself in this inextricable network where actions are repeated with crystalline inevitability, I find the everlasting world which belongs to me, and the perenniality which is

> thereby affirmed of the world belonging to us. […] The supernatural, magical powers reveal themselves as essentially personal; the settler's powers are infinitely shrunken, stamped with their alien origin.[24]

By reintegrating soul and body, Fanon attempts to reconnect the colonized with those parts of themselves that have been denied access to a spontaneous expression of the self. By employing native language and culture, as Pittock notes, it is thus possible to "challenge the hierarchy of heteroglossia: it is control, not lack of control, over the registers of speech which creates the space for the distinctive performance of self."[25] It is within such a space that the subaltern enjoy a full articulation of the self and simultaneously celebrate their changing status from the colonized and marginalized to that of individuals who can relate their own history without inhibition. The result is not to make those languages and cultures incomprehensible to those who do not have the knowledge of the subaltern; on the contrary, it is to highlight that the subaltern can equally possess authority and mastery over an exclusive knowledge of their own history and culture. Scott's representation of his subaltern characters both illustrates and underlines Fanon and the Group's arguments.

In the Waverley Novels, subaltern voices are constantly heard along with the presentation of subaltern characters. It is possible to identify a number of distinct features in Scott's works that denote the power of the subaltern, rather than its limitations. Firstly, the autonomy that the socially marginalized characters maintain is consistently emphasized in the Waverley Novels. These subaltern characters are self-determined and they repeatedly refuse to be assimilated or converted by the overarching power held by the ruling class. Moreover, authority in Scott's fiction is relentlessly disrupted by the emergence of these marginal characters that persistently demand sovereignty and decline to acquiesce to the conditional hospitality of authority. In *Ivanhoe*, before leaving England with her father for a more tolerant Muslim Grenada, Jewess Rebecca declines Rowena's invitation to stay, since her lady's hospitality depends on the condition of Rebecca's conversion. Secondly, the Waverley Novels constantly draw attention to the power of the subaltern's languages. It is generally agreed that Scott deliberately uses languages to differentiate among classes in his fictions. Middle and upper class characters use standard spoken English; the other languages spoken by other social classes are more dialectical. This provincial speech is also called hearth language (such as Scots) as it is only spoken and understood by and within specific language communities. Accordingly, the vernacular languages of the subalterns serve not only as their exclusive protective colouring, but also as a site to resist colonizing power. Moreover, the use of non-standard

forms of language in this case, as compellingly argued by Pittock, "inevitably reinscribed altermentality rather than erasing it."[26] In *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* (1818), the advice of the Duke of Argyle to Jeanie Deans to "shew you have a Scots tongue in your head"[27] when having an audience with the Queen is a typical example. Thirdly, many of the subaltern characters (such as Rob Roy and Redgauntlet) are represented as being in disguise. By taking on forms of disguise, these characters have their identities both concealed and shifted. They therefore enjoy an exceptional ability to travel about within the country and abroad. They remain unmolested even in the most dangerous circumstances. This mobility enables them to breach the boundaries between various social and political groups, and makes it easier for them to be in contact with all sections of society. The Waverley Novels attempt to define disguise as a political form of resistance to the hegemonic power of the State and also as a way to reproduce/recover the self of the oppressed. Fourthly, many of Scott's marginal characters with Oriental backgrounds frequently suggest a possibility, desire, or need for the sort of open-mindedness and hospitality to foreign elements and peoples with dissimilar identities that the historical record cannot always support. Their internationalism and, indeed, cosmopolitanism reject national and geographical boundaries. Saladin, the common enemy of the Crusaders, is one such character who upholds the honour of chivalry, integrity, and hospitality in *The Talisman* (1825). Lastly, subaltern characters are often providers of unconditional welcome, rather than recipients of hospitality. This willingness to give not only forms a symbolically significant part of subaltern characters' identities, but also denotes their possession of strength. For example, the disinterested generosity extended by Edie Ochiltree helps to knit together a potentially disintegrating community. Dandie Dinmont and Meg Merrilies also perform similar functions in *Guy Mannering*. Thefive features described above not only define subaltern characters in Scott's fictions as autonomous individuals but also emphasise the significance of their ability to initiate action in resisting any form of authority. In addition, they also confirm the agency of the marginalized people in reassessing and reconfiguring their position in relation to the dominating power, and their effective strategies for moving from the subordinate role to an empowering one.

In re-examining Scott's attitude towards socially and politically marginalized peoples, this essay demonstrates five significant features of the subaltern in the Waverley Novels which could be considered as Scott's contribution to the development of postcolonial/subaltern discourse. Moreover, this study also indicates that Scott, well over a century before that discourse began, had already begun the process of giving the subaltern

a truly authentic and powerful voice. By reading Scott in the context of literary/social theories, this essay has argued that both Scott's works and these theories can be mutually supported and, yet, simultaneously challenged.

Notes

[1] Montserrat Guibernau, *Nations without States* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999), 13-4.
[2] Alison Lumsden, "'Beyond the Dusky Barrier': Perceptions of the Highlands in the Waverley Novels," in *Mìorun Mòr nan Gall, 'The Great Ill-Will of the Lowlander'? Lowland Perceptions of the Highlands, Medieval and Modern,* ed. Dauvit Broun and Martin MacGregor (Glasgow: Centre for Scottish and Celtic Studies, 2007), 185.
[3] Walter Scott, *Rob Roy*, ed. David Hewitt (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 289; see also Murray Pittock, "Sir Walter Scott: Historiography Contested by Fiction," in *The Cambridge History of the English Novel,* ed. Robert Caserio (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), (forthcoming).
[4] See Murray Pittock, "Historiography," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Alexander Broadie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
[5] Ibid., 151.
[6] Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975).
[7] A.O.J. Cockshut, *The Achievement of Walter Scott* (London: Collins, 1969), 39-40.
[8] David Hewitt, "Walter Scott," in *The History of Scottish Literature: Nineteenth Century V. III*, ed. Douglas Gifford (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1989), 73.
[9] David Daiches, "Scott's Achievement as a Novelist," in *Scott's Mind and Art*, ed. A. Norman Jeffares (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1969), 22.
[10] Fiona Robertson, "Walter Scott," in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature V. III., ed.* Thomas Clancy, Murray Pittock, and Susan Manning (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 187.
[11] Hewitt, "Walter Scott," 73.
[12] Pittock, "Sir Walter Scott: Historiography Contested by Fiction".
[13] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, trans. and ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), 52.
[14] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1963), 12.
[15] Carlos Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Millar*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), xiii.
[16] Ranajit Guha, "Chandra's Death," in *Subaltern Studies* V: *Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Ranajit Guha (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987), 138.

[17] This phrase is derived from the title of one of Guha's essays. Ranajit Guha, "The Small Voice of History," in *Subaltern Studies* IX: *Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Shahid and Dipesh Chakrabarty (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996).
[18] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).
[19] Ibid., 280.
[20] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 1999), 28.
[21] Douglas Mack, *Scottish Fiction and the British Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 11.
[22] Jane Hiddlestone, *Understanding Postcolonialism* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2009), 73.
[23] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (London: Penguin Books, 1967), 193.
[24] Ibid., 43.
[25] Murray Pittock, *Scottish and Irish Romanticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 23.
[26] Ibid., 7.
[27] Walter Scott, *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, ed. David Hewitt and Alison Lumsden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 320.

CHAPTER TWO

WHO IS THE SUBALTERN? A CONSIDERATION OF THE "ORIENTAL WOMAN" IN THE WORK OF E.T.A HOFFMANN

JOANNA NEILLY

The German Romantic movement, generally considered by German literary historians to have been active from the 1790s until the late 1820s, displayed a burgeoning interest in the Orient. Texts by writers such as Ludwig Tieck, Achim von Arnim, Karoline von Günderrode, and E.T.A. Hoffmann, to name just a few, reveal a preoccupation with the East, indicative of the period's increasing focus on the Orient as the locus of poetry. The frequency of oriental themes and figures in German Romantic texts is to be explained by the movement's engagement with a surge in scholarly and philosophical Orientalism around 1800. The studies and reflections of early German Orientalists led to a call for the rejuvenation of European poetry through engagement with the Orient, and therefore, inevitably, scholarly and philosophical observations impacted upon literary depictions of the East. For example, the writer and scholar of Sanskrit, Friedrich Schlegel, claimed: "It is in the Orient that we must search for the highest Romanticism."[1] Schlegel's statement is supported in a letter to the Romantic poet Novalis, in which he wrote: "The teachings of the eternal Orient belong to every artist,"[2] and Novalis himself responded to this sentiment in his novel *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, in which the master poet Klingsohr refers to the Orient as "The land of poetry, the Romantic East."[3]

Leslie A. Willson attributes much of the Romantic enthusiasm for the Orient, and in particular, for the "Indic ideal" to the studies of Johann Gottfried Herder.[4] Herder's anthropological study, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (*Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*), for example, locates in India the origins of humanity, and clear references are made to the proximity of the Indian people to nature. A

broad consensus emerged that the Orient, and in particular India, was the birthplace of poetry, standing for an exemplary place of beauty and nature which symbolised the Romantic ideal for poetic creation. This coding of the East by the German Romantics may be read as their involvement in a process classified by Edward Saïd as "Orientalizing the Oriental."[5] Saïd's observation relates to Western attempts to represent the Eastern Other, which have traditionally been denounced by postcolonial theorists, who view such attempts as a means of entrenching Western dominance and superiority by reducing the Orient to a set of stock images. Saïd points out that even authors operating outside of colonial power structures may be guilty of a sort of intellectual Orientalism, which attempts to classify and explain the Other by way of clichés. The "kind of intellectual *authority* over the Orient within Western culture" is therefore not restricted to British and French works, but may also be traced in German texts dealing with the Orient, and indeed, even the apparently cosmopolitan Romantics were not resistant to orientalist stereotyping.[6] An example of such stereotyping may be found in the Romantic conceptualisation of the oriental woman, who, according to Ulrike Stamm, became a personification of European fantasies of the Orient in the nineteenth century, standing for "sensuality, mystery, splendour and excess."[7] Romantic responses to this image of oriental femininity are to be found in Achim von Arnim's short story *Melück Maria Blainville*, when the eponymous Turkish heroine welcomes her lover to a boudoir resplendent with golden roses. The oriental slave girl Zulima in Novalis's *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* also conforms to this image, as she sings of her old life before she was captured by the crusading knights, claiming that if only she were to be returned to her natural home, she would be seen wearing richly embroidered garments.

In her 1988 essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?," Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak deals with the consequences of an intellectual construction of the Other, defining the subaltern as one who is deprived both of the ability to identify their condition, and of the voice with which this condition might be expressed, if it were known.[8] The resultant disempowerment is exacerbated when Western intellectuals attempt to make known a condition of which they have no knowledge. The representative intellectual speaks from a point of view born of Western production, and this tendency to "diagnose the episteme" denies the subaltern the opportunity to speak. Saïd's citation of Karl Marx, with which he opens *Orientalism*, illustrates perfectly the Western attitude questioned here: "They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented."[9] Spivak identifies the female subaltern as "even more deeply in shadow" because "the ideological

construction of gender keeps the male dominant."[10] This allows male Western representations of the oriental woman to gain in authority and in turn to propagate European patriarchy. Indeed, Saïd reads male-authored oriental women, who are often sensuous without limit and above all willing, as projections of a male fantasy.

It is, however, possible to view German Romantic responses to the Orient, and the corresponding images of oriental femininity, in a more positive light. In recent years, postcolonial writing has been criticised for its essentialist treatment of Western engagement with the Orient, with critics arguing that it is possible, and indeed necessary, to interpret so-called orientalist works more sympathetically in the context of their time. Charis Goer and Michael Hofmann, for example, argue that German Orientalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was not characterised by disdain for the Other, but rather by a curiosity tempered with respect.[11] John MacKenzie goes further, claiming that study of the Orient could provide a critical lens through which to view European society, and was "as likely to be oppositional as consensual in relation to established power structures, a promoter of a ferment in ideas as in artistic innovation."[12]

Proof of such opposition to the traditional European, patriarchal mode of thought criticised by Saïd and Spivak, is to be found in tales by E.T.A. Hoffmann, such as *The Golden Pot* and *Little Zaches, named Zinnober*, which set up an East-West binary. An analysis of Hoffmann's different treatment of Eastern and Western women reveals how this binary acts to destabilise discourses of gender. These tales present oriental women who are not bound by the constraints of the oppressive, male-controlled society of early nineteenth-century Europe. Much of Hoffmann's work parodies passive young women of the German bourgeois classes and satirises the male construction of the ideal female muse, who is essentially without a voice. In contrast, Hoffmann's oriental women and their romantic relationships with male protagonists escape the author's critical treatment.

Furthermore, it appears that different types of behaviour are deemed acceptable for Eastern and Western women. For example, when the German Veronika engages in magic in *The Golden Pot*, it is a terrifying experience for her, and not long after this event she reverts to more passive behaviour, retiring into the role of bourgeois wife. On the other hand, the magic of the oriental fairy Rosabelverde in *Little Zaches, named Zinnober* is a positive force, and she refuses to compromise her independence. This paradox in Hoffmann's treatment of Eastern and Western women reveals how he exploits the cultural borders between them in order to provide critical comment on the literature and society of his time. In view of

Spivak's identification of the possession of a voice and the freedom from authoritarian control as indications of empowerment, this binary also reveals that subaltern status, often accorded in postcolonial discourse to the female Other, is in fact more applicable to Hoffmann's bourgeois German women then to their oriental counterparts.

Studies of the role of women in Hoffmann's writing have traditionally found that many of his female characters are silenced by a male authority, often the father. Both James McGlathery and Alice Kuzniar's studies of the tale, *Councillor Krespel*, for example, conclude that the paternal desire to control leads to the silencing of the female voice.[13] In the tale, which is set in Germany, Councillor Krespel forbids his talented daughter Antonie to sing, on the basis of a questionable medical diagnosis, which states that should she continue to sing it will damage her health fatally. As part of this prohibition, Krepsel also cancels Antonie's planned marriage to a composer, a condition to which she ostensibly agrees, but which, the text strongly implies, is enforced by her father, who chases the composer from his home. Instead of allowing a future in which Antonie and her composer husband might make music together, Krespel jealously guards Antonie and makes music on her behalf, representing her voice by playing the violin. Antonie's submission to Krespel's control becomes so deeply embedded in her psychological make-up that it governs her behaviour and her responses to her father: she even claims to hear her own voice in the violin's song. The figure of the dominating father, who can be likened to Spivak's representative intellectual in his usurpation of the female voice, is represented in its most extreme form in *The Sandman*. In this tale, the clockwork doll Olimpia is presented to society as the living daughter of Professor Spalanzani, who controls her every move. Lifeless and voiceless, Olimpia is incapable of independent thought and can do nothing but move according to Spalanzani's wishes. Olimpia's character enables Hoffmann to provide ironic commentary on contemporary society and its treatment and expectations of women.

Studies by scholars such as Sally Winkle, Elizabeth Eger, and Charlotte Grant demonstrate how a shift in gender-specific roles in the late eighteenth century, resulting from the growth of industry and the corresponding expansion of the bourgeois class, meant that the productive value of middle class women dropped, as they were no longer required to provide financial support to the family.[14] This, in effect, meant a silencing of women in the public sphere, and their confinement to the private sphere of home and family. As women's productive value was downgraded, their new value was recognised in their ability to make a "good match" in marriage, and thus the concept of marriage for love was subordinated to