

Singing the Nation: British Song Culture

by

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates articulations of nationalism and empire found within British song culture from the early eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries. It seeks to expand our critical understanding of song culture, reading it as a varied, complex and multi-mediated form and suggesting that song culture needs to be situated at the centre of the culture of the Romantic period. I consider the characteristics of fluidity, mobility, dynamism, transformation, capaciousness, performativity evident in the work of four cultural producers: Allan Ramsay (1684-1758), Robert Burns (1759-1796), Charles Dibdin (1745-1814), and Thomas Moore (1779-1852). Each one was involved in the production of song culture through such practices as collecting, editing, writing, or performing songs. Chapter One examines the complicated ways in which song culture, gender, and the tropological play in the idea of “voice” figure in the construction of national identity in Allan Ramsay’s song collection *The Tea-Table Miscellany* (1724-1876). Chapter Two discusses the fluid form of national identity expressed in the songs of Robert Burns resulting from the interplay of history, ideas of the nation, and his activities as a producer, collector, and reviser of Scottish songs. Chapter Three suggests how the sea songs of Charles Dibdin not only posit an expansive form of national identity but reveal the capacity of song culture to effect change as well as challenge our understanding of late-eighteenth-century radicalism. Finally, Chapter Four examines the issue of context, considering how the material (con)textualization of Moore’s Irish songs affects the form of national belonging they express. These case studies provide evidence of how national song culture during this period could serve multiple, sometimes oppositional political purposes.

Keywords: Allan Ramsay; Robert Burns; Charles Dibdin; Thomas Moore; song culture; nationalism; mediation; orality; scribal culture; print culture;

Dedication

To David, Caepher, Hannah, and Josie, with love

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Moore's Irish Melodies (1846)

Introduction

This dissertation investigates articulations of nationalism and empire found within British song culture from the early eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries.¹ It seeks to expand our critical understanding of song culture, reading it as a varied, complex and multi-mediated form and suggesting that song culture needs to be situated at the centre of the culture of the Romantic period. With its focus on songs as dynamic objects, the project is informed at least partially by my early experiences. As a young child of immigrant parents, I spent endless weeks every summer riding in the back of the car listening to and joining in with the songs my family sang as we travelled the roads of our new home, Canada. These songs were an eclectic gathering of cultural materials drawn from various regions of the transatlantic world. We sang sea ballads from the Maritimes, cowboy songs from the American Midwest, mining songs from the great coalfields of North East England, and folk songs from Ireland. The songs often related complex narratives concerning the political, religious, social and economic histories of these regions. Highly mobile, fluid cultural forms, these songs travelled *to* us from regions close and far, and they also travelled *with* us, entertaining, informing, providing knowledge of other places, people, and times. For my parents, the English songs reminded them of the home they had left and evoked a process of remembering. For me, my brothers, and sister, who were either too young to remember England or who were born in Canada, the songs proved highly mutable as we adapted the music and lyrics to the circumstances of travel—a guitar could be easily played in a car, and forgotten or misremembered words could be replaced with others. Some lyrics remained intact,

¹“Songs” include materials collected in oral, manuscript or print form which were designated as “songs” at the time of collection. See below for an elaboration on the model of song culture I employ throughout this dissertation.

others transformed under the nexus of geographical, cultural, and temporal distance. Thus, from an early age I was aware of the transportability and fluidity of song culture and its connections to (and dispersal from) ideas of “home.” I was also struck by how songs move: they move in and over time; they move in space; they move the emotions. Bodies move in performance, singing, dancing, playing instruments. Effective and affecting, songs move people physically, temporally and emotionally, but they also move people to adapt, evolve, remember and transform.

I open with this anecdote for three reasons. First, it suggests the subtle interplay between songs and national identity, a theme that I explore throughout this project. Second, it reveals the role of medial and social processes in the construction of cultural memory (Erll and Rigney, Introduction, 5). Third, the features which I associate with the songs I sang as a child —fluidity, mobility, dynamism, transformativity, capaciousness, performativity—are evident in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century song culture and make it, I argue, especially well-suited to represent the diverse, complex, and multiple interests of the nation. In fact, many of these characteristics are shared with nationalism itself, which was and continues to be ever-evolving, flexible, and multifarious.²

This dissertation explores these features and correspondences in the songs associated with four cultural producers: Allan Ramsay (1684-1758), Robert Burns (1759-1796), Charles Dibdin (1745-1814), and Thomas Moore (1779-1852). Each one was involved in the production of song culture through such practices as collecting, editing, writing, or performing songs. These case studies provide evidence of how national song

² For a discussion of nationalism as complex, fluid, and ever-evolving, see Colin Kidd’s *Union and Unionism: Political Thought in Scotland, 1500-2000* (2008). For a discussion of nationalism as culturally mediated, see Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (2006). Though Anderson’s work has proven to be very important, it tends to emphasize, perhaps over-emphasize, the role of print culture in the construction of national identity. Explaining the rise of nationalism, for example, Anderson argues that contingent with economic transformations, technological developments (especially in the field of communications), and social and scientific innovations, “the search was on . . . for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together. Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways” (36).

culture during this period was both a means of transmission for the status quo and a catalyst for change. Song culture was and continues to be dynamic and multifarious, capable of expressing diverse interests simultaneously. A process, it takes place in time, again and again, never to be captured entirely. Continuously in conversation with the contemporary moment, the moment of its inception is the moment of its performance. Multiply mediated, it exists—at least in the period under study—at the nexus of oral, scribal, and print cultures, continuously negotiating the terms of its existence as well as the interests it represents and re-presents.

While my interest in songs has been life-long, my research topic—song culture in the Romantic period—found its genesis in my work on Robert Burns’s authorial self-fashioning, which in turn led to Ramsay and eventually Didin and Moore, all of whom were actively engaged with their nation’s song culture. Producers of popular cultural forms (such as songs, theatre, poetry, for examples), their work was well-received during their lifetime. What I discovered during my initial research was the centrality of song to their lives as well as to the nations of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Yet, I found the subject—Romantic period song—surprisingly under researched. Certainly, there has been excellent work done in this area (Leith Davis, Kirsteen McCue, Maureen McLane, Steve Newman and Katie Trumpener for examples), but it has often focused on song culture as a reflection of folk and oral culture. Given the integral role played by song culture in the life of the cultural landscapes of Britain, both high and low, much more needs to be done to expand the search for song culture. Important in this process is also the development of a language which can address the critical and aesthetic complexity of the form. This vocabulary must speak to song culture’s dynamic, multi-mediated nature and discuss its capacity to entertain numerous, often conflicting positions. This dissertation will contribute to recognizing song culture as an important and varied means of cultural transmission during this period. Because my overarching project is concerned with the diverse and complex articulations of national belonging, each chapter of the dissertation adopts a different methodological and theoretical model. Each chapter is a

case study and each is very different from the others, yet together they demonstrate the complexity and richness of the field of song culture.

Methodologies and Theory

The primary objectives of this project are three-fold: 1) to investigate the articulations of nationalism and empire found within British song culture from the early eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries; 2) to expand our critical understanding of song culture, and to read it as a varied, complex and multi-mediated form; and 3) to situate song culture at the centre of the culture of the Romantic period. In keeping with these objectives, individual producers of culture have been chosen with a view to representing the multifarious and complex articulations of nationalism and empire found in song culture in diverse geographical locations throughout Britain and its empire during this period. Each of the cultural producers--Allan Ramsay, Robert Burns, Charles Dibdin, and Thomas Moore—was involved in the production of song culture, either through collecting, editing, writing, or performing songs.

Chapter One examines Allan Ramsay's song collection *The Tea-Table Miscellany* (1724-1737). This chapter sets the stage for the rest of the chapters by examining the complicated ways in which song culture, gender, and the tropological play in the idea of "voice" figure in the construction of national identity. Ramsay, like all of the song producers examined in this dissertation, was active in various capacities in the cultural field of his day. He was a poet, writer of popular Scots songs, and bookseller. He was involved in the Edinburgh theatre scene and he opened the first circulating library in Britain, leading some of his contemporaries to accuse him of channelling the culture of the British metropole into the Scottish capital. Ramsay collected, wrote, and edited a collection of Scots songs titled *The Tea-Table Miscellany: Collection of Scots Songs* (1724-1737). True to its name, the miscellany featured a diverse ensemble of songs, including those written or adapted by Ramsay, as well as Jacobite songs, love songs, and

traditional ballads.³ The *Miscellany* evolved over time; it included songs featuring both Scots dialect and poetic form (standard habbie), and was one of the earliest works to declare itself as constituting a collection of Scots national songs. An important and early figure, Ramsay adopted a wide-ranging, inclusive approach to the production, editing, and collecting of national song culture.

In Chapter Two I discuss the fluid form of national identity expressed in the songs of Robert Burns resulting from the interaction of ideas relating to history, the nation, and his activities as a producer, collector, and reviser of Scottish songs. As mentioned above, this dissertation came out of my interest in Burns. When I began reading Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1786, 1787), I found several songs titled simply "Song," under which was written the name of a tune. I wondered-- how were these songs? Where was the music? What made them songs? Did everyone know these tunes? This in turn reminded me of other Romantic period works, which also lacked music, at least in the published forms I had seen--such as Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, and Shelley's "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty": I was, frankly, mystified by the designation "song." I began to wonder if there was a conversation occurring off the printed page which could provide information on song culture. I began to suspect that song culture was not liminal or marginal as I initially assumed, but, rather, a pervasive and influential mode of cultural production.

This, in turn, led me to Burns's letters. In my early research on Burns I was struck by his seemingly inexhaustible energy as a producer of the nation's songs.⁴ Working with Scottish engraver James Johnson, helping him gather songs for Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803), Burns collected, adapted, wrote new, collated and edited hundreds of songs. Burns also worked tirelessly, contributing in similar fashion to George Thomson's *Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice* (1793-1818).

3 Among the contributors of Jacobite songs were the Scottish poets and Jacobite army officers William Hamilton of Bangour (1704-1754) and Alexander Robertson of Struan (c. 1670-1749).

4 I discuss Burns's engagement with national song culture in detail in Chapter Two.

He travelled around the countryside, gathering materials for both Johnson and Thomson, at the same time writing endless letters requesting lyrics and airs. Burns was a prolific letter writer, and his correspondence is filled with references to music and lyrics. His letters were also the means by which he communicated his theoretical understanding of Scottish song culture, and by which he directed the editorial practices of those such as Johnson and Thomson who were busy gathering materials for what would constitute important national song collections. Through his letters we see him developing networks of collaboration, sending and receiving music and lyrics, directly and intimately connecting with people, and seeking their assistance with the nation's songs. As a fluid process, Burns's nationalism takes shape in the shifting practices of performance.

Chapter Three reveals how the sea songs of Charles Dibdin not only posit an expansive form of national identity but reveal the capacity of song culture to effect change. Charles Dibdin (1745-1814) was active in various capacities in the late eighteenth-century British cultural field. Like Allan Ramsay, Dibdin enjoyed a varied and successful career. Of his many, diverse cultural products, this chapter focusses on his sea songs, which, were aligned--by many contemporary commentators--with nationalist feeling. Multi-mediated cultural forms, Dibdin's songs were performed on the stage, circulated through scribal culture, and appeared in print. Engaging with issues of gender, politics, religion, and the nation, Dibdin's songs posit a form of national identity which created a space for British seamen—most of whom came from the lower orders of British society—to be seen as integral to the realization and preservation of the political, military, and economic objectives of the state.

Finally, in Chapter Four I examine two different editions of Thomas Moore's Irish songs, and consider how the material (con)textualization of Thomas Moore's Irish songs affects the national belonging they express. The first edition I examine is a multi-volume work brought out by the Irish publishing brothers James and William Power. Its textual space is dominated by musical scores, and it highlights the relationship between music and lyrics while at the same time suggesting the performativity integral to both song culture and nationalism. The second edition I examine was brought out by

Longmans in 1846. Instead of traditional music scores, Moore's lyrics are illustrated by the Irish history painter and illustrator Daniel Maclise (*bap.* 1806-1870). While scholars have claimed that the removal of the traditional music scores have resulted in the depoliticization of Moore's songs in this second edition, I demonstrate that the interplay of Moore's lyrics and Maclise's illustrations model a national culture which—much like the earlier Power edition—is collaboratively developed, as well as sensitive to the historical, political, and cultural moment of its inception

Together, these chapters seek to expand our critical understanding of song culture, reading it as a varied, complex and multi-mediated form. Throughout this work I explore the interplay between song culture and national identity. I also consider the role of medial and social processes in the construction of cultural memory. While I employ the term “medium” to signify “simply any material through which something else may be transmitted” (Hartley 171), I use “mediate and “remediate” interchangeably. Raymond Williams, in his discussion of the term “mediation,” points to Theodor Adorno's understanding of the term. “Mediation,” Theodor Adorno claims, “is in the object itself, not something between the object and that to which it is brought. What is contained in communications, however, is solely the relationship between producer and consumer” (quoted in Williams 206). Williams suggests that

All ‘objects,’ and in this context notably works of art, are mediated by specific social relations but cannot be reduced to an abstraction of that relationship; the mediation is positive and in a sense autonomous. This is related, if controversially, to FORMALIST (q.v.) theory, in which the *form* (which may or may not be seen as a mediation) supersedes questions of the relationships which lie on either side of it, among its ‘producers’ or its ‘consumers.’ (206)

I also employ, however implicitly some elements of Mark Federman has described as Marshall McLuhan's “enigmatic paradox, ‘The medium is the message.’” In *Understanding Media*, McLuhan declares that

In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting and dividing all things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that,

in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium—that is, of any extension of ourselves—result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology. (quoted in Federman 1)

While there have been almost limitless interpretations of McLuhan's ideas, especially this one, I follow Federman's analysis in understanding McLuhan to be gesturing towards the role of a medium (or media) in effecting change in human relations either through a new medium (or media) or an established medium (or media) used in a new way. Federman notes that new innovations often involve effects which we anticipated. However, "it is also often the case that, after a long period of time and experience with the new innovation, we look backward and realize that there were some effects of which we were entirely unaware at the outset" (1). "Many of the unanticipated consequences stem from the fact that there are conditions in our society and culture that we just don't take into consideration in our planning." For McLuhan, a "'message,' is, 'the change of scale or pace or pattern' that a new invention or innovation 'introduces into human affairs' (McLuhan 8). Note that it is not the content or use of the innovation, but the change in inter-personal dynamics that the innovation brings with it" (1). While admittedly, McLuhan developed his ideas in relation to the technological developments of the twentieth century, at the same time, Federman's analysis, which suggests that "A McLuhan message always tells us to look beyond the obvious and seek the non-obvious changes or effects that are enabled, enhanced, accelerated or extended by the new thing" (or the new application of an established "thing," I would add), seems to offer the potential of opening up our understanding of the ways song culture's continuous and open cycle of mediation affected eighteenth- and nineteenth-century culture, particularly as an articulation of national belonging.

Facts require explanations, and all explanations, even bad ones, presume a configuration of concepts, which we provisionally call 'theory.' In other words, theory is not simply a desirable but a *necessary* relation between facts and their explanations. (Ahmad 34)

My project seeks to explain a number of facts (such as the fact that Allan Ramsay's collection of songs *The Tea-Table Miscellany* was published throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries). Because this process of explanation requires the deployment of theory, my work draws on various theories—"configuration[s] of concepts"--in its attempt to explain the complex ways in which cultural producers negotiated and produced the national cultural landscape during this period.

I analyze a range of musical genres (ballads, sea songs, love songs, for example) produced and/or collected by canonical and noncanonical authors (such as Allan Ramsay, Robert Burns, Charles Dibdin, and Thomas Moore) working within Scotland, England, and Ireland (though Thomas Moore produced the majority of his songs while resident in England). Shortly after beginning this project, I heard Paula McDowell give a talk on orality in the eighteenth century. At the end of her talk, someone asked her how she dealt with the difficulty of mediation. She was, after all, investigating oral culture through the materials available which generally took print or scribal form. Her answer—or at least my memory of her response—was "The best way that I can." More specifically, however, she noted the problematic nature of treatments of orality which rely on displacement or cross pollination models based on the separation of print and oral cultures. Her work started me thinking seriously about the essential role mediation played in the construction of song culture. Rather than seeing mediation as an obstacle to be overcome, or a distance to be navigated, I have come to see mediation as essential to song culture; all songs participate in a continuous, open cycle of remediation during their "life time" as songs. Thus, integral to this dissertation has been the development of an approach to song culture which attends to the complex integrations of oral, scribal, and print cultures and also positions song culture within the larger landscape of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century oralities.

In developing a model of song culture, I employ the concept of "textualized oralities" to indicate (and heighten awareness of) the multiple and complex mediations which songs not only "go through," but, I argue, are integral to this cultural form. Even if a song seems to exist only in print form, its lyrics published without musical score,

Kirsteen McCue suggests that it “still created a ‘soundscape,’ or ‘phonic world’ all of its own—by its known historical relation to a melody, by its word choice or the rhythms and sounds of its refrain” (90). An example of this open and continuous cycle of mediation is found in Adam Fox’s discussion of the ballad *Chevy Chase*, which recounts a battle between a Scottish and English chieftan on the Scottish borderlands.⁵ The ballad was first recorded by the singer Richard Sheale of Tamworth in Staffordshire, who “toured the country singing in noblemen’s houses and at fairs.” Fox tells us that “It was to him that we owe the first recorded version of this most famous of all songs as it was transcribed into his working notebook sometime between 1557 and 1565” (2).

In common with almost all of the songs and ballads in the book, ‘The Hunting of the Cheviot’ [*Chevy Chase*] seems to have been taken down from a printed broadside. It must, therefore, have been among the group of great historical ballads of the later Middle Ages which was adopted by the new technology of print in the early sixteenth century. Thus, by Sheale’s day, *Chevy Chase* was already the product of a long series of interactions between oral, manuscript, and print culture. What probably began in manuscript form passed into oral circulation and eventually into print. From print it passed back again into manuscript and lived on in the mouths of minstrels and their audiences. (2-3)

Fox details the series of mediations the song went through in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, noting that it enjoyed widespread popularity, and was celebrated by cultural producers as temporally diverse as Ben Jonson and Thomas Addison. Observing the influence of text on English society generally and English cultural production more specifically, during this period, Fox claims that “England . . . was already a society profoundly influenced by the written word at every social level, not merely in legal and administrative contexts but down to the very fabric of its forms of entertainment and imaginative expression” (5). Thus, he argues that “Any crude binary opposition between ‘oral’ and ‘literate’ culture fails to accommodate the reciprocity between the different media by this time,” much as attempts to construct “any crude

5 According to Fox, the battle described in the ballad may have been that which took place in 1436 between the Northumberland earl Henry Percy and the Angus earl William Douglas (2).

dichotomy between ‘elite’ and ‘popular’ fails to illuminate a spectrum of participation which extended from the Lain verse [translations of Chevy Chase] to the rule style of blind crowders” such as Richard Sheale (6). In fact, he claims that the oral culture he examines in his work, “even those which were largely the preserve of the unlettered majority, [were] profoundly influenced on some level by the fruits of the written and printed word” (9-10). Although Fox is concerned with, as the title of his book suggests, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700*, the period preceding the one I discuss and does not deal explicitly with song culture, his insights are valuable to establishing the early historicity of the intersections of oral, scribal, and print cultures.

Each of the songs I examine inhabited both oral and print fields at some time in its “life” as a song, though it may not have taken oral and print form simultaneously, and though the oral field may have been signified solely through the classification of the song as a song, with no direct evidence of performance. Moreover, the agents under study collected, wrote, revised, or performed their cultural products (songs) with the possibility of other, perhaps multiple, mediations in mind, regardless of the material's source (oral, manuscript, or print). For example, for *The Scots Musical Museum*, James Johnson and Robert Burns collected materials by word of mouth, and from oral performance, letters, and printed materials with a view to publishing them in print form. The integral role of scribal culture in the mediation and production of songs, moreover, is demonstrated by Charles Dibdin, who wrote songs for the stage which he published individually and in collections, and sometimes brought out published versions of his work at the same time as it was being performed on stage so that it was circulating in oral, scribal, and print forms simultaneously. The advertisement below declares the novelty and variety of the music Dibdin produced.

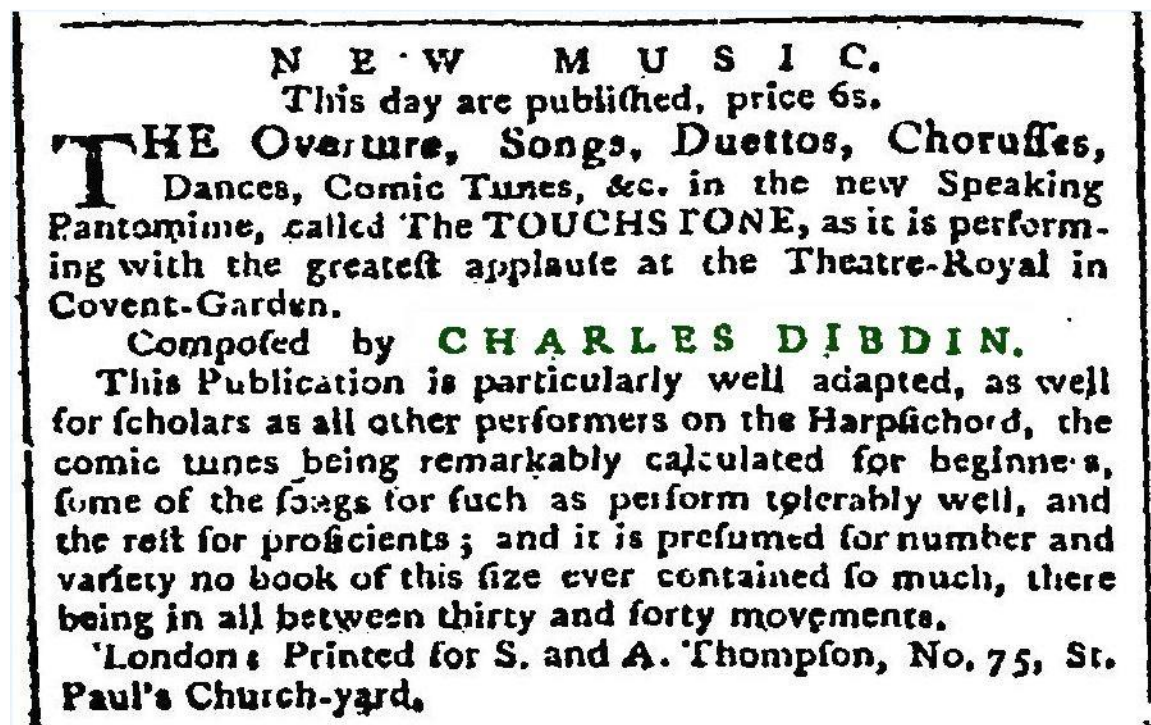


Figure 1.1. “New Music,” *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 Feb. 1779

It also ties Dibdin’s music to his pantomime *The Touchstone*, that was being staged at the Theatre-Royal in Covent Garden. The co-temporality of the multiple mediations is emphasized by the adjectival (present participle) use of “performing.” At the same time, the advertisement anticipates future performances as the printed music--arranged for performance by musicians of varying abilities and interests (“scholars,” “beginners,” and the “proficients”)—moves from the public to the private sphere, where it is expected to circulate orally, aurally, and through print. The activities of the cultural producers examined in this project demonstrate the complicated ways in which oral, scribal and print cultures worked together—in conjunction with other technologies—to produce the textualized oralities out of which the song culture analyzed in this project was generated.

Also important to this project is a consideration of the effect of song as sound. Mary-Ann Constantine reminds us that “It is easy to forget, leafing through scrawled manuscripts or reading in wide-margined, footnoted collections of poems, that the eighteenth century was full of musical noises; that songs went the rounds of pubs,

workplaces, drawing rooms, and nurseries, that they were a soundtrack to political, social, and domestic life, as well as becoming, by the end of the century, objects of antiquarian interest” (“Songs and Stones” 247). In attending to this “musical noisiness,” I draw on theories of soundscapes, as found in Matthew Nudds and Casey O’Callaghan’s *Sounds and Perception: New Philosophical Essays* (2009), which shed light on the “other [than visual] sensible modalities and sensible features that figure in our capacity to negotiate and understand our environments” (2). I also employ Adam Fox’s ideas on the interplay of oral, scribal, and print cultures as articulated in *The Spoken Word: Oral Culture in Britain, 1500-1850* (2002), and *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700* (2000).

As I am concerned with imperial and national (intra-and inter-national) tensions found within British song culture, I employ several theoretical and critical concepts found within the fields of postcolonialism and nationalism. One of the difficulties my project must address is the problematic nature of applying postcolonial theories to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cultural production in the British Isles. I am aware that these theories have been developed in response to specific historic, political, and economic conditions. Frantz Fanon, for example, cultivated his revolutionary theory in direct response to African struggles for independence. The application of postcolonial theory to a different set of historical, political, and economic conditions must therefore be carefully considered. As Suvir Kaul points out, however, not only has postcolonial scholarship “been a powerful intellectual resource for the delegitimation of the ideologies and self-justification of modern empires,” but it has enabled scholars to “emphasize the role played by military coercion, economic exploitation, and cultural incorporation in the internal making of the imperialist nation-states of Europe, and argue that the historical force of colonialist practices is also at work in the domestic political and economic consolidation of the nation” (2-3). Thus, Kaul contends that postcolonial criticism reveals the sometimes hidden links between a nation’s cultural, political, economic and military activities: “Culture—the arts, literature, architecture—and the life of the mind are in particular held by many scholars to be inviolate, to be spheres of creativity separate

from the buccaneering energies of armed trade and territorial conquest” (3). Yet, as Kaul makes clear, “Postcolonial criticism refuses to occlude these connections, and demonstrates instead the worldly ambitions of art and writing in the age of empire” (3). Because of postcolonial criticism’s capacity to interrogate the links between culture, economics, and politics in both the internal and external life of a nation, the theoretically complex and methodologically diverse approaches found within this field have provided the tools necessary for my project.

I have also found extremely valuable works which deal specifically with the development of nationalism within the individual nations examined in my thesis, such as Gerald Newman’s *The Rise of English Nationalism* (1997), David Lloyd’s *Anomalous States: Irish Writing and the Post-Colonial Moment* (1993), Murray Pittock’s, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685-1789* (1997), and Kathleen Wilson’s *A New Imperial History* (2004). In developing an understanding of national identity I have drawn on Kathleen Wilson’s *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (2003), and her *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (1995), and Linda Colley’s *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (1992), all of which speak to the many and diverse interests and allegiances which collectively influence the construction of national identity during this period. Peter Sahlin tells us that national identity “like ethnic or communal identity, is contingent and relational: it is defined by the social or territorial boundaries drawn to distinguish the collective self and its implicit negation, the other” (quoted in Colley, 5-6). This idea of the self being constituted in relation to the other is integral to Colley’s model of the development of Britishness, which she sees as taking shape in response to ongoing conflict between Britain and France over a 130 year period from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries (1). Also helpful is Wilson’s sense of identity as “tentative, multiple and contingent” and her historicization of identity:

In the eighteenth century, the relations of individuals and collectives to each other were rendered through religion, politics, geography, sociability,

politeness and ‘stage’ of civilization, among other things, and these relations, or identities, could be expressed through verbal, textual, kinesthetic and visual forms. (*Island Race* 3)

Murray Pittock’s *Scottish and Irish Romanticism* (2008) also provides an important model of national culture as well as a clear and useful definition of Romanticism which I employ (though in revised forms) throughout the project.

My research has revealed national identity to be—much like the nation itself—multifarious, fluid, and capacious, and, as Colley and Wilson claim, relational and historically constituted. I have also found it to be inextricably bound up in and mediated through cultural memory.⁶ In the Introduction to *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory* (2009), Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney describe the various influences affecting the construction of cultural memory, suggesting that in addition to “the social frameworks in which [individual memory] operates,” “‘media’ of all sorts—spoken language, letters, books, photos, films—also provide frameworks for shaping both experience and memory.”

They do so in at least two, interconnected ways, as instruments for sense-making, they mediate between the individual and the world; as agents of networking, they mediate between individuals and groups. . . . Indeed, the very concept of cultural memory is itself premised on the idea that memory can only become collective as part of a continuous process whereby memories are shared with the help of symbolic artefacts that mediate between individuals and, in the process, create communality across both space and time.(1)

⁶ Vijay Agnew suggests the transformativity of remembering when she tells us that it “can create new understandings of both the past and the present” (8). Though memory is often associated with nostalgia, Gayle Green differentiates between the two: “Whereas ‘nostalgia’ is the desire to return home, ‘to remember’ is to bring to mind’ or ‘think of again,’ ‘to be mindful of,’ ‘to recollect.’ Both ‘remembering’ and ‘re-collecting,’ suggest a connecting, assembling, a bringing together of things in relation to one another Memory may look back in order to move forward and transform disabling fictions to enabling fictions, altering our relations to the present and future(cited in Agnew, 2005, 9). Others, however, see nostalgia as intimately linked with memory. Sinead McDermott argues that “When we long for the past, we long for what might have been as well as what was; it is only by incorporating such longing into our narratives that we can suspend the past and ultimately change its meanings in the present” (quoted in Agnew 9).

Erll and Rigney also note changes in the field of cultural memory studies; while initially focussing on “more stable points of reference for individuals and communities,” the field has come to see cultural memory as dynamic, “as an ongoing process of remembrance and forgetting in which individuals and groups continue to reconfigure their relationship to the past and hence reposition themselves in relation to established and emergent memory sites” (2). Remembering is performative: “it is as much a matter of acting out a relationship to the past from a particular point in the present as it is a matter of preserving and retrieving earlier stories” (2). The social and medial processes associated with the construction of cultural memory as well as its dynamic nature make it invaluable to my work on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century song culture. To a lesser degree, Pierre Bourdieu’s theoretical model of the cultural field, as articulated in *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993), also informs my understanding of cultural production generally, though my research has revealed the need to develop a model of cultural production which takes into account both collaborative as well as competitive cultural enterprises.

The dissertation also engages with current scholarly work initiated by Katie Trumpener which privileges the figure of the bard in its treatment of national culture. While undoubtedly the figure of the bard played an important role in the production of national culture during this period, interest in bardic oral tradition in our contemporary era has trumped a more nuanced landscape of oralities. At the same time, I broaden (and problematize) recent treatments such as Maureen McLane’s which focus on the folk culture roots of song by including works written by cultural producers such as Charles Dibdin, which were produced for the theatre within metropolitan centres, were concerned with topical, political, and/or urban issues, and expressed nationalist notions. Thus, my dissertation responds to the current critical focus on the bardic oral tradition by providing evidence of a more diverse and complex oral arena than previously ascribed to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain. Steve Newman’s work is also very helpful here, as is his caution to avoid “falling into a naïve account of subjective freedom or ignoring the nostalgia and elitism also bound up in the Romantic collection of the ballad” (13). Importantly, Newman claims that “From the start of the Ballad Revival, the ballad

acts as an invaluable resource for dreaming of poetic justice in a democratic key, its communal strains saving elite lyric and elite theory from the solipsism recent accounts have laid at its doorstep. But as Gay points out as early as 1728, there is a persistent danger in mistaking the politics of the imaginary for an actually existing democracy. Popular song is not intrinsically progressive; it has no built-in politics” (14). In my chapters, I explore examples of the ways song culture inhabits multiple political arenas, which can alter depending on issues of publication and performance.

Performativity/Performance

Before concluding this Introduction, some comments are needed on performance and what are, after all, songs, or, in Newman’s words, “verse designed to be sung” (8). Keeping in mind that this dissertation focuses on songs, I attempt to understand how these songs functioned. Were the songs printed in song collections such as Ramsay’s *Tea-Table Miscellany* intended to be read (silently, out loud, privately, in public)? Were these songs meant to be sung? If so, by whom, where, under what conditions? While much more work needs to be done in this area, partial answers can be found in the texts themselves. For example, in the frontispiece and imprint of the anonymously published *The Merry Companion: or, Universal Songster* (second edition, 1742) (figure 2), we can see the interplay of oral and print cultures, as well as the theme of nationalism found in many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century song collections. The frontispiece shows a social setting, a salon, in which a performance is taking place. Both the musical instruments in the foreground as well as the musicians playing and singing tell us that this is a concert; what is interesting, however, is that the singer is holding a book, presumably *The Merry Companion*; the flautist also has a book—perhaps a sheet of music—set up in front of him. The book—and reading—are integral to the performance of the songs. The mediating role of print culture in the performance is further suggested by the stack of books on the table, situated between the musical instruments and the musicians who play them and sing.

The performance provides an opportunity for not only singing and reading, but also conversation. The sociability of the occasion is suggested by the couple seated at the front left of the illustration; the man is turned to the woman, listening to her (his mouth, unlike that of the singer's, is closed, suggesting that he is listening rather than talking). There is also a man standing behind the seated couple, his head bent toward the couple, seemingly listening to their conversation. The two women seated to the seated man's left look toward the musicians, their mouths closed, appearing to focus on the musical performance, yet the woman standing behind them is turned away from the performance, perhaps talking or listening to the person behind her. A man standing behind the flautist, looks over the musician's shoulder, presumably at the music sheet/book set up before the flautist. Thus, while all the figures acknowledge the musicians through their body positioning (all are at least partially turned toward the performers), the degree to which they attend to the musical performance is varied, some completely focussed on the musicians, others on their conversation, and some on the printed materials integral to the performance, suggesting that the song culture event incorporates and facilitates various modes of performance, aural, oral, and print.



Figure 1.2. **The Merry Companion: or, Universal Songster (1742)**

The imprint of *The Merry Companion* describes the collection as containing both Scottish and English songs. Furthermore, in the Preface the editor assures the reader that “The principle view of [the book’s design] was to give a collection of the best songs, as far as the bounds of this undertaking would permit.”

In order to this, the greatest Caution has been used, that nothing low or bad should find Admission, and for the same Reason every Thing loose, immoral, or contrary to Virtue, has been rejected, and the Ears of our Fair Readers guarded against offences, too frequently committed in Books of this Nature. (Preface, unnumbered)

The editor, in expressing concern for the sensibility of the “fair reader,” is engaging with a readership which Barbara Benedict tells us “is becoming greater and more diverse . . . more largely female, and more middle-class” (27). Both the fashionable clothes worn by the figures and the high-ceilinged spaciousness of the room situate song culture as an appropriate cultural form for the middling and upper classes. At the same time, the editor, in conveying concern for the “ears” of the readers, is articulating an expectation of performance. Of the Scots songs in the collection, the editor explains that “it were judg’d proper to assign the first place to the Scots songs, on account of the general esteem they are in, not only for the Elegance, and Simplicity of the thought and Diction, but the agreeable Airs to which they are commonly sung.”

Similarly, the frontispiece of *Bacchanalian: Or, Choice Spirits Feast* (second edition, 1755) demonstrates the interplay of oral and print cultures, as well as an expectation of performance (figure 3). The frontispiece shows a social setting, with four characters posed around a piano. Two men stand behind the piano, one playing the flute, the other resting against the back of the chair on which the pianist sits; both men look toward the piano, presumably at the unseen songbook or music sheet placed on the music stand atop the piano. A woman plays the piano. The other woman sits with her back to us, holding what is presumably a songbook or music sheet. Situated behind them is a pedestal on which stands a statue of a cherub resting on a bow, quite possibly Eros, the god of desire, affection and erotic love, whose arrows were thought to engender passionate love. Looking down on the performers, the figure connects desire and song culture, as do many of the songs contained within collections such as Ramsay’s. Moreover, this song collection, making claims for its inclusion of “New Songs,” promotes “the literary values of novelty and topicality” which Benedict suggests are integral to miscellanies (5). That many songs in the collection have participated in a

continuous cycle of mediation is suggested by the claim on the title page that they have been “Sung at the theatres, Vauxhall, Ranelagh, the Musical Societies, and other Places of Public Resort, to this Day.” In addition, the collection includes “Directions for Singing, Whereby a Person, with an indifferent voice, may be enabled to sing agreeably,” thereby making explicit the expectation—and directions for—performance.



Figure 1.3. *Bacchanalian: Or, Choice Spirits Feast (1755)*

Ultimately, I argue that the mediality and performativity of song culture in combination with the features I associate with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century song culture—fluidity, mobility, dynamism, transformativity, capaciousness, performativity—

make it especially well-suited to represent the diverse, complex, and multiple interests of the nation because there are unlimited opportunities for engagement, intervention, innovation, and resistance within this adaptive, responsive, and accessible cultural form. In fact, many of these characteristics are shared with nationalism itself, which, as this dissertation demonstrates, was (and continues to be) ever-evolving, flexible, and multifarious.

Chapter 1.

Allan Ramsay and *The Tea-Table Miscellany* (1724-1737)⁷

When Allan Ramsay published the first volume (12mo) of the *Tea-Table Miscellany* in 1724, he had established himself—in Edinburgh and beyond—as a popular poet and writer of Scots songs. He was also a bookseller and would, the following year (1725), open the first circulating library in Britain in his Edinburgh bookshop. Twelve to fifteen years earlier, Ramsay had been a member of the Easy Club, a group of young Scottish nationalists who penned poems and letters and discussed national politics, particularly the relations between Scotland and England since the Parliamentary Union of 1707. According to Allan MacLaine, Ramsay “got his start as a poet” through his membership in this club (7). Moreover, MacLaine suggests that Ramsay’s activities as a writer and bookseller “in fact, reinforced one another: for his poetry he had ready access to publication and publicity, and at the same time his growing fame as a poet brought increased trade to his bookstore” (9). Thus, Ramsay was well situated in the literary marketplace at the time he brought out his *Miscellany*.

The first volume of the *Tea-Table Miscellany* in 1724 was followed by three more volumes;⁸ by 1737 the *Miscellany* had gone through nine editions, and nineteen by the

⁷ This chapter uses the tenth edition of Allan Ramsay’s *The Tea-Table Miscellany: or, a Collection of Choice Songs, Scots and English*. In Four Volumes (London: Printed for A. Millar, 1740). According to Burns Martin’s 1931 *Bibliography of Allan Ramsay*, this edition follows the three-volume London edition of 1733, and the fourth volume published in 1737, which Martin has taken as the norm.

For an explanation of the theoretical and methodological parameters of this project, see the Introduction.

⁸ See Martin’s *Bibliography of Allan Ramsay* for the details (and problems) of establishing the publishing dates for the succeeding three volumes. According to Martin, Vol. II was brought out in 1726, Vol. III in 1727, and Vol. IV in 1737 (11-13).

century's end, with reprintings of several editions throughout the century. By the time of its last publication in 1876, the *Miscellany* totaled 30 editions.⁹ For the *Miscellany*, Ramsay collected and revised existing songs, in addition to writing new songs, thereby representing "Scottish song not as a fixed corpus," Leith Davis tells us, "but as part of a dynamic and ever-changing tradition" (Davis, "At 'sang about,'" 191). This sentiment—of the fluidity within the song collection—is echoed by Steve Newman who claims that "For Ramsay, songs are Janus-faced, grounded in cultural memory but also subject to revision and renewal" (53).¹⁰

Certainly, Ramsay's *Miscellany* went through numerous changes, both in form and content. Addressing the ratio of Scottish to English songs, Davis observes that by the 1737 edition of the *Miscellany*, "the Scottish dominate the English songs, making the latter nation's musical contribution appear minimal" (191), and leading Murray Pittock to conclude that "A hybrid collecting style, which had foregrounded the Scottishness of the form while not eschewing English subject-matter, became more definitively national" (*Scottish and Irish Romanticism* 33). Undoubtedly, the songs demonstrate Ramsay's sophisticated use of genre, as well as his thematic and linguistic complexity. And scholars such as Davis, Newman, and Pittock have attributed Ramsay's poems and songs with "giv[ing] Scotland a voice in a more inclusive kind of Britishness" (Davis, "Watson," 76).¹¹

⁹ These statistics are based on Martin's Bibliography of Allan Ramsay (114). While I have used the word "edition" here to describe the numerous printings of the Tea-Table Miscellany, Martin notes that the word "edition" was used in the eighteenth-century to signify what we would now refer to as an "impression" (14). Eighteenth-century practice "seems to have been for a publisher to advance by one the number of his edition over that which he was using as copy, even though the latter had been published by another bookseller in a different town" (Martin 14). Thus, while the imprints of the "editions" published during the eighteenth century numbered no higher than nineteen, Martin lists twenty-seven "editions" published between 1724 and 1799.

¹⁰ Murray Pittock also notes Ramsay's mixing of old and new materials, suggesting that in doing so, Ramsay was "a song-collector of a type familiar in the Romantic period, one who edited and rewrote material alike" (33).

¹¹ This quote comes from Davis's 2011 analysis of James Watson's *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems* (1706).

Davis uses “voice” metaphorically to suggest how Ramsay’s editorial practices have been seen by critics to result in the construction of a particular form of national identity (“a more inclusive kind of Britishness”). At the same time, “voice,” understood as “a right or power to take part in the control or management of something; a right to express a preference or opinion, a say” (*OED*), gestures (albeit obliquely) toward work such as Michèle Cohen’s, which also attends to “voice” in its analysis of the connection between linguistic practice, gender, and national identity. Specifically interested in “how the play of tongues—English, French and Latin—was implicated in the shaping of the English gentleman,” Cohen traces “why tongues (languages) and the tongue (of the speaking subject) came to be critical sites for the representation, articulation and production of national and gender identities” (1).

Like Cohen, I wish to explore the metaphorical richness and literal function of “voice” as it relates to nationalism and gender. In Ramsay’s *Tea-Table Miscellany* Ramsay employs Scots language and Scots literary forms, to create a complex hybridity which Davis elsewhere suggests permeates Ramsay’s *oeuvre*. “His work creatively hybridises Scots and English languages, Scottish and Augustan English literary forms, and includes antiquarian and contemporary references, rural and urban perspectives” (“The Aftermath of Union” 61). Importantly, Davis notes the political and cultural effect of such strategies:

Rather than just reprinting the text of ‘Christ’s Kirk on the Green’ for example, Ramsay included with his reprinting a new canto that he wrote in a bawdy but urbane style of Scots similar to that of the original. By repackaging the original language of the poem, he suggests that ‘Scottish Words’ do not just belong to antiquarian collectors or to the ‘Vulgar,’ as Ruddiman had implied in *Virgil’s Aeneis*, but constitute a vibrant contemporary literary language. (“Aftermath of Union” 61)

Davis claims that Ramsay’s “reconciliation of the characters in this and the previous version [of “Christ’s Kirk on the Green”] suggests Ramsay’s interest in uniting the various political parties the interest of the nation,” a reading which is sensitive to the post-union climate in which Ramsay was working (“Aftermath of Union” 61). But we

also see these practises taken up by Ferguson and Robert Burns later in the century, suggesting their continued function as signifiers of nationalist import.

In addition to Ramsay's use of Scots language and literary forms, the miscellany form itself, with its conventional inclusion of multiple genres, provided opportunities to engage the reading (and speaking/singing) public. In England the form can be traced back to works such as *Tottel's Miscellany* in the mid-sixteenth century; however, Barbara Benedict tells us that the form evolved following the Restoration through its use by "a new gradually professionalizing and powerful kind of publishing bookseller" interested in using the genre to provide "a space, if only symbolically, for the productions of all members of society. In this space, different literary languages and genres that represented or embodied different readers and traditions were juxtaposed" (5).¹² James Watson, with his 1706 *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems*, the first published anthology of Scottish literature, employed the genre to accommodate the nation's many "voices" (Davis, "At 'sang about,'" 61). Like Watson, Ramsay used the miscellany form to bring together diverse languages, genres, and traditions to create a space for readerly imaginings of an inclusive yet diverse Scottish nation.

This chapter focusses on the period in which the *Miscellany* was initially published. Through close readings of the songs, I discuss first the *Miscellany's* linguistic, formal and cultural hybridity, and then its treatment of gender, as well as its implicit critique of British cultural standards.¹³ I argue that the *Miscellany's* employment of song culture, bringing together oral, scribal, and print modes of expression, and presenting a multiplicity of gendered perspectives, suggests the tropological richness of the idea of "voice" in the construction of national identity. I conclude the chapter with some comments regarding the performativity of song culture, specifically, how the relationship

¹² Moreover, Benedict explains that "By promoting the literary values of novelty and topicality, by prefatory rhetoric invoking variety, by a page layout that differentiated each item of the contents but eschewed conventional literary decorum, and by including public and privately circulated poems, these books invited readers to participate actively in the construction of literary interpretation" (5).

¹³ See Davis' "At 'sang about,'" 188-203.

between oral, scribal, and print cultures is mediated in print. Thus, this chapter will serve two purposes. First, it will contribute to Ramsay scholarship a more detailed analysis of the representation of the gendered body in Ramsay's work and suggest the often subtle ways in which the songs, through their treatment of those voices, female, male, singing, writing, and speaking within the contemporary, gendered landscape of early eighteenth-century Scotland, express a subtle anxiety about the gendered body. Second, the chapter will more fully theorize the model of song culture presented in the Introduction. In considering the performative aspects of song culture as well as the songs themselves, I suggest the difficulties inherent in projects such as this which, in attending to the cultural, social, and performative aspects of song culture, especially in terms of its intersections with gender and nationalism, must grapple with the complex interplay of various cultural forms in its attempt to identify the many Scottish "voices" within Ramsay's work.

Introducing and Textualizing Orality: The "sweetness of pronunciation"

Fundamental to a discussion of how Ramsay's *Miscellany* functioned in the eighteenth century cultural field is a consideration of the ways in which oral, scribal and print cultures interact in the production of song culture. It is now a familiar claim that eighteenth-century song collectors such as Ramsay did not simply collect songs, but they also revised, adapted, and produced the songs they published. Moreover, they drew on various sources--oral, scribal, and print—which were often involved in a complex cycle of mediation and remediation. Thomas Crawford provides an example of this kind of mediation in *Society and the Lyric* (1979), in which he explains that songs printed in broadsides and chapbooks were often acquired from oral traditions, and "townsfolk and country people learn[ed] [songs] from printed copies only to transmit [them] to others by oral communication" (7). Yet, while Crawford sees this as "initiating the 'folk process' in the course of which some stanzas would disappear and others perhaps be modified beyond all recognition" (7), I see this process of change and adaptation as linked to the interplay between oral, scribal and print cultures.

An example of this interplay is provided by the Scottish love-song, “The Bush aboon Traquair,” written by Robert Crawford (1695-1732) and found in song collections such as Ramsay’s *Miscellany* and James Johnson’s *Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803). Several of the changes to and adaptations of this song are detailed by Douglas S. Mack, in his Introduction to James Hogg’s play *The Bush aboon Traquair* (1837). While Mack’s comments are primarily concerned with the title of the song as it relates to Hogg’s play (a play, he notes, that “may be read as a response” to Ramsay’s pastoral drama, *The Gentle Shepherd*), he cites Robert Burns’s manuscript notes on Crawford’s song as they appear in an interleaved copy of the *Scots Musical Museum* as evidence of the complex history of the song:

This, another beautiful song of Mr. Crawford’s composition. In the neighbourhood of Traquair, tradition still shews the old ‘bush’; which, when I saw it in the year ’87, was composed of eight or nine ragged birches. The Earl of Traquair has planted a new clump of trees near by, which he calls *The new bush*. (Burns quoted in Mack xviii)

Mack goes on to explain that the copy of the *Scots Musical Museum* in which Burns inscribed his comments was owned by Robert Riddell of Glenriddell, who writes in the text (after Burns’s comments) that Crawford’s song derived from an older tradition. According to Riddell,

At this place, says tradition, a son of Murray of Philliphaugh was wont to meet a daughter of Stewart of Traquair. Lest this subject of ancient song should be lost the late Lord Traquair caused plant a clump of firs on or near the poetic spot.

In detailing the song’s history, Mack briefly remarks on dis/similarities between the different versions. Mack points out that while “The lovers Riddell mentions were members of aristocratic Border families,” the lovers in Crawford’s song “do not appear to be particularly aristocratic” (xviii). At the same time, however, Mack suggests that the relationship between the lovers in Crawford’s song is very similar to that of the lovers in Hogg’s play. Thus, the history of Crawford’s song, arising from an earlier, apparently oral tradition, marked in the topography by the planting of trees, is captured by the hand-

written comments in the printed text of a late-eighteenth song collection before becoming the title of Hogg's play. What is noteworthy here is not only the mediation of the song in terms of the forms it takes (oral culture, landscape, print, dramatic performance), but also how the processes associated with mediation may result in change and adaptation.

As these examples reveal, there is no hierarchical or linear progression from one mode to another; rather, a song may move through multiple media, singly or simultaneously (oral, landscape, print, stage). Thus, although I employ a cyclical model to describe the processes of mediation to suggest how they may continue infinitely, my use of a cyclical model may have the unintended result of suggesting that the mediation processes move in a particular (i.e. cyclical) way, which would not speak to the multiple, dialogic exchanges and engagements which occur—sometimes simultaneously—between and effect the various modes in which song culture takes form.¹⁴ While an oral source may be textualized in print, for instance, it can often continue to engage with oral culture. This is amply demonstrated by the epigraph found on the imprint of the *Miscellany* written by the seventeenth-century Stuart poet and politician, Edmund Waller, whose work was widely read throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Admired by writers such as Dryden and Pope, Waller was accredited with developing what Samuel Johnson would later refer to as the “new versification, as it was then called” (Johnson quoted in Gelber 246).¹⁵ Dryden claimed that “the well-placing of words, for the sweetness of pronunciation, was not known till Mr. Waller introduced it” (*Of Dramatic Poesy and other Essays*, 2 vols. 1962, 1.175). That Waller's sensitivity to the

¹⁴ This idea of multiple mediations occurring simultaneously is taken up and discussed more fully in the following chapters; what is important to note here, however, is the potential for infinite, simultaneous mediations.

In *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order, 1450-1830* (2003), David McKitterick revises the longstanding model of an evolutionary development from manuscript to print.

¹⁵ While highly laudatory of Dryden, Johnson credits Waller and Denham with bringing forth the advances in prosody which Dryden assumed for himself. Johnson writes: “After about half a century of forced thoughts and rugged metre some advances towards nature and harmony had been already made by Waller and Denham; they had shewn that long discourses in rhyme grew more pleasing when they were broken into couplets, and that verse consisted not only in the number but the arrangement of syllables” (Johnson quoted in Gelber 246).

oral/aural aspects of language resulted in a poetic practice which evokes the oral/aural arena is suggested by Warren Chernaik, who writes, “During Waller’s lifetime and afterwards, the terms regularly used to describe his poems were ‘sweet,’ ‘soft,’ and ‘smooth’: these characteristics helped make his poems particularly suited for musical setting, and helped ensure his continuing popularity in Restoration salons” (*ODNB*). Certainly, the evocation of the oral/aural—and other—senses can be seen in the first stanza of Waller’s “Of Mrs. Arden,” as found on the imprint, directly underneath the title of the *Miscellany*.

Behold, and listen, while the Fair
Breaks in sweet sounds the willing air;
And with her own breath, fans the Fire
Which her bright eyes do first inspire:
What reason can that love controul,
Which more than one way courts the soul?

Directing the reader to “listen” to the “sweet sounds” of the “fair,” the speaker suggests a desire which, while initially inspired by the sight of the woman’s “bright eyes,” is “fanned” by the sound of her voice: multi-sensorial, desire arises from aural, oral and visual perceptions. This epigraph from Waller, then, embodies the way that the *Miscellany* itself draws so heavily on multiple media in order to arouse its own readers’ desires.

Gendering the National Song (Para)Text “*To ilka lovely BRITISH Lass*”

At the same time that it recognizes the power of multiple media, the epigraph from Waller also registers another important characteristic of the *Miscellany*: its complex alignment of gender and the nation, as the speaker sounds a cautionary note regarding the potential failure of reason to “control” that “love” which is stimulated by multiple senses. In his discussion of Ramsay’s songs in *Ballad Collection, Lyric, and the Canon* (2007), Steve Newman points out that the sight and sound of a woman singing came to be understood by some eighteenth-century theorists as performing a civilizing effect on

society. Addressing the changes occurring in relationships between men and women, theorists such as David Hume, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, and John Millar discussed the fundamental shift in gender relations in a society which was becoming increasingly commercial (Newman 57). Women's function in society was part of this shift. According to Newman, "The literati [of eighteenth-century Scotland] claimed that with the decline of chivalric possessiveness, women, who had been set on a pedestal but also cloistered, could take a more public role and so further civilize men: 'Both sexes meet in an easy and social manner; and the tempers of men as well as their behavior refines apace'"(57). Women could play an improving role in the modernizing, commercial nation, and one way for women to "fulfill this civilizing function is by singing" (Newman 58). Newman quotes the lines in the Dedication of the *Miscellany*, in which Ramsay declares that the songs' "beauties will look sweet and fair, 'Arising softly through your throats'" (v). Newman goes on:

Women play a similar role in 'Bonny Christy,' when Edie conjures the beauty of his beloved as she sings: 'If my Christy tunes her voice, / I'm rapt in admiration.' Ramsay's use of the word admiration here figures the woman as a privileged object of aesthesis. No mere object of sexual desire, she elicits desire in order to redirect it for the good of polite society. (58)

In contrast to Newman, I would argue, however, that song culture, gender, and nationalism come together in a multifarious, often unstable polyphony in the text and paratexts of Ramsay's *Miscellany*.¹⁶

¹⁶ According to Gérard Genette, paratexts provide a "threshold," for a text. While we may not understand precisely the relationship of the paratexts to the text, Genette tells us, "in any case they surround it and extend it, precisely in order to *present* it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: *to make present*, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its 'reception' and consumption in the form . . . of a book" (1). Mediating the relationship between text and reader, the paratext is a liminal space: "More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a *threshold*, or . . . a 'vestibule' that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back. It is an 'undefined zone' between the inside and the outside, a zone without any hard and fast boundary on either the inward side (turned toward the text) or the outward side (turned toward the world's discourse about the text), an edge, or, as Philippe Lejeune put it, 'a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one's whole reading of the text'" (1-2).

The gendering of the text and the nation begins with the frontispiece which features a full-page portrait of Ramsay (London, 1740). A lone, male figure, he is captured in side-profile, looking to the left, toward the title page, typical of author's portraits at this time. The portrait's frame features thistles on all four corners and tartan ribbons on the top two corners. Ramsay's shirt tie droops over the frame, creating the impression that he is coming through the frame, expanding beyond the material boundaries of the portrait. His name, in large capitals, is written at the bottom of the portrait, within the frame and encased by the corner thistles. "A Ramsay Jun" appears immediately below the portrait's frame on the left, signifying the artist as Allan Ramsay, Ramsay's son, the renowned portrait painter, who was appointed to the court of George III, and thus was one of the many eminent Scots to emigrate to London; "G King" appears below right.¹⁷ The imprint continues the nationalist theme introduced by the frontispiece, with the title of the 1740 edition printed in large font at the top of the page, *The Tea-Table Miscellany: Or, A Collection of Choice Songs, Scots and English*. Yet, the nations referred to in the title, Scotland and England, share a complicated, lengthy history. The first volume, titled simply *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, was published just seventeen years after the Union between Scotland and England, a union which was hotly debated both orally and in print. By 1737, the work became *The Tea-Table Miscellany: Or, A Collection of Choice Songs, Scots and English*. That the work will yoke together the cultural products of two nations is suggested not only by the title but also by the rest of the imprint, printed in Standard English, bearing an epigraph by Waller, a celebrated Restoration era English poet and politician, but authored by Ramsay, a well-known Scot. Furthermore, gender is never far from any page throughout the *Miscellany*, including the frontispiece and imprint, which feature an all-male cast of cultural producers, from the author, portrait painter, engraver, epigraph author (Allan Ramsay the Elder, Allan

¹⁷ The history of the frontispieces of the *Miscellany* is difficult to establish, thereby rendering any comments edition-specific. According to Martin, the 1734 edition of the *Miscellany*, 3 vols., printed by S. Powell for George Risk, Dublin, was the first edition to feature a frontispiece; however, I have found a 1729 edition, also printed by S. Powell for George Risk, Dublin, with a frontispiece featuring a portrait of Ramsay. This portrait is markedly different from the one featured in the 1740 London edition; rather, it is very similar to the frontispiece found in Ramsay's *Poems* (1721).

Ramsay the Younger, G. King, Waller) to those who print and sell the work listed at the bottom of the page (A[ndrew] Millar and J[ames] Hodges).¹⁸

Certainly, the frontispiece and imprint establish male cultural authority and imply a male dominated field of cultural production;¹⁹ however, the other paratextual materials (such as the Dedication and the Preface) and the songs themselves involve a much more complicated treatment of gender, and serve to problematize, however subtly, what may initially appear to be a homogenous male authority.²⁰ For example, Ramsay dedicates the *Miscellany* to every woman of all classes throughout Britain:

To ilka lovely BRITISH Lass,
Frae Ladies Charlotte, Anne and Jean,
Down to ilk bonny singing Bess,
Wha dances barefoot on the Green.

DEAR LASSES,
YOUR most humble slave,
Wha ne'er to serve you shall decline,
Kneeling, wad your acceptance crave,
When he presents this sma' propine.

¹⁸ While there were many publishers, printers, and booksellers involved in the production and dissemination of the numerous editions of the *Tea-Table Miscellany*, the names listed on the various imprints throughout its lengthy publishing history refer to male cultural producers: some examples include Thomas Ruddiman, Edinburgh, 1724; George Risk, Dublin, 1729; A. Millar, London, 1740; Alexander Donaldson, Edinburgh, 1760; James Knox, Glasgow, 1763; Robert Duncan, Glasgow, 1768; Robert and Andrew Foulis, Glasgow, 1768; John Wilson, Kilmarnock, 1788; William Phorson, Berwick, 1793; Robert Morison and Son, Perth, 1793; John Crum, Glasgow, 1871.

¹⁹ In *The Field of Cultural Production*, ed. and introduced by Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia UP, 1993), sociologist Pierre Bourdieu defines the field of cultural production as “the system of objective relations between these agents or institutions [such as writers, painters, sculptors, critics, publishers, dealers, reviews, magazines, academy, coteries, etc.] and as the site of the struggles for the monopoly of the power to consecrate, in which the value of works of art and belief in that value are continuously generated.” Bourdieu also developed the concept of “*symbolic power* based on diverse forms of capital which are not reducible to economic capital. Academic capital, for example, derives from formal education and can be measured by degrees or diplomas held.” Of the many forms of capital in the field of cultural production, symbolic capital and cultural capital are the two most important: “*Symbolic capital* refers to the degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration or honour and is founded on a dialectic of knowledge (*connaissance*) and recognition (*reconnaissance*). *Cultural capital* concerns forms of cultural knowledge, competences or dispositions” (Bourdieu 7).

²⁰ As noted above, even Waller’s epigraph, which would seem to bring to the text the voice of male cultural authority, contains an uneasiness regarding female agency, and its ability to threaten male reason.

Then take it kindly to your care,
Revive it with your tunefu' notes:
Its beauties will look sweet and fair,
Arising softly through your throats.

Speaking of himself in the third person, Ramsay positions himself as their “most humble slave” (1), who, in seeking their acceptance, “presents this sma’ propine” (4). Here Ramsay interestingly conflates vernacular and the highly classical literature. In the second stanza, however, he switches from petitioner to director, instructing the women to take his work and “Revive it with your tunefu’ notes” (6), as “Its beauties will look sweet and fair, / Arising softly through your throats” (7-8). In the third stanza, he situates the women in the home, surrounded by their children whom they will amuse with their singing. The scene is domesticated, involving conversation and work, and Ramsay’s songs have their place in it as entertainment. While the Dedication initially appears to place women in an elevated position as “dedicatees,”²¹ in fact, it serves to position them under Ramsay’s direction, within the domestic arena. Subject to male authority, their voices are co-opted, employed to further his aesthetic project (“to “Revive” and make “Its beauties . . . look sweet and fair”), care for children (“The wanton wee thing will rejoice”), and fill empty time (“Thir sangs may ward you frae the sowr, / And gaily vacant minutes pass”) (15-16).²²

Yet, while the Dedication may seem to ventriloquize women’s voices, the songs themselves complicate this process. The theme of sensorial, sensual desire, or “love” aroused orally/aurally by women that was suggested in the epigraph from Waller occurs repeatedly throughout the *Miscellany*, but in such a way as to question male power. For example, the unidentified speaker of the “Song” (“To the tune of, *I fixed my Fancy on*

²¹ In the *Tea-Table Miscellany*, Ramsay seems to position women in an elevated position much like other dedicatees, such as “His Grace JAMES Duke of HAMILTON, &c” named in the Dedication of Ramsay’s *The Ever Green* (1724). The full Dedication in *The Ever Green* (1724) reads: “His Grace JAMES Duke of HAMILTON, &c. Captain General, And the rest of the Honourable MEMBERS of the *Royal COMPANY of ARCHERS*.”

²² At the same time, however, the Dedication suggests a devaluing of Ramsay’s songs; placed in the home, far from the public, political and commercial spheres usually occupied by men, the songs serve, at best, to divert women and children and pass time while the tea cools.

her”) found on page 38 of the *Miscellany* describes “Bright Cynthia’s power” (Cynthia being the woman the speaker desires) as arising from her sensorial appeal:

She seems the queen of love to reign;
For she alone dispences
Such sweets as best can entertain
The gust of all the senses. (5-8)

Appealing to sight (“Her face a charming prospect brings”), smell (“Her breath gives balmy blisses”), audio (“I hear an angel when she sings”), and taste (“And taste of heaven in kisses”), Cynthia constitutes an intensely alluring presence whose power (“divinely great”), which derives from “nature’s richest treasure,” can more than satisfy sensorial appetites (“Four senses thus she feasts with joy”) (9-12). Yet, while the speaker testifies to Cynthia’s power, his portrayal of “love,” much like that of Waller’s speaker, is not entirely unambiguous. The speaker in “Song” (38), in the final two lines (“Let me the other sense employ, / And I shall die with pleasure”), suggests the sixteenth and seventeenth-century usage of “die,” as a poetical metaphor for experiencing sexual orgasm: through the fifth sense, touch, he will achieve orgasm and, thus, “die with pleasure.” At the same time, however, “die” may be read as a warning regarding pleasure (especially excessive pleasure), in which “die” signifies the suffering of death-like pains (such as implied by Addison in *Spectator* No. 86 [1711], in which he writes, “Nothing is more common than for Lovers to . . . languish, despair, and dye in dumb Show”). If read in this way, this song, like many of the songs in the *Miscellany* which depict desiring bodies, evokes a sense of unease regarding the degree of desire and its containment, as well as the voicing of desire which is further complicated by gender, as the female figures in both “Mrs. Auden” and “Song” (38) stimulate a desire which is unstable and which threatens the male speakers’ reason and control, both defining attributes of masculinity during this period.

Moreover, later editions of the *Miscellany* suggest further various tensions in Ramsay’s alignment of gender and the nation. The title page of “The Tenth Edition” of the *Miscellany* suggests that it is “the Compleatest and most Correct / of any yet

published / By Allan Ramsay.”²³ The importance of the fact that this is the tenth edition, thereby implying the work’s popularity and wide acceptance, is reasserted and more fully developed several pages later in the Preface: “*THIS tenth edition in a few years, and the general demand for the book by persons of all ranks, wherever our language is understood, is a sure evidence of its being acceptable*” (viii). At the same time, Ramsay tells his readers that his “*worthy friend Dr. Bannerman tells me from America,*”

Nor only do your lays o’er Britain flow,
Round all the globe your happy sonnets go;
Here thy soft verse, made to a *Scottish* air,
Are often sung by our *Virginian* fair.
Camilla’s warbling notes are heard no more,
But yield to *Last time I came o’er the moor*;
Hydaspes and *Rinaldo* both give way
To *Mary Scott*, *Tweed-side*, and *Mary Gray*. (ix)

Not only is Ramsay’s work well received and in demand throughout Britain, America, and “Round all the globe” by people of all classes, but his songs, here treated as composites of both lyric and music (“soft verse, made to a Scottish air”) are performed by the “fair,” often at the expense of other music such as “Camilla’s warbling notes” and Italian operas. According to Bannerman, as quoted by Ramsay, it is Ramsay’s Scottish songs (and Bannerman specifically lists *Last time I came o’er the moor*, *Mary Scot*, *Tweed-side*, and *Mary Gray*) which are sung by the “fair,” again drawing on the image of women coming together in song; this time, however, unlike the Dedication which places women and Ramsay’s songs within the home, here the women and the appeal of the Scots songs are not imagined within the domestic sphere; rather, they (both women and songs) are transnational and transatlantic in their positioning and influence. This would suggest a markedly different role for women and song than that suggested in the Dedication. If Scottish culture was seen as a means by which to resist the hegemonic impulse of the

²³ Arguably, the lack of punctuation following “published” enables a double reading of the sentence, the first being that this edition is the most complete and correct “of any yet published By Allan Ramsay.” A second possible reading is that this is the most complete and correct “of any [edition of Scots and English songs] yet published[.] By Allan Ramsay.”

English state following the 1707 Union, the imagining of women as the conveyers of Scottish culture throughout the world seems to accord woman an important political role in the (re)forming of the Scottish nation. At the same time, however, the use of women to symbolize the nation may be perceived to limit--rather than advance--their agency through their objectification.

Moreover, while women were granted no political power, at least officially, their increasing commercial and critical influence is suggested by the *Miscellany's* Preface, in which Ramsay writes:

IN my compositions and collections, I have kept out all smut and ribaldry, that the modest voice and ear of the fair singer might meet with no affront; the chief bent of all my studies being, to gain their good graces: and it shall always be my care, to ward off these frowns that would prove mortal to my muse.(ix)

Ramsay frames his concern regarding women's reception of his work within an economy of female modesty, suggesting that he has edited his works with a view to womanly sensibilities, yet, as Kathleen Wilson notes, women were active participants in the political, cultural and social fields throughout the eighteenth century. According to Wilson, "in spite of their legal standing as dependents and the masculinist nature of much nationalistic political discourse, women frequently acted like political subjects within the commercialized world of extra-parliamentary politics" (40). Moreover, Wilson argues that women's growing political, cultural and social authority derived from their activities as consumers, producers, and critics:

Women made up thirty percent of the patrons at circulating libraries in the country and accounted for between one-third and one-fifth of the membership at various book clubs that have left adequate records; they were avid newspaper readers, and were also patrons of such institutions of political and prints culture as inns and taverns. Further, numbers of women worked in London and provincial towns as writers, printers, engravers, newspaper publishers, newsagents, stationers and booksellers as well as innkeepers and victuallers; as writers they engaged in polemical political debates from the consequences of the Glorious Revolution to the immorality of slavery. (40)

Certainly, Ramsay's prefatory comments speak to his attempt to engage his female readers' support for his project while at the same time suggesting their ability to affect his symbolic, cultural and economic capital.²⁴ Urging his "little books, go your ways; be assured of favourable reception wherever the sun shines on the free-born cheerful Briton," he tells them: "steal your selves into the ladies bosoms. . . . please the ladies, and take care of my fame" (x). In doing so, he connects cultural production, pleasure, nationalism, and the female body, suggesting his work as an intimate, perhaps even prurient, infiltration into the private arena of the nation, embodied in female form.

Within the songs themselves, women's voices express a wide range of views on cultural, political, economic and sexual issues, both contemporary and historical. A pervasive theme is love and its complex intersections with sex and money. While many of the women seek emotional fulfillment, women are also heard negotiating for their material security and sensual pleasure, often at the same time. The coming together of these various interests can be heard in "Dumbarton's *Drums*" (49), in which Annie sings of her beloved, Jonny ("How happy am I, / When my soldier is by" [3-4]), whose military career will improve their collective fortunes. Not only is he sensually appealing ("While he kisses and blesses his *Annie-O!* / 'Tis a soldier alone can delight me—O" [5-6]), handsome ("For his graceful looks do invite me" [7]), but he will keep her safe:

While guarded in his arms,
I'll fear no wars alarms,
Neither danger nor death shall e'er fright me—O. (8-10)

Sensual and aesthetic pleasure, safety, and security: the form of masculinity Annie constructs (and values) must provide a diverse range of benefits. In addition, she demonstrates a keen sensitivity to the connections between gender and class and actively pursues her and Jonny's mutual interests by planning to secure a commission for Jonny:

²⁴ Women make up thirty-two percent of those named in the subscription list of William Thomson's song collection, *Orpheus Caledonius: Or, A Collection of Scots Songs* (1733), a work very similar in content to Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*. In fact, of its one hundred songs, ninety-one had appeared earlier, in the first 3 volumes of the *Tea-Table Miscellany* (1724, 1726, 1727).

My love is a handsome laddie—O,
Genteel, but ne'er foppish nor gaudy—O:
Tho' commissions are dear,
Yet I'll buy him one this year;
For he shall serve no longer a cadie—O. (11-15)

Here, Annie suggests the various ways in which Jonny will be well served by the procurement of a commission. Honourable and brave, "Unacquainted with rogues and their knavery" (presumably the lower and ungentlemanly classes), a commissioned officer attends to "the ladies or the king; / For every other care is but slavery—O" (17-20). Liberated from the confines of the non-commissioned ranks, Jonny will be in the company of those through whom promotions and privileges are obtained. Moreover, Jonny is not the only one to benefit from his obtaining a commission. Annie recognizes that the military provides opportunities for women as well as men; she will also be elevated through Jonny's military endeavours and position:

I'll be the captain's lady—O,
Farewell all my friends and my daddy-O;
I'll wait no more at home,
But I'll follow with the drum,
And whene'er that beats, I'll be ready—O.
Dumbarton's drums sound bonny—O.
They are sprightly like my dear *Jonny*—O:
How happy shall I be,
When on my soldier's knee,
And he kisses and blesses his *Annie*—O! (21-30)

Annie will obtain status ("the captain's lady"), freedom from her familial and domestic obligations, and a degree of autonomy. She will also be with the man she desires, one who pleases and values her.

Throughout the song, we hear only Annie's voice detailing her plans for both her and Jonny's professional and economic future. Jonny's voice is never heard, and we are left assuming a male agency which is pliable, accommodating, and willing to be led in contrast to the directing, politically and economically savvy female agency modeled by

Annie.²⁵ She will buy the commission, however expensive, suggesting that she has economic capital to invest. However, her plan to “follow with the drum,” problematizes any attempt to locate her in terms of her class, as presumably a woman of the upper classes would not be attending the troops; perhaps, however, only a woman of some material wealth would have the freedom to do so without having to provide domestic and/or sexual services. While, indeed, Annie anticipates sexual pleasure, it is a pleasure for which *she* has planned and which she says will make *her* happy. Importantly, it is a pleasure for which, through her capital investment (buying Jonny’s commission), she has provided the opportunity. She is no servant doing the bidding of others. She expresses sexual desire and professional ambition; she also demonstrates an awareness of the social and political hierarchies operating and develops a strategy by which to navigate them and succeed.

Certainly, the *Miscellany* features many voices singing of the economic, social, political and sexual opportunities available through marriage. In “Magie’s Tocher” (26-7), two men (the wooer and Magie’s father) hammer out the details of Magie’s dowry, concluding a deal which is agreeable to both parties and which offers sufficient support for the young couple and any children who may come along. The male speaker of “Lass with a Lump of Land” (114) also suggests the prospects available through marriage, though, for him, the most important is that of economic gain. Capital alone, in the form of money or land, will ensure an enduring union. Furthermore, he looks to the woman to provide such capital and explicitly states that in the economy of marriage, “she that’s rich, her market’s made” (7), and “naithing can catch our modern sparks, / But well tocher’d lasses, or jointer’d widows” (23-4).

²⁵ See “O’er the Moor to Maggy” (64-5) for further evidence of a consenting, flexible masculinity. The male speaker will become what his beloved desires, as long as she loves him: “My bonny Maggy’s love can turn/Me to what shape she pleases,/If in her breast that flame shall burn,/Which in my bosom blazes” (23-4).

Yet, sometimes material wealth is not enough, as suggested in two poems, “Scornfu’ Nansy” (19-21) and “Slighted Nansy” (21-22). In the first, “Scornfu’ Nansy,” the young Nansy is wooed by Willie:

NANSY’S to the Green Wood gane,
To hear the Gowdspink chatt’ring,
And Willie he has followed her,
To gain her love by flatt’ring:
But a’ that he cou’d say or do,
She geck’d and scorned at him;
And ay when he began to woo,
She bade him mind who gat him. (1-8)

Nansy insinuates that Willie’s family is of insufficient quality to justify his interest in her. Willie, though very keen to win her hand, objects to her implication and argues that throughout his life he was always fed well and cared for and that though his “father was nae laird,” “He keepit ay a good kail-yard, / A ha’ house and a pantry” (17, 19-20). Nansy rejoins, “Wad ye compare ye’r sell to me, / A docken till a tansie?” (27-8). Furthermore, Nansy tells Willie, “I have a wooer of my ain, / They ca’ him souple Sandy” (29-30). Willie, never one to back down, points out that he knows Sandy, and is “sure the chief of a’ his kin / Was Rab the beggar randy” (35-6). Moreover, he adds, Sandy’s

minny Meg upo’ her back
Bare baith him and his billy;
Will ye compare a nasty pack
To me your winsome Willy? (37-8)

Despite Willie’s passionate defense of his lineage and his threat to get his grandfather’s “good braid sword” and give Sandy a “heezy,” Nansy remains adamant in her choice of Sandy, concluding that “For as lang’s Sandy’s to the fore, / Ye never shall get Nansy” (41, 48, 55-6).

However, the second poem, “Slighted Nansy,” finds Nansy’s situation dramatically altered. Despite her material wealth (“seven braw new gowns, / And ither

seven better to mak,” and “seven milk-ky”), her “wooer has turned his back” (1-2, 5, 4). Not only has Sandy rejected her, but no other “young spark” has shown any interest in her. She becomes increasingly desperate as she ages.

When I was at my first prayers,
I pray'd but anes i' the year,
I wish'd for a handsome young lad
And a lad with muckle gear.
When I was at my neist pray'rs,
I pray'd but now and than,
I fash'd na my head about gear,
If I get a handsome young man.

No when I'm at my last pray'rs,
I pray on baith night and day,
And O! if a beggar wad come,
With that same beggar I'd gae.
And O! and what'll come o' me?
And O! and what'll I do?
That sic a braw lassie as I
Shou'd die for a wooer I trow. (25-40)

Initially praying for a handsome young man with wealth, she then prays for “a handsome young man,” without wealth, and finally resolves to take up with any man (even a beggar). She is fraught with anxiety at the thought of having no admirer. As with “Scornfu' Nansy,” “Slighted Nansy” ends with Nansy's voice, yet this time, rather than haughtily silencing (and rejecting) a suitor (“Sae had ye'r tongue and say nae mair”), she laments her fate (54). Husbandless, Nansy will lose the material wealth of her dowry, and be unable--as an unmarried child living within her family's home and therefore subject to her father's will--to establish her own affective and sexual economy within her own domestic space, an opportunity usually available (at least theoretically) to married women.

A different kind of economy is proposed by the female speaker of “This is no mine ain House” (90-1), who connects obedience with love, honour, and good treatment. Of her marital relations with her soon-to-be husband, and her obligation to obey him, she says,

When Hymen moulds us into ane,
My Robie's nearer than my kin,
And to refuse him were sin,
Sae long's he kindly treats me. (15-6).

Importantly, she says that her obedience is conditional upon his good treatment of her and that the marriage is a contractual arrangement in which love dictates duty and is dependent on the partners fulfilling their obligations. The speaker gains her "ain house," which means not only her own property, but also her own affective landscape, over which she is mistress.

When I'm in mine ain house,
True love shall be at hand ay,
To make me still a prudent spouse,
And let my man command ay; (17-20)

In the speaker's eyes, love is the catalyst, the agent directing her actions; because she loves, she is directed by love and love allows her husband command of her. Moreover, though in legal terms she has no claim to Robie's (her husband's) house, she makes clear from the beginning that whereas in her father's house she has no standing, in Robie's house she is "mistris of his fire-side" (6) and can—and will—express agency in terms of the domestic power structure.

A somewhat different form of female agency operates in "*Norland JOCKY and Southland JENNY*" (182-3). This song evokes issues of class and regionalism, while simultaneously operating as a test of the male (north) by the female (south). The first six lines of the song are in third person and set up the dialogue which follows between "A Southland *Jenny*" and "a norland *Johny*." Johny (also referred to as Jocky), a suitor from the north, comes courting the "right bonny" Jenny from the south. Johny, taken with the beautiful Jenny, is overwhelmed by shyness. However, "blinks of her beauty, and hopes o' her siller / Forc'd him at last to tell his mind till her" (5-6), and, overcoming his shyness, he proposes marriage. Jenny agrees to marry him, though she admits to having "neither gowd nor money," but will "ware my beauty on thee" (11). On hearing that she is without wealth, he seems to recant his proposal, evoking a simplistic form of

regionalism, suggesting that whereas “Ye lasses of the south, ye’r a’ for dressing; / Lasses of the north, mind milking and threshing” (14-5). He explains that his parents would disapprove of his marrying “a lady” (though Jenny’s status as a “lady” did not seem to deter him when he held out hopes of a substantial dowry), and that he must marry a woman who can manage the physical labour as well as social networking required of a northern wife:

For I maun hae a wife that will rise in the morning,
Crudel a’ the milk, and keep the house a scaulding,
Toolie with her nibours, and learn at my minny,
A norland *Jocky* maun hae a norland *Jenny*. (17-20)

Jenny responds,

My father’s only daughter and twenty thousand pound,
Shall never be bestow’d on sic a silly clown;
For a’ that I said was to try what was in ye.
Gae hame, ye norland *Jocky*, and court your norland *Jenny*. (21-24)

Revealing that she is an only daughter with a considerable fortune, she sends him on his way, but not before telling him that she had been testing him, to “try what was in ye.” The critical capacity needed to judge and the power to act on her judgment are located in the woman; the woman knows her own worth on the marriage market and will “test” those men who come wooing, sending away those whom she deems wanting. She is not attended by a male relative, nor does she invoke male authority. She can assess a man’s

worth, his value as a potential mate. Money empowers her but she is also no pawn without agency.²⁶

The song evokes a binary of a southern, propertied female, and a northern, labouring male. The woman, Jenny, expects to be valued for her beauty and her inherent worth; she employs a marriage economy based on aesthetic value and affect and rejects her suitor, Johny, on the grounds that he employs a different marriage economy and is unable (or unwilling) to operate within her value system. He is “sic a silly clown,” because he is unable to appreciate her aesthetic capital and engage with an economy of affect. His inability to engage with this economy means that he cannot function in her world; thus, the marriage economy he employs—which values female partners in terms of the economic capital (specifically, money and labour) they bring to the marriage—renders him, however ironically, incapable of realizing the economic capital Jenny would bring to their marriage. Implicit in this song is a critique of the regionalism operating in eighteenth-century Scotland; just as Johny cannot move beyond his northern regionalism to inhabit, and benefit from, the social, cultural, economic, gendered landscape of the south, so is the north condemned to remain economically and aesthetically undercapitalized if unable to participate in the increasingly industrial, commercial market economy of the nation.

²⁶ While both “Dumbarton’s *Drums*” and in “*Norland JOCKY and Southland JENNY*” feature women who have economic capital (or access to economic capital), there are songs in which women without capital still have a strong sense of personal worth and agency. For an example, see “Song” (169-70), in which the female speaker declares, “ALTHO’ I be but a country lass,/Yet a lofty mind I bear—O,/And think my sell as good as those/That rich apparel wear—O./Altho’ my gown be hame-spun grey,/My skin it is a saft—O,/As them that satin weeds do wear,/And carry their heads aloft—O” (1-8). The speaker sees herself as equal to those who are richly adorned; she is employed doing necessary work, free of alcohol, innocent, and well fed. While her parents are not rich, she will not be sold like an animal, “Like them whase daughters, now-a-days,/Like wine are bought and sold” (27-8). Moreover, though she lacks all adornments, she will “keep a jewel worth them a’/I mean my maidenhead—O,” which she will bestow on the man she marries (39-40). She concludes by saying that if love will be her good fortune, she can improve her material circumstances (“If canny fortune give to me/The man I dearly love—O,/tho’ we want gear,/I dinna care,/My hands I can improve—O” (41-4).

A different kind of regional critique is offered in “The Highland Laddie” (85-6). The female speaker, who self-identifies as a “lawland lass,” compares the “lawland lads” to her “highland laddie.” She begins with a critique of the men of the lowlands:

The lawland lads think they are fine;
But O they’re vain and idly gawdy!
How much unlike that gracefu’ mein,
And manly looks of my highland laddie? (1-4)

As a Lowlander, she speaks from a position of knowledge. She knows the men of the Lowlands, is familiar with their ways and their self-deceptions. Describing them as “vain and idly gawdy,” she suggests that they are conceited and uselessly, tastelessly fine, lacking the grace and manliness of Donald, her Highlander. In doing so, she posits a model of masculinity which involves a pleasing, elegant, courteous manner, and a strong, independent appearance. Her use of the word “manly”²⁷ suggests that for her, the Highlander is the paradigm of masculinity, the model against which both womanliness and manliness may be judged. She claims that given the freedom to choose “To be the wealthiest lawland lady,” she would “take young Donald without trews / With bonnet blew, and belted plaidy” (6-8). Even the “brawest beau in borrows-town, / In a’ his airs, with art made ready,” is “but a clown” when compared to her Highlander, who is “finer far in ’s tartan plaidy” (9-10, 12).

In the first three stanzas she speaks as a Lowlander within the Lowlands and centres her critique on a direct comparison of the Lowland men with the Highland Laddie. However, in the fourth stanza, she switches to a celebration of the Highland Laddie, located in the Highlands, she by his side:

O’er benty hill with him I’ll run,
And leave my lawland kin and dady,

²⁷ The *OED* defines the adjectival form of “manly” as “having those qualities or characteristics traditionally associated with men as distinguished from women or children; courageous, strong, independent in spirit, frank, upright.” The *OED* cites Ramsay’s *Christ-kirk on the Green* (1718): “The manly Miller haff and haff, Came out to shaw good Will” (II.17).

Frae winter's cauld, and summer's sun,
He'll screen me with his highland plaidy.

Imagining herself running through the Highlands with Donald, without her family, protected from the elements by the Highlander's "plaidy," she constructs a moment of impossible freedom: freedom to run, freedom from familial obligations, freedom to be intimate without censure, freedom to be in nature and yet protected from its threatening aspects. In this imagined space, she is free of all physical, social, sexual strictures. In the fifth stanza she briefly returns to a Lowland scene, but only so as to compare it to the pleasures of the Highlands:

A painted room, and silken bed,
May please a lawland laird and lady;
But I can kiss, and be as glad
Behind a bush in's highland plaidy.

Whereas the aesthetic and foreign elements associated with the urbanized culture of the Lowlands may appeal to the upper classes, the speaker positions herself within the natural landscape of the Scottish nation, which she associates with the Highlands. Both the Highlands and the Highlander are imagined as sources of wilderness and liberation, providing opportunities for intimacy and sensual/sexual pleasure without the social and cultural conventions and practices of the more urban Lowlands. The speaker suggests, in the sixth stanza, that her and Donald's speech is informal, intimate, and sensual, and she concludes, in the seventh stanza, with her declaration of endless love for her Highlander.

Few compliments between us pass,
I ca' him my dear highland laddie,
And he ca's me his lawland lass,
Syne rows me in beneath his plaidy.
Nae greater joy I'll e'er pretend,
Than that his love prove true and steady,
Like mine to him, which ne'er shall end,
While heaven preserves my highland laddie.

Entangling gender, class, and regionalism, the song sets forth a complicated view of the nation. It presents multiple binaries, such as Lowland versus Highland, urban versus

rural, art versus nature. The Lowlands are associated with art and artifice, which, together with its foreign elements (“A painted room, and silken bed”), constitute an emasculating influence on the nation’s men. Only those men of the Highlands are beyond the urban, alien effects of the lowlands.

Yet, in the song “SANDY *and* BETTY” (145), Scottish masculinity is not associated with the Highlands, but with the nation more generally. In this song, an allegorical treatment of the 1707 unification of the English and Scottish parliaments under Queen Anne, Scotland is represented by a male lover, Sandy, a Lowlander born in Edinburgh, who is “As blyth a lad as e’er gade thence” (3). England is represented by the female lover Betty, who “did *Stafford*-shire adorn / With all that’s lovely to the sense” (3-4). Alluding to the dissolution of the Scottish parliament and its post-union re-location in London, the song’s unidentified speaker suggests that this re-location—and, more generally, the political unification with Britain--had an ameliorating effect on Scotland: “Had Sandy still remain’d at hame,/He had not blinkt on Betty’s smile” (5-6). While the move proves enriching to Sandy, Betty

like the fragrant violet,
Still flourish’d in her native mead:
He, like the stream, improving yet
The further from his fountain-head. (9-12)

Unlike Betty (England), who thrives in her native environment, Sandy (Scotland) improves the further he travels from his place of origin, until, that is, he reaches Betty (England):

The stream must now no further stray;
A fountain fixt by Venus’ power
In his clear bosom, to display
The beauties of his bord’ring flower. (13-16)

Union is portrayed as a love affair-- decreed by the queen of Britain (Anne) and preserved by the “queen of love” (Venus)--which furthers both parties’ interests:

When gracious *Anna* did unite
Two jarring nations into one,
She bade them mutually unite,
And make each other's good their own.
Henceforth let each returning year
The *rose* and *thistle* bear one stem:
The *thistle* be the *rose*'s spear
The *rose* the *thistle*'s diadem. (17-24)

While the rose (England) and the thistle (Scotland) will “bear one stem,” the song leaves no doubt that though “The *thistle* will be the *rose*'s spear,” the rose will be the “*thistle*'s diadem” (21-24). If “spear” is understood to symbolize military power, and “diadem” royal authority, then Scotland, here initially portrayed as a masculine presence (Sandy), metamorphoses under the influence of England, a feminine presence (Betty), to become the armed force protecting and promoting British royal interests; here, however, Britain is England, the thistle (Scotland) remains distinct from the rose (England), however much grafted together through politics and desire.

There are many voices—both male and female--within the *Miscellany*, and Ramsay's attempts to draw attention to them, direct them, and make them “sing” reveal some of the tensions being played out in the contemporary cultural field, especially at the intersections of song culture, gender, and nationalism. As I have suggested here, song culture provides an opportunity for the “voicing” of interests which may otherwise remain silent. Moreover, the tropological play within song culture allows for the potential politicization of positions (and the agents who inhabit these positions) in the life of the nation

Before concluding, I would like to make two additional points. The first relates to the adaptation of Ramsay's songs for public performances such as that listed on a playbill which appeared in the *World* newspaper, August 17, 1789 (figure 4). The theatre named in the playbill is Sadler's Wells, London, and the first act—“a Favourite Piece, with Singing and Dancing”—is titled, *Hooley and Fairly: or, The Highland Laddie*. The Songs chiefly compiled from the Works of Allan Ramsay.” While the history of the

production and performance of *Hooley and Fairly* remains allusive, the work's subtitle, *The Highland Laddie*, refers to a song by the same name found in the *Miscellany*, as well as numerous eighteenth-century chapbooks and song collections. There is also a 1755 reference to a song, *Highland Laddie*, set to music by Michael Arne and sung at Drury Lane, as well as sheet of music with words, titled "The Highland Laddie. Set by Mr. Arne and Sung by Mr. Mattocks at the Theatre Rl. In Drury Lane" (National Library of Scotland).²⁸ What is striking about this playbill is not only the adaptation of Ramsay's work to the stage, but that the act featuring Ramsay's work, *Hooley and Fairly*, like the other five acts listed on the playbill, seems to represent a specific nation, either through the activity listed (for example, the concluding act is called "Mandarin, Or Harlequin Widower, in which is introduced the celebrated Feast of Lanterns," identifying the act however superficially with Chinese culture), or through explicit description, such as seen in the first act which features Ramsay's work "and the Music and Dances entirely Scotch." Here, Ramsay and his cultural products, altered and adapted, and performed in tandem with dance, become representative of the nation.²⁹

The second point is a recurring theme found in discussions of Allan Ramsay and his work in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century periodical press, which suggests yet another mode of cultural mediation, that being that of memory and national culture. In an article published in 1791 ("Strictures on Scottish Poetry: Allan Ramsay"), Timothy Thunderproof discusses Ramsay's work generally and his pastoral comedy, *The Gentle Shepherd*, specifically (the songs of which are found in the *Miscellany*):

But *The Gentle Shepherd* does not rest its reputation on the caprice of a theatrical audience. Were all the copies of Ramsay's comedy annihilated, the grateful memories of his countrymen would eagerly supply the loss—

²⁸ All of these print versions have the same lyrics as found in Ramsay's *Miscellany*.

²⁹ More work needs to be done here in terms of the influence and performance of Ramsay's work on the British stage throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; however, what my research reveals at this point is that while Ramsay's name appears on playbills throughout the 1780s, in previous theatre ads, he is listed further down the bill. For example, in an advertisement in the *World* August 25, 1787 (that is, 2 years earlier), *Hooley and Fairly* is positioned 3rd, after "a favourite musical piece, The Fortune Hunters," and a French ballet.

Many of his readers have almost the whole poem by heart; and what other Scottish author can pretend to such universal admiration?

This sense—that the memorization of a work, its quotability—is a measurement of the “universal admiration” felt for its author occurs throughout the nineteenth century.³⁰ It is hard to imagine what Ramsay, the bookseller, would think of this extra-textualization of song culture, this movement beyond the book. I return again to Ramsay’s comment in the Preface that “a general demand for the book by persons of all ranks, where our language is understood, is sure evidence of it being acceptable.” Given the numerous editions and reprintings of the *Miscellany*, as well as the adaptations, alterations, and “borrowings” of many of its songs, it is noteworthy that the estate sale for John Crum, the publisher of the 1871 edition, listed 939 copies of the *Miscellany* for sale (*The Glasgow Herald*, June 7, 1875).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined how Ramsay’s *Tea-Table Miscellany* in its paratextual materials (such as frontispieces, title pages, dedications, prefaces) and collected songs, requires us to query the intersections between song culture, gender and the nation. At the same time, however, collections such as Ramsay’s, made up of and animated by voices whose interests are very diverse, also make clear that none of these categories—song culture, gender, nation—are stable, homogenous forms. There is no one Scottish voice which sings for the nation; rather there are many, multi- (re)mediated voices singing many songs of the nation. These voices—female and male—speak diverse languages (Scots dialect mixed with standard English, and standard English by itself), occupy various positions in terms of cultural production (producer, editor, critic, consumer), and represent various landscapes of early eighteenth-century Scotland (rural and urban, local and national). They sing of sexual inequality and gender inequity, lost dignity, unsparing

³⁰ In an 1872 review of *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, the author writes of the quotability of Ramsay’s work (December 14, 1872, *Athenaeum*).

grief, intense passion, ambition, and joy in lyrics which are sometimes trite, often conventional, occasionally bawdy, and frequently engaging. Yet, however diverse, they all speak to (and sing of) the complexity of the Scottish nation, and suggest how that nation is mediated by song culture.

Given the numerous ways in which the *Miscellany* problematizes Scottish and English nationalisms and contests the relations of power between the two nations, the enduring interest in the *Miscellany* is striking.³¹ Certainly, the *Miscellany*, in addition to other works by Ramsay, continued to be printed into the nineteenth century (1871, 1875, 1876). Ramsay's work was popularly received throughout the eighteenth century. *The Merry Companion: or, Universal Songster* (1742) featured 66 Scottish songs—"carefully chosen," the editor tells us, "from the best miscellanies"—54 of which were printed in Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*. This would not be the first time, moreover, that songs appearing in Ramsay's collection showed up in later works. In the *Miscellany*'s Preface, Ramsay takes exception to what he sees as William Thomson's using his songs without properly accrediting Ramsay:

FROM this and the following volume, Mr. Thomson (who is allowed by all, to be a good teacher and singer of Scots Songs) cull'd his Orpheus Caledonius, the musick for both the voice and flute, and the words of the songs finely engraven in a folio book, for the use of persons of the highest quality in Britain, and dedicated to the late Queen. This, by the by, I thought proper to intimate, and do my self that justice which the publisher neglected; since he ought to have acquainted his illustrious list of subscribers, that the most of the songs were mine, the musick abstracted. (ix).

A critic writing in the first half of the nineteenth century could claim Ramsay's songs enjoyed almost the same level of popular and critical acclaim then as when first

³¹ For a critical assessment of Ramsay's complex treatment of nationalism in the *Miscellany*, see Leith Davis's "At 'sang about': Scottish song and the challenge to British Culture," in Davis et al's *Scotland on the Borders of Romanticism* (2004), 188-203. Davis claims that, "instead of reinforcing the subordination of Scotland to a hegemonic center, Ramsay works to change the model of a powerful, cosmopolitan London versus a weak, traditional Scottish periphery" (191).

published in 1724. Furthermore, references to Ramsay's work in the nineteenth-century periodical press speak to his continuing influence. His work was sold throughout the British Empire, as witnessed by the numerous advertisements appearing in newspapers and periodicals such as the *Cape Monthly Magazine* (South Africa), *The Friend of India* (India), *the Melbourne Punch* (Australia), and *The Canadian Journal* (Canada). Moreover, his enduring cultural authority is suggested by his inclusion in anthologies such as *Beeton's Great Books of Poetry*, which contained, according to its editor, "Nearly 2,000 of the Best Pieces in the English Language" (*Beeton's Boy's Own Magazine*, November 1, 1868). As I have suggested, however, over time, Ramsay's Scottish song became associated with a limited, nostalgic sense of Scottish nationalism. By the second half of the nineteenth century the complexity of voices constituting Ramsay's Scotland is reduced to a handful of songs, suggesting a distillation, perhaps a homogenization, of national identity.³²

³² In 1864, William Black, in his review of Ramsay's work and influence, lists four songs as "the most widely-known": "'Lochaber no More,' 'Bessy Bell and Mary Gray,' 'The Lass of Patie's Mill,' and 'The Flower of Yarrow'" (*Once a Week*, November 19, 1864, 614).

Chapter 2.

“An Honest Scotch Enthusiasm”: Collecting the Nation’s Songs

Poet, song collector, writer, and editor, Robert Burns (1759-1796) inhabited numerous positions in the late eighteenth-century Scottish cultural field. From his first published work, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1786), Burns’s poetry and songs have won popular acclaim, and his varied cultural products continue to generate popular interest. Critical attention, however, has been noticeably absent, especially in the last sixty years. In *Scottish and Irish Romanticism*, Murray Pittock discusses this decline and the paradox of Burns’s reputation: “His extraordinary and continuingly strong international profile and evident poetic sophistication have been increasingly at odds with an equally extraordinary plunge into critical neglect” (164).³³ In fact, only recently has Burns begun to be included in the Romantic canon, as the canon has also widened to include more popular cultural products like song. Peter Murphy claims that “what status Burns has in the modern critical world depends more on his songs than the poetry included in his authorized editions” (93). Scholars such as Leith Davis, Kirsteen McCue, Carol McGuirk, Murray Pittock and Nigel Leask have turned their attention to the genre of songs in Burns’s cultural production. They explore Burns’s active participation in contemporary Scottish song culture, reading the songs not only in relation to nationalism, language, and engagement with the pastoral, but also in terms of their place in Burns’s professional development. While these critical approaches have offered important insights into Burns’s work with Scottish songs, this chapter will pursue a different critical

³³ For a discussion of Burns’s non/place in Romantic period literary history, see Chapter Six in Murray Pittock’s *Scottish and Irish Romanticism* (2008).

stream, analyzing the intersections of national identity, history, and Burns's cultural practice, and revealing the links between performance and the construction of national identity that were integral to Burns's cultural practice and products.

Song collectors such as Burns collected, wrote, revised, and/or performed their cultural products (songs) with the possibility of other, perhaps multiple, mediations in mind, regardless of the material's source (whether oral, manuscript, or print).³⁴ For example, for *The Scots Musical Museum*, edited by James Johnson and unofficially edited by Robert Burns, both Johnson and Burns collected materials by word of mouth and from oral performance, letters, and printed materials with a view to publishing them in print form. That they expected these songs to be performed is evidenced by their inclusion of musical scores. And while many songs were published without melodies throughout the eighteenth century, Kirsteen McCue tells us that even "Songs which appeared in print as lyrics alone did not completely divorce themselves from their melodic partner" (89). In her investigation of Burns's songs, McCue draws on the work of Nick Groom. Interested in the relation of sound to "the aesthetics of "Englishness," Groom, working with the ideas of Ralph Pordzik, attends to the "situational embedment" of a text: how literature 'functions as experience.'" According to Groom, "This is not merely investigating how literature 'affects our emotions,' but is 'a method of recapturing a dimension of the written text that appeals to our sense of a more fully realized, sensual experience instead of our intellectual or analytical abilities.'" As "a literary practice," "neo-pragmatism" attends to "the text's sensual import," and "brings us closer to achieving an internally more integrative experience of reading as 'collaboration' with the text" (179). What is especially germane to this chapter is Groom's warning that we need to be aware of "the harmonic expectations of eighteenth-century readers confronted with a ballad or song text," and "that acoustic references in verse should not simply be considered as metaphorical, but as the traces of a lost (and irrecoverable) physical reality. Literature is, in other words, a secret history of noise" (179-80). Applying Groom's observations to

³⁴ Charles Dibdin, for example, published the music from his pantomime *The Touchstone* at the same time that the pantomime was being staged at the Royal-Theatre in Covent Garden (February 1779).

Burns, McCue suggests that the lyric, even published without musical score “still created a ‘soundscape,’ or ‘phonic world’ all of its own—by its known historical relation to a melody, by its word choice or the rhythms and sounds of its refrain” (90).³⁵ Certainly, many songs, such as those appearing in the first two editions of Burns’s *Poems*, were published during the eighteenth century without musical scores, “frequently appearing,” McCue notes, “with titles of airs or melodies alongside, and, more importantly still, often with musical notation” (90).³⁶ The activities of song collectors such as Burns demonstrate the complicated ways in which manuscript, oral, and print cultures worked together to produce the textualized oralities out of which song culture was generated.

In this chapter, I argue that Burns’s treatment of national identity and history, combined with his work as a collector, producer, and editor of the nation’s songs, produces what I term a nationalism of presence. I begin with a discussion of Burns’s approach to song culture, suggesting the way that Burns understood Scottish song as a multi-media expression of national identity. I examine his letters in which he theorizes about song culture. A prolific letter writer, he seems compelled to spell out his theoretical and methodological approaches to song in this simultaneously public and private medium, and, in doing so, suggests parallels between song culture and performativity. Through his letters we see him developing networks of collaboration, sending and receiving music and lyrics, directly and intimately connecting with people, and seeking their assistance with the nation’s songs. Using scribal culture, Burns creates—and creates the conditions necessary for—a collaboratively developed national

³⁵ Nick Groom’s work uses the “‘neo-pragmatist’ poetics of Richard Shusterman as elaborated for literary criticism by Ralph Pordzik, to investigate “how noise defined the aesthetics of Englishness at the end of the eighteenth century” (179).

³⁶ Moreover, Kirsteen McCue tells us that “The success, and thus contemporary popularity, of certain songs often relied on the qualities of the tune to which the lyrics were written and/or sung, on the timbre of the voice which sang them, on the atmosphere generated by a particular performance, or indeed on the promotional prowess of an individual performer—in other words on the oral transmission of the songs themselves” (89).

culture similar to that modelled in *A Selection of Irish Melodies* (see Chapter Four).³⁷ As a fluid process, Burns's nationalism takes shape in the shifting practices of performance. I move from there into a discussion of Burns's most well-known song, "Auld Lang Syne," examining the development of the song in the context of previous versions and performing a close reading of the lyrics in terms of its textualized oralities. As my reading of "Auld Lang Syne" suggests, Burns's model of national identity as performance was ideally suited to the increasingly globalized presence of Scots in the late eighteenth century.

Performing Song Culture

Burns spent considerable time and energy collecting, producing, and revising Scottish songs. Following the first two subscription editions of his *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* in 1786 and 1787, Burns focused almost entirely on songs. The two major song collections which he contributed to were Scottish engraver and publisher James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803), and Scottish music collector and publisher George Thomson's *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* (1793-1818).³⁸ As Thomas Crawford notes, "After 1787, Burns's main creative activity was the writing of songs Even his best political pieces—the works produced under the stimulus of the French Revolution and the Reform movement at home—are songs first, and poems second" (258). Crawford suggests that Burns's enthusiasm for Scottish song culture was rooted in the varied soundscapes in which Burns found himself throughout his life. Crawford tells us that "Given his early familiarity with the songs and dances of the

³⁷ While Burns's and Moore's theoretical and methodological approaches differ in many important ways, they are similar in that they participate in and contribute to a national song culture which is mediated through oral, scribal, and print cultures and constructed through the collective and collaborative efforts of many.

³⁸ Both of these collections were published over several decades. Johnson's six volume work appeared in print beginning in 1787, with the last volume published in 1803. Thomson's Scottish collection was published in "sets of 25 songs in the 1790s," and though the collection's publication dates are usually given as 1793-1818, Kirsteen McCue notes that the collection was not "completed until the mid 1840s" (94).

countryside . . . and given his discovery that there were men and women in the capital who loved them and wished to preserve them . . . it was almost inevitable that Burns should turn to the allied pursuits of collecting folk-songs and setting his own words to traditional tunes” (258). Here Crawford positions Burns as an intermediary in oral and print cultures, as an observer, participant, recorder and producer of the complex and diverse contemporary cultural landscape.

That Burns occupied these multiple roles, mediated various modes of cultural production, and was fully involved in the collecting, revising, and writing of national songs is clearly expressed in his letters. In October 1787, Burns wrote to Mr. James Hoy, Librarian to the Duke of Gordon at Gordon Castle, asking him for a copy of the words to a song:

Allow me, Sir, to strengthen the small claim I have to your acquaintance by the following request. An Engraver, James Johnson, in Edinr has, not from mercenary views but from an honest Scotch enthusiasm . . . set about collecting all our native Songs and setting them to music; particularly those that have never been set before.—Clarke, the . . . well known Musician, presides over the musical arrangement; and Drs Beattie & Blacklock, Mr Tytler, Woodhouslee, and your humble servt to the utmost of his small power, assist in collecting the old poetry, or sometimes for a fine air to make a stanza, when it has no words. . . . My request is; ‘Cauld kail in Aberdeen’ is one intended for this number; and I beg a copy of his Grace of Gordon’s words to it, which you were so kind as repeat to me. (*Letters* I: 163-4)

Here we can see the various economies of song collecting at work. James Johnson was an Edinburgh engraver and publisher who, at the time Burns met him in 1787, was about to publish the first volume of his *Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803). At the time of this letter, Burns (an unofficial co-editor of Johnson’s *Museum*) was helping Johnson collect, revise, and produce Scottish songs for the second of what would be six volumes of

Scottish songs.³⁹ In the letter, Burns tells the Librarian that the project is generated by patriotic rather than commercial motives, a sentiment expressed earlier by Burns in the prefatory materials of his *Poems*. Burns's disavowal of Johnson's economic interest places Burns, Johnson, and the *Scots Musical Museum* beyond the commercial press, within what Paula MacDowell describes as the realm of "genteel study and polite enjoyment" (154).⁴⁰ Nigel Leask provides an alternative reading, suggesting that "Although Burns's refusal of remuneration for his songs . . . was patriotically motivated . . . it was doubtless also linked to the fact of his secure excise salary" (*Robert Burns and Pastoral* 251).⁴¹ Either way, Burns uses the rhetoric of nationalism (Johnson is motivated "from an honest Scotch enthusiasm") to request the Librarian's (who is acting on the Duke's behalf) assistance in providing the words to the song. What is interesting to note here is while Burns will accept money for his work as an excise officer, collecting

³⁹ Discussing Burns's relationships with James Johnson and George Thomson, Crawford claims that "Johnson's great service was that he published everything Burns cared to send him, without alteration or demur," whereas George Thomson, editor of the *Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*, whom Burns also assisted by collecting, revising and collecting songs, had "an irritating propensity to amend or reject" (261). Yet, however difficult Thomson proved, "By suggesting changes in both the words and music he received from Burns, he forced the poet into elaborating a theoretical justification for his lyric art" which, Crawford assumes, benefited Burns's "creative activity" (261-2).

⁴⁰ According to MacDowell, "For later eighteenth-century ballad scholars, redefining balladry as an appropriate object of genteel study and polite enjoyment meant defining their own learned anthologies away from the 'trash' of the commercial press" (154).

⁴¹ Five years later, Burns continued to refuse payment for his work with songs. In a letter to George Thomson (September 16 1792), Burns writes: "As to any remuneration, you may think my Songs either above, or below price; for they shall absolutely be the one or the other.—In the honest enthusiasm with which I embark in your undertaking, to talk of money, wages, fee, hire, &c. would be downright Sodomy of the Soul!—A proof of each of the Songs that I compose or amend, I shall receive as a favor" (Burns, *Letters* II: 149-50). In fact, by April 1793, Burns would claim to Thomson, "You cannot imagine how much this business of composing for your publication . . . has added to my enjoyments.—What with my early attachment to ballads, Johnson's Museum, your book; &c. Ballad-making is now as completely my hobby-horse, as ever Fortification was Uncle Toby's" (Burns, *Letters* II: 204).

the nation's taxes, he refuses recompense for his work as a cultural producer, collecting the nation's songs.⁴²

Moreover, Burns's description of Johnson's project—to "set about collecting all our native Songs and setting them to music, particularly those that have never been set before"—speaks to two additional aspects of Burns's song collecting. First, Burns suggests his own expertise based on an exhaustive knowledge of Scottish songs, allowing Burns (and Johnson) to know what constitutes "all our native Songs." Second, this letter speaks to is his musical knowledge, his ability to provide songs (lyrics) with appropriate musical settings. In a letter of 1791, Burns expresses his desire to develop a complete knowledge of Scottish song culture, writing: "I was so lucky lately as to pick up an entire copy of Oswald's Scots Music, and I think I shall make glorious work out of it. I want much Anderson's Collection of Strathspeys &c., and then I think I will have all the music of the country" (*Letters* II: 75). According to Crawford, Burns's cultural activities and his accumulated expertise situated him in two very important contemporary movements: "The gathering and publishing of Scottish songs was one of the most important branches of the antiquarian movement of the eighteenth century; and on this subject, so closely bound up with the contemporary national revival, Burns became the greatest expert of them all" (*Burns* 258).

⁴² This would not be the first time Burns refused remuneration (or expressed economic disinterest) for his cultural work. In the Preface of the first edition of his *Poems* (published in July 1786), Burns positions himself as "The Simple Bard." Referring to his poems as "trifles" which "are not the production of the Poet...with all the advantages of learned art" (iii), Burns produces himself as a poet by nature, a poet submersed in the local, who recognizes his poetic abilities, and who writes for his own amusement (and not for money, thereby expressing the disavowal of economic interest sociologist Pierre Bourdieu identifies as part of the "economic universe" of the cultural field). Bourdieu tells us that "disavowal...is neither a real negation of the 'economic' interest which always haunts the most 'disinterested' practices, nor a simple 'dissimulation' of the mercenary aspects of the practice, as even the most attentive observers have supposed" (76). "The fact that the disavowal of the 'economy' is neither a simple ideological mask nor a complete repudiation of economic interest explains why, on the one hand, new producers whose only capital is their conviction can establish themselves in the market by appealing to the values whereby the dominant figures accumulated their symbolic capital, and why, on the other hand, only those who can come to terms with the 'economic' constraints inscribed in this bad-faith economy can reap the full 'economic' profits of their symbolic capital" (76).

The prestige associated with song collections is implied in Burns's assurance to the Librarian that the music needed for the project will be "presided over" by the "well known Musician," Stephen Clarke, a music teacher and organist of Edinburgh's Episcopal Chapel, to whom Burns, in a later letter to John Skinner (25 October 1787), assigned the title of "the first musician in town" (*Letters* I: 168). Burns also assures the Librarian that the project has attracted the support of the cultural, political, and intellectual elite, such as "Drs Beattie & Blacklock, Mr Tytler, Woodhouslee." At the same time that Burns speaks to the cultural capital of the project, he guarantees to protect the Duke's privacy if so desired: "You may be sure we won't prefix the Author's name, except you like; tho' I look on it as no small merit to this that the names of many of the Authors of our old Scotch Songs, names almost forgotten, will be inserted." While suggesting the importance of authorial attribution to song collections conceived as national and nationalizing projects, Burns also seems to be sensitive to the uncertain relation of popular to national song. Popular song could be seen perhaps as a national cohesive, bringing together all subjects regardless of class, education, or regional affiliations; however, as McCue makes clear, "The process by which demotic (or popular) song tradition becomes national song is one still requiring a great deal of exploration" (90). According to McCue,

the notion of 'popular song' is ambiguous, denoting both 'the people' as the inhabitants of traditional rural societies who supposedly create these songs as part of an uneducated and oral culture, and also, by the early nineteenth century, a growing public of consumers deriving pleasure from a printed song culture (also often in performance), and offering the prospect of substantial commercial success to song publishers. (90)

The commercial aspect of national song collections such as the *Scots Musical Museum* is confirmed when Burns concludes the letter by naming "Johnson's terms" for the text in its material form: each number (and there will be three) will be a handsome pocket volume containing at least 100 Scotch songs, "with basses for the Harpsichord, &c."; and

subscribers will be able to purchase each volume for 5s. Non-subscribers will be able to purchase for 6s. (*Letters* I: 163-4).⁴³

While this letter speaks to the cultural and material economies associated with song collecting, it also suggests Burns's role as a collector of songs, a self-professed intermediary, operating within the nexus of oral, scribal, and print cultures. Burns indicates that he has heard the Librarian's rendition of the song (aural), a rendition based on the Duke of Gordon's (oral) words, words which Burns now collects via a handwritten copy (scribal) so as to set the lyrics to music in print form (print) with performance as the ultimate expectation (aural and oral). Thus, Burns describes (and actively participates in) the cycle of re-mediation integral to song collecting which continues as the song travels from body—flesh and text—to body. The cycle of re-mediation is both social and cooperative, depending on a network of cultural producers willing to collaborate in the production of the nation's culture. The cycle is also performative; at the same time as Burns describes, and actively participates in, the cycle of re-mediation, he performs his role as a producer of the nation's culture. The cultural product (the song) and the cultural producer (in this case, Burns) coalesce to reveal the nation's culture as living, as actively—and continuously-- producing itself.

⁴³ Burns was confident that through his work as a collector, reviser and producer of songs he, and those with whom he collaborated, would accrue considerable symbolic and cultural capital. That he believed his fame would endure is evidenced by his letter to Thomson (May 1795). Burns tells the editor that "there is an artist of very considerable merit, just now in this town, who has hit the most remarkable likeness of what I am at this moment, that I think ever was taken of any body. . . . I have some thoughts of suggesting to you, to prefix a vignette taken from it to my song, 'Contented wi' little & cantie wi' mair,' in order [*sic*] the portrait of my face & the picture of my mind may go down the stream of Time together" (*Letters* II: 356).

In an earlier letter (April 1793), Burns assured Thomson, "*Your Book will be the Standard of Scots Songs for the future*" (*Letters* II: 198, original italics). He expressed a similar belief to James Johnson in a letter written about June 1796: "Your Work is a great one; . . . I will venture to prophesy, that to future ages your Publication will be the text book & standard of Scottish Song & Music" (*Letters* II: 3821-2). Several years prior to this (November 1788), Burns assured Johnson that while the editor may not realize much (if any) financial reward (economic capital) from the *Museum*, he would certainly gain fame (symbolic capital), and his cultural expertise (cultural capital) and patriotism would be widely recognized: "Perhaps you may not find your account, . . . *lucratively*, in this business; but you are a Patriot for the Music of your Country; and I am certain, Posterity will look on themselves as highly indebted to your Publick spirit.—Be not in a hurry; let us go on correctly; and your name shall be immortal" (*Letters* I: 339).

That the collections of contemporary song collectors and writers such as Burns “were initially inspired by, and ultimately intended for, performance,” is suggested by McCue, who speaks to the interplay of sources in the practices of song collectors such as Burns, James Hogg, John Clare, Thomas Moore, and George Thomson. According to McCue, these song collectors and writers “happily collated materials from a variety of oral and printed sources which [they] amalgamated and transformed with the help of both musicians and writers. . . . [;] the role of melody was critically important” to these song collectors and editors, “and was usually the starting point for creating songs afresh” (100-1). Burns himself made specific references to the performability of the songs he worked on. In a letter to George Thomson (April 1793), in which Burns had enclosed several verses for Thomson to consider for inclusion in Thomson’s *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice*, Burns comments on those elements of a song (in this case, rhythm and language) which may affect its performability. He notes that though the lines set to the tune, “Bonie Dundee” “suit the tune exactly,”

There is a syllable wanting at the beginning of the first line of the second Stanza, but I suppose it will make little odds.--There is so little of the Scots language in the composition that the mere English Singer will find no difficulty in the Song. (*Letters* II: 195)

Here Burns demonstrates his keen sensitivity to song in performance.⁴⁴

Thomson's *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* featured Scottish melodies to which lyrics were added. As the title page of the collection's first volume (1793) explains,

To each of [the Scottish airs] are added, introductory & concluding Symphonies & Accompaniment for the Violon & Piano Forte. By Pleyel. With select and characteristic Verses by the most admired Scottish Poets, adapted to each Air; many of them entirely new. Also suitable English Verses in Addition to such of the Songs as are written in the Scottish Dialect.

When Thomson first approached Burns asking for his help with *A Selection Collection*, Thomson outlined his plan to include Scottish and English lyrics. His overall objective seems to have been to produce a collection of Scottish songs which could be performed in a wide range of private and public venues. In a letter to Burns (September 1792), hoping to recruit Burns's help with his new project, Thomas writes:

⁴⁴ The issue of Burns's use of Scots dialect in his poems and songs has been taken up by many scholars (for some recent examples, see Gerard Carruthers, Robert Crawford, Leith Davis, Nigel Leask, and Liam McIlvanney). Many of these discussions have centred on the connections between nationalism and Burns's use of the vernacular. In the context of Burns's letter to Thomson (April 1793), however, Burns is discussing the performability of the Scots dialect for a "mere English Singer." For Burns, Scots dialect produced a particular effect, an effect beyond imitation or comparison; discussing a song on which he was working, he writes, "I could easily throw this into an English mould; but to my taste, in the simple & tender of the Pastoral song, a sprinkling of the old Scottish, has an inimitable effect" (*Letters* II: 195). At the same time, however, Burns was well aware of the popular and critical attitude to Scots dialect when employed in poetry and songs. The publication of the first edition of his *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Kilmarnock, 1786), stimulated a great deal of interest. Yet, while the reception was generally positive, the London reviewers were united in their criticism of Burns's use of dialect. A typical comment, found in the *Monthly Review*, reads: "We much regret that these poems are written in some measure in an unknown tongue, which must deprive most of our Readers of the pleasure they would otherwise naturally create" (quoted in Low, *Burns: The Critical Heritage*, 72). Perhaps Burns was responding to this stream of criticism when he expanded the glossary in the second edition from five to 24 pages. Even enthusiasts of Burns's poetry lamented his use of dialect. In a letter to Samuel Rose (27 August 1787), William Cowper writes, "Poor Burns loses much of his deserved praise in this country through our ignorance of his language. I despair of meeting with any Englishman who will take the pains that I have taken to understand him. His candle is bright, but shut up in a dark lantern. I lent him to a very sensible neighbour of mine; but his uncouth dialect spoiled all; and before he had half read him through he was quite *ram-feezeled* (exhausted)" (quoted in Low, "Introduction," xviii). Moreover, criticism of Burns's use of dialect was not limited to English readers; Henry Mackenzie, himself a resident of Edinburgh, commented on the difficulties attendant upon Burns's language.

For some years past, I have, with a friend or two, employed many leisure hours to selecting and collating the most favorite of our national melodies for publication. We have engaged Pleyel, the most agreeable composer living, to put accompaniments to these, and also to compose an instrumental prelude and conclusion to each air the better to fit them for concerts, both public and private. To render this work perfect, we are desirous to have the poetry improved, wherever it seems unworthy of the music . . . “ (quoted in the *Poems and Songs of Robert Burns* III: 989-90).

Thomson claims that in other song collections

some charming melodies are united to mere nonsense and doggerel, while others are accommodated with rhymes so loose and indelicate, as cannot be sung in decent company. To remove this reproach, would be an easy task to the author of *The Cotter's Saturday Night*; and, for the honour of Caledonia, I would fain hope he may be induced to take up the pen. If so, we shall be enabled to present the Public with a collection, infinitely more interesting than any that has yet appeared, and acceptable to all persons of taste, whether they wish for correct melodies, delicate accompaniments, or characteristic verses. (Burns III: 989-90)

Burns agreed to help Thomson, sending him many songs up until his death in 1796. According to Thomas Crawford, Burns even wrote some of the English lyrics at Thomson's request (*Burns: A Study of the Poems and Songs* 264), though Burns complained that “These English Songs gravel me to death.—I have not the command of the language that I have of my native tongue.—In fact, I think my ideas are more barren in English than in Scottish. I have been at ‘Duncan Gray,’ to dress it in English, but all that I can do is deplorably stupid” (*Letters* II: 268).

Several years earlier, in his *Commonplace Book*, Burns delineated his theory regarding Scots songs, a theory which posits the importance of performativity to Scottish song culture:

There is a certain irregularity in the old Scotch songs, a redundancy of syllables with respect to that exactness of accent & measure that the English Poetry requires, but which glides in, most melodiously with the respective tunes to which they are set. For instance, the fine old song of *The Mill Mill O*, to give it a plain prosaic reading it halts prodigiously out of measure; on the other hand, the Song set to the same tune in Bremner's

collection of Scotch Songs which begins ‘To Fanny fair could I impart &c.’ it is most exact measure, and yet, let them be both sung before a real Critic, one above the biases of prejudice, but a thorough judge of Nature,--how flat & spiritless will the last appear, how treated, and tamely methodical, compared with the wild-warbling cadence, the heart-moving melody of the first.—This particularly is the case with all those airs which end with a hypermetrical syllable.--There is a degree of wild irregularity in many of the compositions & Fragments which are daily sung to them by my compeers, the common people—a certain happy arrangement of old Scotch syllables, & yet, very frequently, nothing even *like* rhyme, or sameness of jingle at the ends of the lines.—This has made me sometimes imagine that perhaps, it might be possible for a Scotch Poet, with a nice, judicious ear, to set compositions to many of our most favorite airs, particularly that class of them mentioned above, independent of rhyme altogether. (*Commonplace Book* 37-8)

While a song may consist of lyrics and music, the song is a song when sung (and not read). Its aesthetic value as well as its function as a signifier of national culture can only be fully realized in performance. Burns distinguishes Scots from English songs based on the “wildness” of the Scots songs, their capacity to move the emotions, to produce an affective response. Unlike the English songs, the Scots songs are irregular; they escape the boundaries of precision--“that exactness of accent & measure”—which Burns associates with English poetry. Burns links aesthetic effect and national identity (specifically, Scottishness), to argue that a nation’s song culture—as an expression of its members--takes its shape and assumes its power (cultural, political, social) in performance.

Burns’s work as a producer of national song culture suggests parallels with Frantz Fanon’s articulations regarding the culture of the nation.⁴⁵ In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon describes national culture as taking shape and meaning through its presence rather than through its past:

⁴⁵See the Introduction for a discussion of the strategic use of postcolonial theory in the analysis of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts.

A national culture is not a folklore, nor an abstract populism that believes it can discover the people's true nature. It is not made up of the inert dregs of gratuitous actions, that is to say actions which are less and less attached to the ever-present reality of the people. A national culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify, and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence. (233)⁴⁶

Burns demonstrated a flexible and nuanced approach to nationalism, especially in his work with song culture. He collected and contributed songs for the Scottish musical anthologies of James Johnson (*Scots Musical Museum*) and George Thomson (*A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs*), although these projects involved quite different notions of national culture. As Nigel Leask points out, while “Both Johnson and Thomson were important pioneers in transforming ‘popular’ into ‘national’ song, . . . the latter term has a slightly different inflection in each case. Compared to Johnson’s ‘patriotic inclusivity,’ Thomson’s collection was in its very conception an ‘act of union’ presenting alternative Scottish and English lyrics to each of its elaborately set melodies” (*Robert Burns and Pastoral* 254). In his involvement in Johnson’s and Thomson’s projects, Burns was taking part in what Pittock describes as “The growing practice of ballad-collecting, the preservation of oral literature in textualized form, [which] attempted to save before it was too late a culture under threat from mobility and literacy” (*Scottish and Irish Romanticism* 153). However, Burns approached the task not as an ethnographer collecting fragments from a dying or dead past, but as a producer of a

⁴⁶ Yet, as Laura Chrisman points out, to Fanon, “the notion of traditional culture was, on occasion, nothing other than a contradiction in terms. Arguing that colonialism had destroyed precolonial culture and history, to the point of irrecoverability, Fanon insisted that nationalism ought not to preserve or synthesize ‘the past’ but rather to invent a qualitatively new cultural consciousness, one that could only begin to be engendered through the political creation of struggle itself” (187). Chrisman suggests Fanon’s complex (ambivalent?) notion of culture: “Elsewhere, however—including in some of the other essays in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1968; see also Fanon 1965)—Fanon posited the ongoing existence and utility of precolonial cultural formations. In other words, there is no schematic polarization of traditional and modern cultures in his nationalism; instead there is a sustained emphasis on nationalism as an activity that transforms human subjects in new and unimaginable ways” (187).

living, vibrant culture.⁴⁷ In this way, he recalls Fanon's treatment of oral tradition ("stories, epics, and songs of the people") as changing, living components of national culture.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ For a thoughtful analysis of the role of temporality in postcolonial analysis, see Keya Ganguly's "Temporality and Postcolonial Critique" (2004). According to Ganguly, while "The periodizing approach to the question of time in postcolonial analysis has generated some thought-provoking insights," it "has tended to eschew larger philosophical meditations on what makes epochal pronouncements intelligible in the first place (e.g., explorations of *how* time has figured in the analysis of the postcolonial)" (162). Ganguly suggests that a more productive exploration of temporality is found in work that regards "the postcolonial not as an epoch or age but as *a particular mode of historical emergence*. Here, the issues have entailed characterizing the 'alterity' associated with postcolonial forms of being; in other words, the focus has been on the ways in which, and the degree to which, the postcolonial has been taken to represent an 'other' time whose logic and historical expression are incommensurable with the normative temporality of clock and calendar associated with Western modernity" (162).

For a discussion which links anthropology, postcolonialism, and the temporal distancing of the "Other," see Johannes Fabian's *Time and the Other* (1983). Fabian claims that anthropological discourse—specifically, anthropology's denial of coevalness (which he defines as "a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse," [31]), to the "Other"—is implicated in the ways in which the "Other" has been and continues to be constituted. Fabian sees the strategies of distancing as "devices (existential, rhetorical, political)" employed by anthropological discourse to set the "Other" within a temporal framework which is outside of that of the anthropologist. Arguing for a recognition of the political nature of anthropological study, Fabian notes that knowledge is produced "in a public forum of intergroup, interclass, and international relations," and points out that the historical conditions in which anthropology as a discipline developed included "the rise of capitalism and its colonialist-imperialist expansion into the very society which became the target of our inquiries. For this to occur, the expansive, aggressive, and oppressive societies which we collectively and inaccurately call the West needed Space to occupy. More profoundly and problematically, they required Time to accommodate the schemes of a one-way history: progress, development, modernity (and their negative mirror images: stagnation, underdevelopment, tradition). In short, *geopolitics* has its ideological foundations in *chronopolitics*" (143-144). For an important treatment of travel writing and transculturation, see Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (2006). Pratt develops several extremely useful terms for use in postcolonial analysis: transculturation, contact zone, anti-conquest, and autoethnography (7-9).

In *The Language of Postcolonial Literatures: An Introduction*, Ismail S. Talib discusses the interplay between orality, writing and English in postcolonial context. Of particular interest is her treatment of "Orality, Writing and What English Brings" in Chapter 4 (71-89). According to Talib, "As significant as the introduction of English in some of these countries, is the introduction of writing. Indeed, in some contexts it can be regarded as more significant" (71).

Burns's activities as a collector, reviser and producer of songs need to be placed within the scope of his cultural production. Certainly, the complex ways in which Burns links nationalism, class and his poetic practice in his authorial self-construction (as a national poet and collector of songs) defy any attempts to categorize or contain him within a stable category. Burns often positions himself as a cultural authority within the paratextual spaces of his work. In *Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1786), for example, he provides a glossary for the Scots dialect he employs and appends footnotes explaining literary allusions (127), cultural practices (155), and historical agents and events (132). In the Preface of the 1786 *Poems*, Burns positions himself as working within the Scottish poetic tradition. Referring specifically to Allan Ramsay and Robert Ferguson, he acknowledges their influence: "These two justly admired Scotch Poets he has often had in his eye in the following pieces; but rather with a view to kindle at their flame, than for servile imitation" (v). Thus, he is inspired by, though no slave to, his poetic predecessors. In this way, Burns creates a name for himself in the cultural field. According to Bourdieu, the cultural field is the "continuous creation of the battle between those who have made their names...and are struggling to stay in view and those who cannot make their own names without relegating to the past the established figures, whose interest lies in freezing the movement of time, fixing the present state of the field for ever" (106). By designating established poets such as Ramsay and Ferguson as predecessors, Burns "relegates them to the past," thereby creating an opening for up-and-coming poets (such as him) who wish to make their name. "To 'make one's name,'"

⁴⁸ In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon writes, "On another level, the oral tradition—stories, epics, and songs of the people—which formerly were filed away as set pieces are now beginning to change. The storytellers who used to relate inert episodes now bring them alive and introduce into them modifications which are increasingly fundamental. There is a tendency to bring conflicts up to date and to modernize the kinds of struggle which the stories evoke, together with the names of heroes and the types of weapons. The method of allusion is more and more widely used. The formula 'This all happened long ago' is substituted with that of 'What we are going to speak of happened somewhere else, but it might well have happened here today, and it might happen tomorrow.' The example of Algeria is significant in this context. From 1952-53 on, the storytellers, who were before that time stereotyped and tedious to listen to, completely overturned their traditional methods of storytelling and the context of their tales. Their public, which was formerly scattered, became compact. The epic, with its typified categories, reappeared; it became an authentic form of entertainment which took on once more a cultural value. Colonialism made no mistake when from 1955 on it proceeded to arrest these storytellers systematically" (239-4).

Bourdieu tells us, “means making one’s *mark*, achieving recognition...of one’s *difference* from other producers, especially the most consecrated of them; at the same time, it means *creating a new position* beyond the positions presently occupied, *ahead* of them, in the *avant-garde*” (106).

The complexities of Burns’s cultural practices and their relationship to the political and cultural landscape are suggested by Murray Pittock, who, in his reading of Burns’s poems and songs, claims that “Burns’s politics, though of themselves complex and quite possibly inconsistent, developed a poetic rhetoric which melded Jacobin, Jacobite and nationalist elements” (170). Moreover, in “A Man’s a Man for a That,” Pittock tells us, “Burns creates a universal radical manifesto out of the unique qualities of Scottish history’s struggle for liberty against a larger neighbour, not only through the linguistic tensions of the poem, but also by rooting it in the famous Jacobite song ‘Tho Georthie reigns in Jamie’s stead’” (171). Like Pittock, I see Burns combining political radicalism, Scottish history and national elements in his work. However, while Pittock claims that “Burns’s achievement in releasing a political language of universal claims out of the particularities of the Scottish folk tradition has provided his poetic rhetoric with a more lasting political appeal than any of the other Romantics” (171), I see the interplay of these elements (contemporary politics, history, and nationalism) as suggesting not only the complexity of the political, social, economic, and cultural landscapes of late eighteenth-century Scotland, but also the complexity of Burns’s understanding of culture as well as his role as a producer of it.

By playing close attention to performance throughout his work Burns further complicates the idea of national culture, suggesting the role of multi-media in the modernizing nation. In the Preface of the first edition of his *Poems*, he connects oral and print cultures with nationalism to position himself as an author who “sings the sentiments and manners, he felt and saw in himself and his rustic compeers around him, in his and their native language” (iii). In terms of language, form, and national culture, Burns draws on the work of Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson in situating himself as a producer of the nation’s culture. Like his predecessors, Burns demonstrates a complex understanding

and use of vernacular Scots culture, employing Scots dialect in his songs and poems; he collects traditional songs, and also writes lyrics which he sets to traditional Scots tunes. Yet, while he demonstrates a keen sense of Scotland's cultural history, referring specifically to Ramsay and Fergusson in the prefatory materials of his published work (*Poems*, 1786), and acknowledging their influence, he also suggests an esthetic distance from cultural forerunners, relegating poets such as Ramsay and Ferguson to the past (Bourdieu 106).⁴⁹ The past in this sense, however, is the national past, and through the employment of textualized oralities, he presents his voice as the national and nationalizing voice of the nation in the present.

“Auld Lang Syne”: a Nationalism of Presence

Burns composed hundreds of songs, all of which explore some aspect (cultural, social, political, historical, sexual, for example) of the nation's life, past and present.⁵⁰ Many of these songs address Scottish political and historical subjects, and have been read as such; however, the rest of his *oeuvre* (which constitutes the majority of his

⁴⁹In the Preface of the 1786 *Poems*, Burns positions himself as working within the Scottish poetic tradition. Referring specifically to Allan Ramsay and Robert Ferguson, he acknowledges their influence: “These two justly admired Scotch Poets he has often had in his eye in the following pieces; but rather with a view to kindle at their flame, than for servile imitation” (v). Thus, he is inspired by, though no slave to, his poetic predecessors. In this way, Burns creates a name for himself in the cultural field.. According to Bourdieu, the cultural field is the “continuous creation of the battle between those who have made their names...and are struggling to stay in view and those who cannot make their own names without relegating to the past the established figures, whose interest lies in freezing the movement of time, fixing the present state of the field for ever” (106). By designating established poets such as Ramsay and Ferguson as predecessors, Burns “relegates them to the past,” thereby creating an opening for up-and-coming poets (such as him) who wish to make their name. “To ‘make one’s name,’” Bourdieu tells us, “means making one’s *mark*, achieving recognition...of one’s *difference* from other producers, especially the most consecrated of them; at the same time, it means *creating a new position* beyond the positions presently occupied, *ahead* of them, in the *avant-garde*” (106).

⁵⁰Burns’s songs have been read through a variety of lens, some of the songs (such as “A Man’s a Man for a’ That”) seen to be expressions of a particular political ideology, while others (such as “Robert Bruce’s March on Bannockburn”) have been seen to be addressing a particular historical moment. Of course, there are many crossovers between these camps, in that the manner in which a song describes a specific moment in the nation’s history constitutes an interpretation of the event which is informed by a particular ideological positioning. Thus, a song which addresses an historical event can also constitute a political manifesto.

songs) has been categorized as either love songs or drinking songs and has been less likely to be interpreted through the lens of nationalism.

Burns's arguably most well-known song, "Auld Lang Syne," has long been celebrated for its "global reach" (Pittock, Introduction, *Robert Burns in Global Culture*, 20), yet it, too, has seldom been examined as a nationalist lyric in terms of how it engages the historic or contemporary Scottish nation (with the exception of Carol McQuirk's work, discussed below). Thomas Crawford describes "Auld Lang Syne" as "the best of Burns's Drinking Songs . . . which for all Anglic-speaking peoples has become the traditional expression of good fellowship and group solidarity" (Burns 320). More recently Murray Pittock, discussing the international and transcultural dimensions of "Burns's global presence and impact," notes that

the settled global reach of 'Auld Lang Syne' in particular has lifted it clear of Burns's usual cultural frontiers. During 2009, the Global Burns Network events saw singing of the song in tongues as diverse as Mandarin and Czech by international audiences, while a world record was set on St Andrews' Day 2009 in Glasgow, when the song was simultaneously sung in over forty languages to mark the end of Homecoming Scotland, including Arabic, Hindu, Igbo, Maori, Malay, Persian, Swahili, Thai, Urdu, and Vietnamese. (Introduction, *Robert Burns in Global Culture*, 21).

Both Crawford and Pittock mark the international and transnational range of the song, and suggest how in performance (singing the song collectively) the song enacts the "good fellowship and group solidarity" it has come to symbolize. In doing so, Crawford and Pittock participate in two important streams of Burns scholarship: the examination of the communal/social aspects in Burns's work which engage the idea of fellowship and its significance to the human condition; and the exploration of the global dimensions of Burns's presence.

In the rest of this chapter, I examine "Auld Lang Syne" as a specifically nationalist text by closely examining the conditions of writing of the text. As suggested above, Burns's songs often problematize any simple understanding of what constitutes a

national cultural product, both by the complex ways in which they engage multiple aspects (often simultaneously) of the nation as well as how they position the nation in terms of the local, national, international, and transnational. And certainly, “Auld Lang Syne” is no exception to this. Yet, Burns himself offered various statements regarding what constituted Scottish song. For Burns, “wildness” (of “accent & measure” and “happiness of thought and expression”), simplicity, and Scots language (specifically, Scots dialect) were essential elements. In a letter to Reverend John Skinner (24 October, 1787), a noted song writer of the period (who, in the same letter, Burns addresses as “the Author of the best Scotch song ever Scotland saw,--‘Tullochgorum’s my delight!’”), Burns writes:

The world may think slightly of the craft of song-making, if they please; but, as Job says, ‘O! that mine adversary had written a book!’ let them try. There is a certain something in the old Scotch songs, a wild happiness of thought and expression, which peculiarly marks them, not only from English songs, but also from the modern efforts of song-wrights, in our native manner and language. (*Letters* I: 167)

Notably, here (and elsewhere) Burns refers to the “wild happiness of thought and expression” as specific markers of *old* Scottish songs; however, that he sees these markers as aesthetic qualities which are reproducible now—in the contemporary moment--by a song producer of sufficient taste and skill (*Letters* I: 170) is implied in his ruminations on song theory found in his *Commonplace Book* (discussed above), in which he writes: “sometimes [I] imagine that perhaps, it might be possible for a Scotch Poet, with a nice, judicious ear, to set compositions to many of our favorite airs” (38). Admittedly, he only “imagines” the possibility of a “Scotch Poet” (with the requisite skills) writing the nation’s songs, yet given Burns’s consistent self-positioning as a Scots Bard, it seems plausible that he “imagines” himself as the “Scotch Poet, with a nice judicious ear.”

In addition to a “wild irregularity,” Burns sees simplicity and Scots language as integral to Scottish songs. He explains the need for both of these elements in his correspondence. Of the need for simplicity, he writes to Thomson (April 1793): “of

pathos, Sentiment & Point, you are a compleat judge; but there is a quality more necessary than either, in a Song, & which is the very essence of a Ballad, I mean Simplicity” (*Letters* II: 196). Of the primary role of the Scots language in the creation of Scots culture, specifically, Scots songs, he writes, again to Thomson (26 January, 1793):

If it were possible to procure songs of merit, I think it would be proper to have one set of Scots words to every air,--& that the set of words to which the notes ought to be pricked.—There is a naïveté, a pastoral simplicity, in a slight intermixture of Scots words & phraseology, which is more . . . in unison (at least . . . to my taste, & I will add, to every genuine Caledonian taste,) with the simple pathos, or rustic sprightliness, of our native music, than any English verses whatever. (*Letters* II: 181)

Here Burns is both an evaluating and authorizing voice. As well as arguing for the aesthetic value of Scots dialect to Scots songs, he positions himself as possessing the cultural capital, the knowledge and the “taste,” necessary to judge those elements which are integral to the nation’s songs. Not only does his “taste” allow him to determine the essential elements, but he implies that anyone who does not agree with him, who does not see the “unison” between Scots language and Scots music, lacks “genuine Caledonian taste,” and is thereby incapable of assessing the nation’s culture.⁵¹ At the same time as he positions himself as having the “taste” to classify the cultural product (in this case, Scottish songs), he is classified through his “taste”; as Bourdieu tells us, “Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier” (*Distinction* 6).

⁵¹ Burns’s comments are indicative of the “taste war” waged between him and Thomson during the years of their collaboration. A simple reading of their conflict would suggest that whereas Burns valued simplicity, Thomson valued refinement. However, this would be doing an injustice to the complexities of their projects as well as their skill as adept negotiators of the late eighteenth-century cultural field. Nevertheless, their correspondence is full of discussions regarding the aesthetics of Scottish song culture and suggests the dis/similarities of their positions. In the same letter quoted here (April 1793), Burns suggests that Thomson drop by Dumfries on his way to London, so that Burns can share some Scots airs he has on hand: “I have still several M.S.S. Scots airs by me, which I have pickt up, mostly from the singing of country lasses.--They please me vastly; but your learned lugs would perhaps be displeased with the very feature for which I like them.—I call them Simple; you would pronounce them Silly. . . . I send you likewise, to me a beautiful little air, which I had taken down from viva voce. . . . On the other page, I will give you a Stanza or two of the Ballad to it. . . . I know these Songs are not to have the luck to please you, else you might be welcome to them” (*Letters* II: 198-9).

Certainly Burns was successful in accumulating sufficient cultural and symbolic capital to make a “name” for himself in the late eighteenth-century Scottish cultural field. That he accrued the power necessary to consecrate the cultural productions of others is suggested by both Thomson and Johnson citing him as a contributor of songs in their works. Presumably they both felt that Burns’s name would bring additional cultural, symbolic, and economic capital to their projects. Thomson names Burns on the title page of the fourth volume (1803) of his *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs* (1793-1803): “A select Collection . . . including upwards of one hundred new songs by BURNS” (*The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns* III: 989). Johnson, in the Preface to the fifth volume of *The Scots Musical Museum* (1796), credits Burns for his generous contributions to the *Museum*:

To [Mr. Burns] is the present Collection indebted for almost all of these excellent pieces which it contains. He has not only enriched it with a variety of beautiful and original Songs composed by himself, but his zeal for the success of the Scots Musical Museum prompted him to collect and write out accurate Copies of many others in their genuine simplicity—Prior to his decease, he furnished the Editor with a number, in addition to those already published, greater than can be included in one Volume . . .” (quoted in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, III: 986).

Aesthetic judgement, originality, passion: these are the qualities of the nation’s song collector. The editor describes how Burns’s “zeal for the success” of the publication compelled Burns’s efforts. Johnson suggests Burns’s professionalism in both his commitment to this particular textual production (volume five of Johnson’s *Museum*), as well as to the larger project (producing the nation’s songs). Burns not only contributed his own work to the *Museum*, Johnson tells his readers, but searched for more songs which he accurately transcribed, taking care to retain their “genuine simplicity.”

Moreover, Johnson notes Burns's generosity; even in his final days, Burns continued to provide Johnson with materials for the *Museum*.⁵²

Johnson's use of "zeal" (which Samuel Johnson defined as a "passionate ardour for any person or cause") is important here as it speaks to the affective quality of nationalism during this period. In both his correspondence and his published materials Burns links feeling, culture, and nationalism. Often, when relating details of his life and connecting them to his cultural production, especially his work as a national poet and song "maker," he uses a vocabulary of affect. Words and phrases such as "enthusiasm," "crazed," and "heart-moving" are scattered through his writings. In a letter to his friend Frances Dunlop (November 1786), Burns describes his early boyhood explorations, in search of sites visited by the Scottish hero Sir William Wallace: "I explored every den and dell where I could suppose my heroic Countryman to have sheltered, I recollect (for even then I was a Rhymer) that my heart glowed with a wish to be able to make a song on him equal to his merits" (*Letters* I: 62). Here, and elsewhere, he describes his feelings and suggests both their power ("my heart glowed") and their history (since childhood) when associated with his song production. When discussing a song project (whether it involved producing, collecting, or revising materials), he often employs the word "enthusiasm." Of the several definitions provided by Samuel Johnson, "Elevation of fancy; exaltation of ideas" seems most often to apply, such as in Burns's letter to James Hoy (October 1787) discussed above, in which Burns describes Johnson's project motivated by "an honest Scotch enthusiasm."⁵³

Burns's evocation of feeling and its connections to nationalism can be seen in his version of "Auld Lang Syne," as it appeared in the fifth volume of Johnson's

⁵² Generous and committed, Burns provided Johnson with over two hundred songs for *The Scots Musical Museum*. James Kingsley tells us that virtually everything Burns produced between 1787 and 1792 "went into the *Museum*: more than 200 songs, most of them original compositions or pieces reshaped from tradition" ("Textual Introduction," *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, 987).

⁵³ For an example of Burns's use of "crazed" to describe his song collecting activities, see his letter to John Skinner (25 October, 1787) (*Letters* I: 167-8).

Museum(1796). Burns was not the first to set emotionally-laden lyrics to this song, however; the version appearing in James Watson's *A Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems both Ancient and Modern* (1706-1711), titled "Old-Long-syne," features a male speaker's grief over a failed love affair; and that found in Allan Ramsay's *Scots Songs* (1718), titled "The Kind Reception" and set "To the Tune of *Auld lang syne*" (original italics), details a female speaker's joy at being reunited with her lover after a prolonged separation. The song published in Watson's miscellany is one of the earliest print versions of "Auld Lang Syne" to appear in the eighteenth century. Watson's miscellany was the first published anthology (1706-1711) of Scottish literature, and included works of various genres, languages, and traditions. Many of the pieces can be traced to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and, according to J.C. Dick, in his "Historical Notes" on *The Songs of Robert Burns* (1903), "Old-Long-syne" as it is titled in Watson's work, is no exception. Dick tells us that this "ballad is the well-known two sets of verses attributed on slender authority by some to Sir Robert Aytoun (1570-1638), and on more imperfect evidence by others, to Frances Sempill of Belltrees (died c. 1683)" (436). As to Ramsay's version (*Songs* 1718), no earlier analogue has yet been identified.

Burns's version of this song (*Museum* 1796) has been traditionally seen as an expression of longing, a turning back to lost times. Carol McGuirk tells us that "Similar nostalgic sentiments may be traced through Scottish literary culture as far back as the sixteenth-century Bannatyne Manuscript's 'Auld Kyndness foryett'; both the Union of Parliaments and the Jacobite wars stimulated many songs about happier days 'lang syne'" ("Notes" in *Robert Burns: Selected Poems*, 1993, 250). McGuirk argues that unlike earlier versions of the song, "Burns's version is unique in not didactically stating but rather subtly dramatizing the theme of affection enduring despite time and loss. Resemblances to earlier lyrics are merely superficial; moreover, use of a source does not preclude authorship of a text" ("Notes" in *Robert Burns: Selected Poems*, 1993, 250). Here McGuirk is alluding to what J. C. Dick describes as the "obscure and disputed" history of the song's lyrical and musical composition (433). Yet, despite (indeed, perhaps in light of) the song's complex history, McGuirk argues for a recognition of the

historicity of Burns's version, which she contends is evidence of Burns's authorship: "This song of displacement is framing itself round images deriving specifically from the Jacobite wars and the ensuing late-century Highland clearances" (250). According to McGuirk, the lack of a "mid- to late-century analogue for Burns's stanzas that might have suggested these images to the poet" confirms Dick's claim that the song was composed—rather than revised—by Burns (250).

Certainly, scholars such as Dick and McGuirk have been meticulous in their attempts to trace the "origins" of Burns's work, and the search for "origins" is a common concern for those interested in a nation's cultural production. Yet, Burns himself had a complicated approach to the concept of authorship, particularly in regard to his work with national song culture. As indicated earlier, he often disavowed his own authorship, perhaps in part because he was acutely aware of the collective nature of song composition, which involved multiple producers collecting, composing, and revising both lyrics and music over time. Moreover, in his dealings with other cultural producers, he expressed a keen sense of the ways in which national culture, technology, and commerce combined in the creation of the nation's songs, especially as they took form as material objects (in print) which participated in the increasingly commercialized cultural marketplace, and, sensitive to how class could inflect authorial assignation, particularly in regard to the seeming dichotomy of popular versus national song culture, he was quick to assure contributors that he would protect or promote their authorship as they desired.⁵⁴ In addition to these concerns, Burns's strategy of authorial dis/avowal (in terms of his own work as well as the work of others) seems to have been motivated by other reasons, such as wishing to protect a friend from critical opprobrium, or remain allusive about the

⁵⁴ For an example of Burns's deft handling of authorial assignation, especially as it concerns issues of class, see his October 1787 letter to James Hoy (*Letters* I: 163-4). Burns's keenness to assign credit to those who produce songs can be seen in his letter to Reverend John Skinner (14 February 1788), in which he writes: "Your songs appear in the third volume [of Johnson's *Museum*], with your name in the index, as I assure you, Sir, I have heard your *Tullochgorum*, particularly among our west country folks, given to many different names, and most commonly to the immortal Author of the *Minstrel*, who indeed, never wrote any thing superior to '*Gie's a Sang, Montgomery cried*'" (*Letters* I: 235). Here and elsewhere, Burns suggests the importance of authorial attribution, while at the same time displaying a sensitivity to the various economies at work.

source of materials for reasons not made clear or perhaps not revealed at all. In a letter to Frances Dunlop (13 November 1788), Burns explains Johnson's use of lettering in the *Scots Musical Museum* to identify the contributors (though it has been long recognized that Johnson was inconsistent in his use of lettering, rendering the system as a means of attributing authorship unreliable). Burns's comments suggest his desire to protect friends such as Thomas Blacklock from criticism, however well deserved; they also imply his ambiguity about his own work in terms of his revealing the degree to which he amended materials or composed songs new:

The Songs in the 2^d Vol. of the Museum, marked, D, are D^r Blacklock's; but as I am sorry to say they are far short of his other works, I, who only know the cyphers of them all, shall never let it be known. Those marked, T, are the work of an obscure, tippling, but extraordinary body of the name of Tytler: . . . Those marked, Z, I have given to the world as old verses to their respective tunes; but in fact, of a good many of them, little more than the Chorus is ancient; tho' there is no reason for telling every body this piece of intelligence. (*Letters* I: 337)

"Auld Lang Syne" provides an example of the difficulties involved in determining the extent of Burns's hand in the composition of a song. These difficulties arise in part because the text and music of a song are often fluid, nonfixed, and collaboratively developed over time; but they also arise because the details Burns provided when introducing a song to a friend such as Frances Dunlop or the editors Johnson and Thomson were often bits and pieces of the song's history which collectively constituted at best a fragmentary record. In addition, as suggested by the above quotation, Burns would sometimes purposely misrepresent the age and/or origins of a song. Burns first mentions "Auld Lang Syne" in a 1787 letter to Frances Dunlop, in which he writes: "Apropos, is not the Scots phrase, 'Auld lang syne,' exceedingly expressive.—There is an old song & tune which has often thrilled thro' my soul.—You know I am an enthusiast in old Scots songs" (*Letters* I: 342). His description of the song—"an old song & tune"—implies that both the words and music pre-date the possibility of his authorship. Yet, his concluding comments cloud the issue of the song's genesis. At the end of letter, following the song's lyrics, he adds: "Light be the turf on the breast of the heaven-

inspired Poet who composed this glorious Fragment! There is more of the fire of native genius . . . in it, than in half a dozen of modern English Bacchanalians” (*Letters* I: 345). Here Burns seems to disavow any authorial involvement, his high praise of the unnamed author evoking an economy of modesty which would presumably preclude his authorship. At the same time, however, his use of the term “heaven-inspired Poet” echoes the phrase “Heaven-taught ploughman” that novelist and critic Henry Mackenzie, author of the *Man of Feeling*, used to describe Burns in his anonymous review of Burns’s *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1786). Mackenzie’s review appeared in the *Lounger* (Fall 1786), and, according to Donald Low, “was to prove influential far beyond Scotland” (Introduction, xviii). Andrew Nash tells us that Mackenzie’s review “typified the Enlightenment’s general reception of Burns which seized on the rural and domestic characteristic of the poetry, enabling Burns to be accommodated to primitivist theories” (181). Moreover, Nash argues, “It is significant that, in advertising the poems, Burns’s publishers linked the work to advertisements of *The Lounger* and *The Mirror* (both periodicals edited by Mackenzie) and with Mackenzie’s own novels. Marketed in this way, Burns became the ‘Heaven-taught ploughman’” (181). Burns’s sensitivity to this reception and his attempt to move beyond the limiting role of rustic genius to that of a national poet and song writer is suggested in his praise of “the fire of native genius.” While “native” can denote simple, unadorned, natural, it can also signify belonging through birth or natural constitution. “Genius,” Raymond Williams tells us, denotes “‘a characteristic disposition or quality,’” or “‘extraordinary ability’” (143). Burns’s phrase “native genius,” therefore, contains a complex of meanings which collectively signify an expansive national aesthetic which both employs and problematizes the language and aesthetics associated with primitivism.⁵⁵ Burns’s use of this phrase, his extolling of its presence in “Auld Lang Syne,” and his implication that “English Bacchanalians” suffer from its comparative lack, all suggest his advocacy of a more inclusive national culture,

⁵⁵ The *OED* provides numerous definitions for “native”; the most applicable in this case being “Left or remaining in a natural or original state or condition; free from or untouched by art; unadorned, simple, plain”; and “Inherent, innate; belonging to or connected with something by nature or natural constitution.” According to Raymond Williams, “native” can also mean “innate, natural, or of a place in which one is born (cf. the related *nation*)” (*Keywords*, “Native,” 215).

one which incorporates all culture and cultural producers from the nation's diverse regions and classes.

The "Auld Lang Syne" lyrics which Burns included in his letter to Dunlop were very similar to those published several years later in Johnson's *Museum* (1796).⁵⁶ According to Dick, Burns must have sent Johnson a copy of the lyrics which Johnson then put aside, presumably "because the air for which they were written had already appeared with the verses of Allan Ramsay in the first volume of the *Museum* published in 1787" (434). Johnson eventually published Burns's lyrics (set to the air used for Ramsay's version) in the fifth volume of the *Museum* (1796). In the meantime, several years after mentioning the song to Dunlop (1787) and prior to the publication of Burns's version of "Auld Lang Syne" in the *Museum* (1796), Burns sent a copy of the lyrics (substantially the same as those published in the *Museum* in 1796) to Thomson (September 1793).⁵⁷ He tells a different story about the song in this letter, this time critiquing its air and expanding his narrative, explaining that prior to his recording it, the song existed only in oral form:⁵⁸

One Song more, & I have done.—Auld lang syne—The air is but mediocre; but the following song, the old Song of the olden times & which

⁵⁶ For a detailed history of the lyrics and music of *Auld Lang Syne*, see J. C. Dick's 1903 edition of *The Songs of Robert Burns* (433-440). The original lyrics (as appear in the 1787 letter to Dunlop) are largely the same as those published in the *Museum* (1796) with the following exceptions: First stanza: "Should auld acquaintance be forgot, / And never thought upon? Lets hae a waught o' Malaga, / for auld lang syne. Chorus: For auld lang syne, my jo, / For auld lang syne; / Lets hae a waught o' Malaga / For auld lang syne. Fifth Stanza: And there's a han' my trusty fiere, / And gie's a han' o' thine; / And well tak a right gudewilly waught, / For auld lang syne."

⁵⁷ The lyrics of "Auld Lang Syne" published in Johnson's *Museum* (1796) and Thomson's *Scotish [sic] Airs* (1799) are the same with the following exceptions as described by Dick: "The principal variations from the *Museum* copy is the substitution of 'my dear' for 'my jo' in the chorus; and the second stanza in the *Museum* is the last in *Scotish Airs*" (438).

⁵⁸ Again, as in his letter to Dunlop (1787), Burns describes the song as old, and, certainly, the story he tells Dunlop does not negate the story he tells Thomson. The words and music could be old, and he could have recorded it from an old man's performance, a copy of which he then sent to Dunlop and Thomson. However, there have been no similar lyrics found occurring earlier than those in Burns's 1788 letter to Dunlop (as noted by scholars such as Dick and McGuirk). This of course does not preclude an earlier version, as absence does not constitute evidence.

has never been in print, nor even in manuscript, until I took it down from an old man's singing; is enough to recommend any air—(*Letters* II: 246-7)

Importantly, Burns positions himself as actively participating in the cycle of remediation integral to Scottish song culture during this period: the embodied song travels from “an old man's singing” to Burns who writes it down, encloses it in a letter to Thomson, who will then publish it in print form, accompanied by music, with performance in the oral arena anticipated. But Burns was interested in more than just gathering and arranging materials for performance; song production for Burns was a cultural project whose primary concern was aesthetic, an ongoing process to produce the best song (according to Burns's judgement). This would often involve splicing together various lyrical and musical sources, regardless of “origins.” The following year Burns writes again to Thomson (November 1794) with directions regarding “Auld Lang Syne,” this time suggesting Thomson set the lyrics which Burns sent him the previous year to another tune, rather than the one traditionally used: “The words of, auld lang syne, are good; but the music is an old air, the rudiments of the modern tune of that name.—The other tune, you may hear as a common Scottish [*sic*] country dance” (*Letters* II: 329). When Thomson published “Auld Lang Syne” in his *Scottish Airs* (1799), he set Burns's lyrics to a Scottish country dance, the same country dance which had appeared earlier in the fourth volume of Johnson's *Museum* (1792) set to “O can ye labor lea, young man” (No. 394). This is the same melody popular today.⁵⁹

“Auld Lang Syne” took various forms over the course of the eighteenth century, eventually, under Burns's lyrical revisions, metamorphosing from a love song to its

⁵⁹ According to Dick, Thomson conferred with Burns regarding the musical setting to be used with Burns's lyrics: “In the poet's letter to him speaking of the old tune as mediocre he accurately describes the air which was selected as ‘the other tune you may hear as a common Scots country dance.’ It is quite certain that Burns knew it well, for he contributed the verses ‘I fee'd a man at Martinmas’ for the tune, and for a variant of it ‘Comin thro' the rye,’ which is in the *Gray MS*. he instructs to be set to ‘Tune—*Miller's Wedding*, a Strathspey.’ Thus the melodies of *Auld lang syne*, *O can you labor lea*, *Comin thro' the rye* and others in Scottish song books are all variants of the same air and derived from a Strathspey, originally published in Bremner's *Reels*, 1759. No tune was better known or more popular in Scotland during the last half of the eighteenth century, and it was published in numerous collections under many titles” (439).

present, “universally” recognized form as a Bacchanalian celebration of fellowship. The reasons for this version’s durability are well worth examining, especially in regard to the place and function of song culture within the Scottish nation and the Scottish diaspora, as well as the shifting of Scottish regional, national, intra-national (between the nations of Britain), and transnational allegiances. The song (as it appeared in Johnson’s *Museum*, 1796) examines the role of history in the construction of national identity. The song begins with the speaker asking,

Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

Evoking the memory of past relationships (“auld acquaintance”), the speaker asks if these past relationships “should” be forgotten, while simultaneously signaling the conditional use of “should” (if the acquaintances are forgotten, what are the results?). William Donaldson suggests the relational quality of Scottish national identity in his discussion of modern historiography, Scottish history and Scottish national identity. According to Donaldson,

The prestige of ‘empirical’ history has obscured the fact that there are other, perhaps equally plausible, ways of looking at the past. One of them was current amongst the early eighteenth century Scots.

They had an alternative history, quite different from our one, and it expressed who they thought they were, where they thought they had been, and where they thought they were going to. It was made up of a tissue of myth and legend stretching back into the remotest antiquity, and provided a heroic backdrop against which they viewed themselves, a frame for their thinking, and the driving force behind their politics. They called it ‘Guid Auld Lang Syne.’ (5)

Donaldson explains that the “charter myth” tracing the monarchial line two thousand years back to the reign of King Fergus I in 330 BC (and in fact, in some renditions, all the way back to Adam) has operated as the foundation upon which Scots have based their claims to land title to and political autonomy within Scotland. That Fergus never existed

is beside the point, Donaldson tells us, for “until well into the modern period the mythic past coloured the world view of all Scotsmen and inspired many of them to passionate political commitment” (5). This would explain, at least partially, the enduring significance assigned to the Stewart cause and the succession crisis throughout the eighteenth century. It would also explain the antipathy expressed by many Scots to the union of 1707. As Lord Belhaven made clear in his address to the Scottish parliament (2 November 1706) on the issue of union, present day Scots were indebted to their ancestors, both for their “rights and liberties”:

I shall mind this honourable House, that we are the successors of our noble predecessors, who founded our Monarchy, framed our laws, amended, altered, and corrected them, from time to time, as the affairs and circumstances of the nation did require, without the assistance or advice of any foreign power or potentate; and who, during the time of two thousand years, have handed them down to us, a free and independent nation, with the hazard of their lives and fortunes: shall we not then argue for that which our progenitors have purchased for us at so dear a rate, and with so much immortal honour and glory? (Belhaven quoted in Donaldson 8)

According to Belhaven, Scottish rights and title to the land of Scotland are derived from the historicity of the Scottish monarchy. Not only are the rights and freedoms enjoyed by Scots the result of an ancient and enduring power structure (as embodied by the Scottish monarchy), but the current generation has an obligation to honour and uphold the rights so painfully won. Slavery and shame are the price for failing to do so. For Belhaven,

Scottish national identity is both a condition for and result of independence, and thus, the union poses a threat to the nation.⁶⁰

Yet, the union was affected, and just as the Scottish court relocated to London following the union of the crowns in 1603, much of the central Scottish political machinery moved to London following the union of the parliaments in 1707. Donaldson argues that during the following years, “the theme of ‘Guid Auld Lang Syne’ began to make its appearance in political poetry, recalling golden ages of political independence, social autonomy, and pure uncomplicated heroism tragically comprised and lost” (11-12). Yet, while Scottish political and social independence was an occurring theme throughout the eighteenth century, it was an independence which, as Belhaven detailed, was constituted relationally, between Scots throughout time. Thus, when Burns’s “Auld Lang Syne” asks, “Should auld acquaintance be forgot?” it poses a question with profound implications for the study and function of the nation’s history. At the same time, it poses a vexing ethical issue. If current rights and land title are the result of the sacrifice (often, blood sacrifice) of ancestors, what obligations are owed to their memory? If identity is constructed relationally, then what happens when those relations are forgotten? Do we have a self-interest in maintaining our memory of our past? What is the context of our relationships with others? Moreover, if conditions change, as they certainly did in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland in terms of the economic, political, industrial, and cultural landscapes, how does a history of “Auld Lang Syne” function as the nation’s narrative, as the story which, as Donaldson suggests, informs Scots who they have been, are, and will be?

⁶⁰Belhaven’s speech to the Scottish parliament continued: “GOD forbid . . . if our posterity, after we are dead and gone, shall find themselves under an ill-made bargain, and shall have recourse unto our records, and see who have been the managers of that treaty, by which they have suffered so much when they read their names, they will certainly conclude and say, Ah! Our nation has been reduced to the last extremity at the time of this treaty; all our great chieftains, all our great Peers and considerable men, who used formerly to defend the rights and liberties of the nation, have been all killed and lie dead in the bed of honour, before ever the nation was reduced to condescend to such mean and contemptible terms. Where are the names of the chief men of the noble families of *Stewarts, Hamiltons, Grahams, Campbells, Gordons, Johnstons, Humes, Murrays, Kerrs, &c?* Where are the great officers of the crown, the *Hereditary Lords, High Constable, and Marshal of Scotland?* They have certainly all been extinguished, and now we are slaves for ever” (quoted in Donaldson 8).

As the song moves from the abstract question of identity and the role of history in the construction of identity, it telescopes into the moment of childhood, when

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pou'd the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a wary fitt,
Sin auld lang syne.

The speaker harkens back to memories of time spent together as children, juxtaposing the innocence of youth with the experience of later life. The stanza begins with children, running freely in nature, picking flowers, and concludes with adults, weary from the great distances they have since travelled. On the page, these early and later stages of life are shown to be distinct yet connected by the use of a semi-colon and coordinating conjunction to join childhood (innocence) and adulthood (experience). Orally, the language casts both experiences in the past tense, positioning the speaker and the person he is addressing in the present moment, looking back on “auld lang syne.” Here, though, “auld lang syne” refers to the personal experiences of the speaker and his addressee rather than the nation’s history. The song seems to evoke the sense of “Syne” Robert Jamieson refers to in his *Scottish Dictionary*: “Syne” “To a native of this country it is very expressive, and conveys a soothing idea to the mind, as recalling the memory of joys that are past” (Jamieson quoted in J.C. Dick, “Historical Notes,” in *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, 1903, 435). Yet, however soothing or joyful, the memories recalled by the speaker are associated with a time far gone, a time separated from the present by the intervening experiences and the enormous distances (geographical and temporal) covered “Sin auld lang syne.”

The notion of Scots journeying beyond the nation, potentially spreading out over the globe is further developed in the fourth verse:

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd,
Sin auld lang syne.

In the first two lines the speaker conjures up a local scene, the neighbouring stream where he and the person he is addressing paddled as children; the indigenous nature of their shared memory is enhanced by his use of Scots dialect. There is a sense of play, unity, security, and leisure in the remembered setting. Yet, the juxtaposition of the image of children together playing daylong in the burn with that of adults separated by broad, roaring, potentially life-threatening seas creates a powerful dichotomy of small/secure/local and immense/dangerous/global. While this might suggest a nostalgic turn, a yearning for the innocence and security of times past, the chronological and spatial dimensions of the song move toward a global present in which Scots, dispersed throughout the world, remain united through a shared language, history, and culture. Within the song's present moment (the now of the speaker), the speaker and the addressee are reunited once again--despite the great distances travelled and the dangers overcome--to remember together. However, the act of remembering is problematized by the question posed in the song's first stanza and which underlies the song, that being, "Should auld acquaintance be forgot / And never brought to mind?" The Scotland in which Burns was writing was in many important ways far distant from the Scotland of "auld lang syne." In addition to increasing urbanization and industrialization at home, its overseas trade had tripled during the second half of the eighteenth century, resulting in a significant accumulation of wealth in many Scottish towns (Linda Colley 122-3). Its citizens were increasingly involved as commercial, military, and political agents in the ever expanding British empire. An example of the large number of Scots involved in the imperial mission can be found in late-eighteenth-century India where, during Warren Hastings's governorship of Bengal, Linda Colley tells us there was a "disproportionate number" of Scots filling positions:

In the decades after 1775, some 47 per cent of the 249 men appointed to serve as writers in Bengal were Scots; and so were 60 per cent of the 371 men allowed to reside in Bengal as free merchants. . . . Hastings' inner circle of confidants, the men he personally selected to go on intricate diplomatic missions to courts in India and elsewhere, was dominated overwhelmingly by Scots. (127)

In addition to India, Scots were found throughout the empire. Some stayed away only long enough to accrue the funds necessary to establish themselves at home again in Britain; others, however, made empire their vocation. “For some Scots, . . . empire became a profession in itself, an opportunity for power, responsibilities and excitement on a scale they could never have enjoyed back home” (Colley 127). James Murray, a younger son of an impoverished Scottish peer, joined the British army in 1740, served under General James Wolfe in Quebec, and (following victory, Wolfe’s death, and Murray’s role in reestablishing order in post-war Quebec) was named Britain’s first Governor of Canada in 1760 (Colley 127). As well as filling high-ranking positions, Scots worked in various capacities around the globe. Explorers, fur traders, merchants, farmers, politicians, innkeepers, and soldiers, they could be found in regions as diverse as Central Africa (Mungo Park, 1795-97), the Pacific Northwest Coast (Captain James Cook’s Third Voyage, 1776-1780), and the West Indies. In fact, Burns himself had made plans to work as an overseer on a plantation in Jamaica, but was saved from emigrating by the successful publication of his first collection of poems and songs, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Kilmarnock 1786).

By alluding to the Scottish diaspora, the song raises the vexing problem of how to construct national identity in a nation whose members are dispersed throughout the globe. It provides an answer, albeit somewhat partial, in its final verse:

And there’s a hand, my trusty fiere!
And gie’s a hand o’ thine!
And we’ll tak a right gude-willie-waught,
For auld lang syne.

In coming together, joining bodies and voices through song, the Scots of the present moment—regardless of their geographical location, in or beyond Scotland--embody their Scottishness through performance. Dick glosses “gude-willie-waught” as “a deep drink of good fellowship” (434), which, when combined with “For auld lang syne,” can be read, roughly, as a drinking to, or toasting, the nation as constructed through what Dick explains is the historical understanding of “Guid auld lang syne” (discussed above). By

toasting “auld lang syne,” the speaker and his “trusty fiere” (companion or comrade) acknowledge the nation’s history while at the same time positioning it as distant from the contemporary moment. The nation’s history, much like the thousands of Scots scattered over the earth, is both a presence and an absence in the life of the nation. Toasting is associated with celebrations and rituals (weddings, births, festive occasion, for example), but it is also allied with absence and loss (toasts to family or friends who are missing through death, difficulty, or emigration, for example). Thus, toasting, taking “a right gude-willie-waught, / For auld lang syne,” suggests celebrating the nation’s history, while at the same time, acknowledging its loss. It directs us to remember the past, that which is absent, or forgotten enough to necessitate recalling it, bringing it to mind. This tension--between remembering and forgetting--underlies the song, informing its treatment of Scottishness as it was taking shape in Burns’s time. And while scholars, both then and now, have suggested the role of history in the creation of national identity, “Auld Lang Syne” argues for a nationalism of presence, in which national identity is understood not as emerging out of—and necessarily determined by--an “immemorial past” (Benedict Anderson), but as an ongoing process, fluid, unfixed, and collaboratively developed and given life through performance much like its songs. This nationalism of presence explains, at least partially, the reason for “Auld Lang Syne’s” enduring popularity, for it provides a space in which ideas of national belonging can be created, contested, negotiated, and transformed, and, as such, adapted to the Scot, both at home and abroad in an increasingly globalized world.

Chapter 3.

The Songs of Charles Dibdin

Who has not heard of Dibden, the author of 1200 songs? Who has not heard of the name associated with all that is patriotic and tender in the lyrical compositions of Great Britain, but particularly with the ‘jolly blue jackets,’ and the ‘wooden walls of old England’? —*Albion, Gawthrop’s Journal of Literature, Science, and Arts*. November 13, 1841. Page 55. [Liverpool]

Charles Dibdin (1745-1814) was active in various capacities in the late eighteenth-century British cultural field. Like Allan Ramsay, Dibdin enjoyed a varied and successful career. Actor, composer, lyricist, author, publisher, bookseller, and music theorist; he was highly productive, and his works received critical and popular acclaim,⁶¹ and continued to be reprinted, well into the nineteenth century.⁶² Of his many, diverse cultural products, this chapter will focus on his sea songs, which, as suggested in the above quotation, were aligned by commentators with nationalist feeling.

The songs have been interpreted (both then and now) as supporting a loyalist agenda. Robert Fahrner, for example, argues that Dibdin’s work was perceived as inherently conservative and non-threatening to the established order, as evidenced by its total lack of censorship during a time in which the government censors were highly sensitive to politically charged cultural products. .This reading of Dibdin’s work is most

⁶¹ For an overview of the critical reviews of Charles Dibdin’s work, especially his theatre career, see Robert Fahrner’s *The Theatre Career of Charles Dibdin the Elder (1745-1814)* (1989).

⁶² Dibdin’s work was continuously in print throughout the nineteenth century. An examination of the first one hundred listings under the search term The Songs of Charles Dibdin in the World Catalogue (online), revealed song collections by Charles Dibdin published in 1781, 1790, 1791, 1792, 1795?, 1796, 1798, 1799, 1800, 1801, 1803, 1805, 1808, 1810, 1814, 1818, 1823, 1825, 1839, 1841, 1842, 1844, 1845, 1847, 1847-8, 1849, 1850, 1852, 1854, 1864, 1872, 1886.

likely related to the fact that, unlike the other song producers discussed in this dissertation, Dibdin was recruited by the state to produce and perform songs in support of Britain's ongoing war with France.

Yet, Dibdin's work can also be seen as challenging the structures of power. Engaging with issues of gender, politics, religion, and the nation, Dibdin's songs posit a form of national identity which created a space for British seamen—most of whom would come from the lower orders of British society—to be seen as integral to the realization and preservation of the political, military, and economic objectives of the state. No longer voiceless, faceless subalterns labouring below decks, the sailors in Dibdin's songs enact virtues and possess qualities associated with, and judged valuable to, the nation and its increasingly globalized presence. Central to this process is a conceptualization of the patriot as defined “through position and practice rather than birth, through merit and discipline rather than entitlement” (to use Kathleen Wilson's words).⁶³ Seen through this lens, Dibdin's songs offer an expansive form of national belonging based on a reformulation of political subjectivity.

The apparent contradiction in which the songs articulate a more inclusive model of national identity while at the same time reinforcing conservative ideals (which are often expressive of an exclusive form of political agency), engenders a series of questions regarding our current understanding of late-eighteenth-century cultural nationalism. In this chapter, I will address one of those questions, specifically, how did cultural products simultaneously reinforce yet challenge contemporary political and social culture. I will

⁶³For Kathleen Wilson's analysis of the role of radicalism and oppositionalism in eighteenth-century English political culture see her *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (1998). While not directly referencing British seamen, many of Wilson's comments can be applied to British naval culture as constructed in Dibdin's songs, especially her conclusion that “the language and strategies of oppositionist and radical patriotism challenged the seemingly ineffable structures and imperatives of patrician hegemony by defining the patriot through position and practice rather than birth, through merit and discipline rather than entitlement. Oppositionist ideologies endorsed extra-legal qualifications for citizenship—attributes of mind and taste (‘public-spiritedness,’ disinterest), activism in the public good, freedom from the restraints of patrician clientage in cultural, political and economic realms—that, if still partially predicated upon the hierarchies of property and gender, also enabled a wider range of individuals to enact or imagine their own claims to political subjectivity” (438).

examine the songs and their contemporary reception. I will reveal the complex ways in which Dibdin's sea songs engaged with, reflected, and, ultimately, effected—and were seen to effect-- the form of national identity modelled by Britain's sailors, thereby demonstrating not only the generative power accorded Dibdin's songs, but song culture more generally during this period.

In making this argument regarding this apparent contradiction I Dibdin's ideological impact, I draw upon the work of Gilliam Russell, in *The Theatres of War: Performance, Politics, and Society, 1703-1815* (1995), who offers a useful theoretical focusing on the way that censorship tended to sensitive contemporary theatre audiences to the potential for political interpretation. "The assumption has been," Russell tells us, "that because the Georgian theatre existed under "The assumption conditions of strict censorship the drama was politically nullified. In fact, the Georgian theatre was an intensely political place. While the Licensing Act of 1737 may have been efficient in ensuring that explicitly political comment never reached the stage, it simultaneously generated the sensitivity which is the concomitant of censorship, ensuring that politics were seen everywhere. (16). Admittedly, Russell is discussing the theatre, but her comments to the contemporary cultural field more generally as there seemed to be a fluid relationship between venues and media. Moreover, many of Dibdin's songs, such as "Blow High, Blow Low," were first performed on the stage, though this was not always the case. As mentioned in the Introduction, Dibdin, who wrote songs for the stage which he published individually and in collections, sometimes brought out published versions of his work at the same time as it was being performed on stage so that it was circulating in both oral and print forms simultaneously ("New Music. This day are published, price 6s. The Overture, Songs, Duettos, Choresses, Dances, Comic Tunes &c. in the new Speaking Pantomine, called The TOUCHSTONE, as it is performing with the greatest applause at the Theatre-Royal in Convent-Garden," *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 13 Feb. 1779).

Beginnings: “My darling passion for music”

Charles Dibdin was born in Southampton (c.1745) to Thomas Dibdin, “a silversmith, a man of considerable credit” (*Professional Life*, 1:15), and Sarah, *née* Wesgarth (Jon A. Gillaspie *ODNB*). Following his father’s death (c.1759), the family moved to Winchester, where Dibdin’s musical ability became increasingly apparent.⁶⁴ In *The Professional Life of Charles Dibdin* (1803), Dibdin describes his early experience of music:

Music was my supreme delight; it possessed and engrossed me, nor would my mind admit of any thing else, at least materially, till I had fully accomplished all that I found necessary for my purpose; and thus it happened that, though my father intended me for the church, and I suffered the common imposition of what is usually called education, it was rather like something laid by for future, than intended for immediate use. My darling passion for music was also fed fortuitously. I had, when a boy, a remarkable good voice, and therefore I not only cut a great figure at the college and the cathedral, at WINCHESTER, where I sung anthems, but the concert rooms, at the races and the assizes, echoed with my vocal fame. (1: 13-14)

Music, memory, and affect combine in conjunctural relation as, looking back on his early years, Dibdin constructs the narrative of his career according to music’s affectivity. His development is processual rather than positional. Music “possesses” Dibdin, takes him over, disallows other mentalities; he is affected to the point of changing his plans: no longer intent on a vocation in the church, as his father had wished, he takes up a career in music. Moreover, his change of plans is validated by the public’s response. He connects his “darling passion for music” with his ability to affect others; not only are his vocal performances well received, but they generate an additional level of vocal effect; public spaces—scholarly, religious, entertainment and governmental—ring with his “vocal

⁶⁴ Like many of the details of Dibdin’s early life, there seems no agreement as to when Dibdin’s father died. Jon A. Gillaspie says Dibdin’s father died when Dibdin “was young,” and by the chronology Gillaspie constructs, he seems to date Dibdin’s father’s death to have taken place prior to 1754, before Dibdin’s ninth birthday. Robert Fahrner, on the other hand, dates Thomas Dibdin’s death to 1759 (7), when Dibdin would be about fourteen.

fame,” implying a cycle of affectivity: music moves him to be musical and his performance moves the audience to “voice” their approbation which moves him to further pursue music. This affectivity is seen throughout his career but is especially evident in the sailors who feature in his sea songs, both in terms of the masculinities they model as well as the public response to them.

In the mid-1750s Dibdin’s brother, Thomas a member of the merchant navy, invited him to join him in London. The younger Dibdin took Thomas up on his offer, feeling sure of obtaining a position as an organist in the city. This would prove more difficult than Dibdin anticipated. Upon Charles’s arrival, Thomas introduced him to John Johnson, a music shop owner in Cheapside, believing that Johnson could provide Charles with the connections necessary to obtain a position as a church musician. Shortly after Charles arrived in London, Charles’s brother set sail in a West-Indiaman which was captured by a French man-of-war. Thomas was taken prisoner and Charles found himself alone in London, without a position. However, he was not entirely abandoned. Through a friend of Thomas, Richard Berenger, a gentleman well connected to members of the literary and theatrical elite of London, Charles was encouraged to pursue a theatrical career, and to this end, he was soon introduced to the London theatre scene: “Within weeks of their meeting, through the influence of his new friend, he had not only begun attending theatre regularly, but had breakfasted with John Beard, the popular singer-actor, dined with John Rich, and even sung informally with the Earl of Sandwich at the St. Albans-street Tavern” (Fahrner 8). What followed was a forty-five year career in which Dibdin was actively involved with London’s major and minor theatre houses. In *The Theatre Career of Charles Dibdin the Elder (1745-1814)* (1989), Robert Fahrner notes Dibdin’s innovative use of several eighteenth-century theatre forms, such as the burletta,

the pantomime, and the equestrian drama.⁶⁵ Dibdin also contributed significantly to the development of the formal solo-entertainment.⁶⁶ Not only was he an inventive and productive writer, composer, and performer, but he was also an imaginative and energetic impresario, establishing two minor theatres, the Royal Circus, and the San Souci (in two locations), as well as creating performance venues out of non-theatrical spaces such as rented rooms. Dibdin was prolific, experimenting in numerous fields of cultural endeavour, and, within each field, various genres.⁶⁷ His seemingly endless energy, continuous exploration of cultural forms, and commitment to the public performance of his work resulted in his cultural productions being widely circulated during his lifetime and throughout the nineteenth century.

⁶⁵ For a discussion of Dibdin's theatrical innovations see Robert Fahrner's *The Theatrical Career of Charles Dibdin the Elder (1745-1814)* (1989). An example of Dibdin's innovative use of theatrical forms is seen in his reinvigoration of the "speaking pantomime," a form which had lapsed into disuse following John Rich's establishment of "the convention of silence for the *commedia* characters" early in the century. While the form had been used by David Garrick in 1759 (*Harlequin's Invasion*), Fahrner argues that "the 'speaking pantomime' was still considered unusual when Dibdin's [*The Touchstone; or, Harlequin Traveller*] opened at Convent Garden in 4 January 1779" (75). "Because of its place in the evolution of pantomime," Dibdin's *The Touchstone* "is of major importance in the history of English theatre" (Fahrner 74). That Dibdin was interested in theatrical innovation is demonstrated in the Advertisement of the published version of *The Touchstone* (1779) in which he writes, "Endeavouring what to invent, where the situations for Musick could be new and various, I conceived that a kind of Operatical Pantomime would be very likely to answer the purpose. This scheme every one encouraged me to go on with; and it is now (with the Dialogue, considerably improved, by the advice and assistance of some ingenious friends) humbly submitted to the Public."

⁶⁶ See Fahrner for Dibdin's role in the development of the one-person show.

⁶⁷ An exact reckoning of Dibdin's cultural products has not yet been established. Dibdin provided a rough total in *The Professional Life of Charles Dibdin* (1803): "I have written in the course of my life, exclusive of my entertainments of Sans Souci, nearly seventy dramatic pieces, of different descriptions, besides having set to music fifteen or sixteen, the productions of other writers. In the whole of those which I have invented and brought forward are included more than nine hundred songs, a number, I should imagine, not again to be found in the English language" (1: 6). Several years after Dibdin's death, *The Morning Chronicle* (29 September 1819) offered a tally: "LITERARY INDUSTRY.—Mr. Charles Dibdin has written from 1500 to 2000 songs, 13 serious pantomimes, 36 harlequins ditto, 35 melodramas, 42 musical pieces of one and two acts, exclusive of comic operas and other pieces played at Drury-lane and Covent-garden Theatres." A more recent catalogue can be found in Fahrner's history of Dibdin's theatre work, though this lists only his staged works (215-227).

Dibdin's Sea Songs and their Sailors: “the character of the British tar plain, manly, honest, and patriotic”

Arguably, Dibdin's contribution to the late-eighteenth-century theatre movement affected the reception of his sea songs, which have proved to be his most enduring legacy. In the Preface to his *Professional Life*, Dibdin outlines the “motives and inducements” which influenced the choices he made as a writer and composer, explaining that “It was not enough . . . for me merely to write love-songs, pastorals, invocations to Bacchus, to sing the pleasures of the chase, or be a sonnet monger. All this without better support would have outraged the cause of music. It was necessary to go beyond what had been already done, and in particular to give my labours a decided character.” To this end he “sung those heroes who are the natural bulwark of their country.”

This theme . . . had only been slightly touched upon till I undertook it; and, though we have had some poetic specimens of nautical praise, the character of the British tar plain, manly, honest, and patriotic, had not very pointedly been put forward. (xxi-xxii)

While others before him have dealt with “this theme,” Dibdin is among the first, he tells us, to move beyond a superficial treatment and to fully acknowledge and celebrate the nation's sailors; creative, innovative, and patriotic, he chose to write sea songs based on the “honourable, commendable, and in some degree novel” nature of the subject (xxi-xxii). As always, Dibdin gestures towards the affectivity of his work, noting the “zeal” which compelled him, as well as the opportunity the songs provided him “through public duty of expressing private affection” (xxi-xxii). This conflation of “public duty” with “private affection” surfaces throughout his work, but especially in his sea songs, in which the sailors themselves model a form of national identity which conjoins duty, affect, and patriotism.

Sea songs were not new to the eighteenth century, of course. As Roy Palmer remarks in his Introduction to *The Oxford Book of Sea Songs*, sea songs have a long history. Palmer's collection, which is organized chronologically, begins with the mid-

sixteenth-century “John Dory” and concludes with the late-twentieth-century “The Final Trawl.”⁶⁸ There is a wide range of themes covered, including “battles, storm and shipwreck, pressgangs and crimps, mutiny, slavery, privateering and piracy, smuggling, shipboard life and conditions, fishing, whaling, trading, emigration and exploration, separation and celebration, Jack Tar on shore as well as afloat” (xiv). Thus, many of these songs deal with themes similar to those found in Dibdin’s work. Moreover, the point of view of both the *OBSS* and Dibdin’s songs is generally that of the “lower-deck seamen, their wives and loved ones, and the communities from which they came” (xiv). Where Dibdin’s songs stand apart, however, is in the construction of a complex national identity which is very much engaged with contemporary issues of gender, class, professionalism, and religion. They are products of their time and place.⁶⁹

In *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (2010), Mary A. Favret discusses the ongoing mediation of war during the Napoleonic era, how it was brought home to Britons who were far removed from the scenes of carnage. “With the advent of mass media, in the print culture that rose in the eighteenth century, and in an increasingly popular visual culture of prints, panoramas, and theatrical performances, wartime stepped forth as a mediated relationship to distant violence” (13). Dibdin’s songs were integral to this process of mediation, both in terms of their positioning of the nation’s sailors as protectors of the nation (through their affective relationship to others, both at sea and on land) as well as what contemporary commentators considered their generative power. Moreover, while Linda Colley argues that on-going war with France played a significant role in the construction of British identity during this period, Dibdin’s songs reveal the impact of war on the civilian population, indicating how the mourning of the dead becomes integral to the life of the nation. Central to this mourning is the memorialising of the dead through collectively performed song.

⁶⁸ While Palmer begins his collection with “John Dory,” he readily acknowledges the existence of earlier sea songs such as “Sir Patrick Spens” and “Andrew Barton” (xiv).

⁶⁹ This is not to suggest that the songs featured in the *OBSS* are not temporally and spatially determined, but to point out that like other cultural products, Dibdin’s songs were produced in, reflected, influenced, and to various degrees challenged a specific historic context.

Dibdin was one among many cultural producers actively mediating the image of the sailor, which, both unstable and heterogeneous, evolved over the eighteenth century. While early in the century Charles Shadwell's play the *Fair Quaker of Deal* (1710) depicted idle sailors contemplating filling their spare time with acts of violence, by mid- and late-century Tobias Smollett's novels and Dibdin's songs "established a strong tradition of praising the sterling moral and martial qualities of the sailor. The quarter century between 1750 and 1775, then, was perhaps the decisive period of transition for Jack Tar in British culture" (Land 21). Dibdin was part of this transitional process, his songs initially heard on the stage--incorporated into various theatrical forms--in the 1770s, and quickly appearing in print form. According to Robert Fahrner, Dibdin's sea songs first appeared in George Alexander Steven's "comic sketch" *The Trip to Portsmouth*, performed in August 1773 at the Haymarket. The following year, August 1774, Dibdin's ballad opera *The Waterman; or, The First of August*, staged at the Haymarket, featured several songs which he had composed earlier for performance at "Ranelagh and the Theatre." Two songs from *The Waterman*, "The Jolly Young Waterman" and "Then Farewell, My Trim-Built Wherry," appeared in song collections throughout the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, "and the comic opera itself continued to be produced as an afterpiece well into the nineteenth century" (Fahrner 51). The August 1777 performance of Dibdin's musical dialogue *Yo Yea! or, The Friendly Tars*, presented at Sadler's Wells, also contained sea songs (Fahrner 44, 66-7).

Dibdin was clearly interested in multi-mediating his songs in order to broaden his audience base and thus capitalize, both culturally and economically, on his cultural products. In the Preface of the 1774 edition of his ballad opera *The Waterman: or, The First of August* he outlines his plan to recycle previous materials, and, at the same time, discusses the ballad opera as a framework for the performance of his songs.

Finding among the different pieces I have composed for Ranelagh and the Theatre a number of Ballads which I took great pains with, and which have been but little heard, I thought I could not better employ my leisure time than in furnishing upon some familiar plan the dialogue necessary to work up these materials into a Ballad Farce, a species of entertainment

which has always been well received, and which as it has lain dormant for some time, I thought would have so far the charms of novelty to recommend it. (v)

Concerned to ensure the broadest reception for his work, he employs the theatrical form he judges most appropriate to showcase his songs; for him, then, the form serves as a vehicle for his songs. *The Waterman* featured spoken dialogue, a chorus, and songs presented in two acts. As the term implies, and the critical reception confirms, Dibdin's songs—seventeen in all—constitute a major part of the work. That Dibdin's strategy was in line with contemporary expectations is affirmed by the *Critical Review*'s assessment (August 1774), which agreed that the ballad opera provided “a good ground-work” for Dibdin's songs (quoted in Fahrner 51). As demonstrated here and throughout his professional life, Dibdin displayed a sophisticated understanding of the cultural field. Not only were his cultural innovations and professional strategies often highly successful (for example, his solo-entertainment *The Oddities*, 1789-1790 was both critically and popularly well received), but they could also be highly lucrative. Around 1790 Dibdin began publishing and selling his songs through his Music Warehouse on the Strand. In his *Professional Life* he gives a sense of the economic capital he accrued as a publisher and seller of his own music: “The success of the *Oddities*, and the popularity of the songs it contained, augured a rapid increase of fortune to me, especially as the sale of the music . . . was immense beyond any thing I had conceived to be possible.” He adds that “Of the Greenwich-Pensioner alone, I have published, from first to last, ten thousand seven hundred and fifty copies, which have yielded me a profit of more than four hundred pounds; and, on that song, *Poor Tom*, and the *Lamplighter*, I cleared more money in four months than all I have ever, in my whole life, received for the sale of music” (3: 40). Dibdin's depictions of sailors sold well, and sold in many forms simultaneously.

As constructed in his songs, Dibdin's sailors are loyal, committed to king, kin and country, and courageous, willing to brave great danger in service to the nation. They demonstrate the values and beliefs associated with contemporary gender ideals; they also reflect—and challenge--the social, cultural, political and religious landscape of the

period. One of the many examples of this model of the British seaman found in Dibdin's songs is "Poor Jack." The speaker is an experienced sailor who espouses courage in the face of uncertainty, and faith in a caring, ordered, controlling Providence. The song begins with the speaker distancing himself from any anxiety regarding "danger, and fear." He directs the unidentified addressee to

Go patter to lubbers and swabs, d'ye see,
'Bout danger, and fear, and the like;
A tight water-boat and good sea-room give me,
And t'ent to a little I'll strike:
Though the tempest top-gallant masts smack smooth
should smite,
And shiver each splinter of wood,
Clear the wreck, stow the yards, and bouse everything
tight,
And under reef'd foresail we'll scud:
Avast! Nor don't think me a milksop so soft
To be taken for trifles aback;
For they say there's a Providence sits up aloft,
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack.

In using the terms "lubber" ("A clumsy seaman; an unseamanlike fellow") and "swab" (a term of contempt or abuse), the speaker implies that the addressee will not find seamen such as himself receptive to the addressee's "patter,"⁷⁰ a term which in itself suggests the speaker's dismissal of such talk. Sailors, the speaker implies, are not interested in nonsensical jabber concerning the hazards and apprehensions associated with their profession. They are beyond trepidation or angst, and, instead, are concerned with their obligations and duties as seamen. Some critics have read the sailors' denial of fear as a form of bravado, or a naive acceptance of fate. And the speaker's "nor don't think me a milksop so soft / To be taken for trifles aback" seems to support that reading. Managing a damaged ship in a raging storm is not, after all, a "trifle," and suggesting that anyone who thinks otherwise is a "milksop"⁷¹ implies a boldness bordering on overconfidence,

⁷⁰ The *OED* defines "patter" as "chatter, jabber, prattle."

⁷¹ The *OED* defines "milksop" as "A feeble, timid, or ineffectual person, *esp.* A man or boy who is indecisive, effeminate, or lacking in courage."

perhaps dangerously so. At the same time, however, “milksoy” connotes--in addition to timidity or feebleness--a lack of judgement or courage. The sailor’s “don’t think me a milksoy,” therefore, is an important affirmation that he possesses the qualities essential to the successful management of a crisis at sea for either being, or thought to be, a “milksoy” would render a sailor ineffective, as a rating or an officer.

As suggested here, life aboard ship involved the development of a language of its own which could take several forms, such as “the shared language of sails, ropes, yards, masts, and anchors that formed the common work environment” (Land 35). But the “sea talk” Land theorizes involved more than a language of work; it “described a whole world of experience: it was exuberant, and its scope was total, encompassing every aspect of life from food to fate. For the initiate . . . sea talk was an art form.” A “highly precise and efficient way of issuing reports and commands on a ship at sea,” at the same time “it delimited the boundaries of the authentic maritime, and it confirmed its practitioners as ‘real seamen’—whatever other languages they happened to speak” (35). The ship constituted a diverse oral landscape, comprising numerous dialects from across Britain as well as languages from around the world.⁷² Robert Hay, in his memoir of his years at sea, notes the linguistic diversity he encountered: “Irish, Welsh, Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, French, Swedish, Italian and all the provincial dialects which prevail between Land’s End and John O’Groats” (53). At the same time, he describes the “poetical effusions . . . mutterings, execrations, songs, jests, and laughter, while the occasional rattle of the boatswain’s cane, and the harsh voices of his mates, blended with the shrill and penetrating sound of their whistles, served at once to strike terror into the mind, and add confusion to the scene” (53). Dibdin’s use of words such as “swab,” “patter,” and “milksoy,” and his inclusion of technical terms related to the actual work of sailing a ship, invoke the oral complexities of life aboard ship as well as the conditions of seafaring more generally.

⁷² For a discussion of shipboard language, see Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker’s *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, especially chapter five.

While Linda Colley argues that on-going war with France played a significant role in the construction of British identity, Dibdin's sea songs reveal the impact of war on the civilian population, how the mourning of the dead becomes integral to the life of the nation. Central to this mourning is the memorialising of the dead through collectively performed song. Certainly, there were significant risks linked to life at sea, as testified to by the numerous accounts of shipwreck, piracy, storms, and battles found in a wide variety of contemporary sources, such as songs, paintings, letters, newspapers, pamphlets, broadsides, published naval journals, plays (and other forms of dramatic productions), poems, and novels to name but a few. Between 1810 and 1812, 21 per cent of the seamen mustered to ships were lost through death, desertion, or discharged as invalids (Morris 251).⁷³ In fact, Dibdin's songs resound with explicit references to the dangers connected to naval service, dangers which were exacerbated or minimized depending upon the sailors' knowledge and skill. The speaker in "Poor Jack" argues that given a good boat and enough ocean, he will manage whatever difficulties arise. Even faced with conditions of extreme distress, such as handling a damaged ship in the midst of a tempest, he and his fellow sailors have the skill, knowledge, and courage to do what needs to be done. They will prevail, in the sense that they will fulfill their duty with integrity, yet they may not survive, for ultimately they are in the hands of an omnipresent, omniscient Providence, an ordering force which is invoked throughout Dibdin's sea songs.

The idea of Providence as raised in "Poor Jack" is complicated, however, as it is in many of Dibdin's songs. Each of the song's four stanzas closes with a two-line reference to Providence, yet if examined closely, they testify to an evolution in the

⁷³ This represents an overall increase of 4 per cent from 1755-1757. While the death and desertion rates had dropped in the later period, 1810-1812, "discharges of seamen as invalids rose from 2.8 per cent at the beginning of the Seven Years' War to 10.7 per cent towards the end of the Napoleonic War." Morris makes the interesting claim that discharging more men as invalids from the service before they died resulted in lower mortality rates for the navy. "The credit for a reduction of the death rate was claimed by the navy's medical profession. But they can also be credited with the higher proportion of seamen who were discharged as invalids. For their greater knowledge of the nature of diseases suffered by seamen permitted them not only to preserve life, but also to decide who were best discharged before they died" (251-52). Thus, a lower mortality rate for seamen while in service does not necessarily reflect the actual deaths resulting from service.

speaker's religiosity. In the first stanza the speaker himself does not commit to the notion of a controlling power, but allows that others, unnamed and unindividualized, testify to it ("For they say there's a Providence sits up aloft, / To keep watch for the life of poor Jack"). In the second stanza the speaker moves from uncertainty to belief. He begins by explaining that he had heard the chaplain "palaver one day / About souls, heaven, mercy, and such." And while he seemingly dismisses--with a mixture of colloquial and nautical language--the chaplain's address as incomprehensible ("And, my timbers! what lingo he'd coil and belay, / Why, 'twas just all as one as High Dutch"), midway through the stanza he experiences a spiritual transformation.

For he said how a sparrow can't founder d'ye see,
Without orders that come down below;
And many fine things that proved clearly to me
That Providence takes us in tow:
For, says he, do you mind me, let storms e'er so oft,
Take the top-sails of sailors aback,
There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack

The speaker claims that the chaplain's speech has met the burden of proof needed to convince the speaker that there is a divine, protective power overseeing sailors at sea. Yet, notably, the declaration—"There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft"—is voiced by the chaplain via the speaker ("For, says he"). Not until the third stanza, in which the speaker recounts his conversation with "our Poll" (presumably his female love), does the speaker seem to express his faith in his own voice.

I said to our Poll, for d'ye see she would cry,
When last we weigh'd anchor for sea,
What argufies sniv'ling and piping your eye,
Why, what a damn'd fool you must be!
Can't you see the world's wide, and there's room for us all,
Both for seamen and lubbers ashore,
And if to old Davy I should go, friend Poll,
Why you never will hear of me more:
What then, all's a hazard, come don't be so soft,
Perhaps I may laughing come back,

For, d'ye see, there's a cherub sits smiling aloft,
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack.

Yet, arguably, in this third stanza the speaker is using the idea of religion to placate Poll, to assuage her anxiety regarding his impending departure. He rationalizes the dangers associated with his profession, arguing that life is risk ("What then, all's a hazard"), and though he indeed may die at sea, he also "may laughing come back." He invites Poll to "see" a "cherub sits smiling aloft," though whether he is inviting her to recognize, or simply imagine, a divine presence remains ambiguous. Moreover, while "d'ye see" could be read as an affirmation, a statement of fact—Do you see, there's a cherub—, it also implies a question—Do you see the cherub?—which heightens the ambiguity of the speaker's position regarding a divine presence.

By the fourth and final stanza, however, he assumes full responsibility for his spiritual metamorphosis by declaring, in his own voice, his faith:

D'ye mind me, a sailor should be every inch
All as one as a piece of the ship,
And with her brave the world without offering to flinch,
From the moment the anchor's a-trip.
As for me, in all weathers, all times, sides, and ends,
Nought's a trouble from duty that springs,
For my heart is my Poll's and my rhino's my friends,
And as for my life, 'tis the king's:
Even when my times comes, ne'er believe me so soft
As for grief to be taken aback,
For the same little cherub that sits up aloft
Will look out a good berth for poor Jack.

The song is witness to the sailor's moral and spiritual development. Driven by duty, loyalty, and generosity, he braves all, accepts all, trusting his fate to the care of a benevolent god. The speaker's religious evolution, a transformation powered by reason, experience, courage, and empathy, positions him within the religious discourses of the period.

Jack, like many of Dibdin's sailors, sees a sacred presence at work in the world he inhabits, and he practices a theology of good works, both of which were associated with orthodox Anglicanism. In *Eighteenth-Century Britain: Religion and Politics, 1714-1815*, Nigel Yates explains that for "orthodox churchmen" during this period "What was to be emulated was a religion of piety and sobriety but one that did not fall into the temptations offered by the scientific discoveries and secular learning of the age that wanted to banish ideas of a God active in the world that he had created." Orthodox Britons were to avoid the "two evils," those being "extreme forms of personal piety, based on a guarantee of salvation recognised in the experience of conversion, or the attractions of a radical form of deism from which all notions of the inexplicable or the miraculous were to be ruthlessly expunged" (70).⁷⁴ Dibdin's positioning of British sailors within contemporary religious ideology is important in terms of the overall fashioning of their national identity, and their place in the nation, for British sailors not only fulfilled the state's military and political objectives at sea, but often constituted the vanguard—and, thus, were the representatives--of the British imperial mission.

Like "Poor Jack," "Little Ben" is one of the many songs which describe an omnipresent, all-knowing, unfailing, ever-vigilant power ("If there's a Power that never errs, / And certainly 'tis so"). Entangled with the idea of a controlling power is Fate. "Each Bullet has its Commission" argues that faced with the inevitability of death, we must enjoy life:

What argues pride and ambition?
 Soon or late death will take us in tow:
 Each bullet has got its commission,
 And when our time's come we must go.
 Then drink and sing—hang pain and sorrow,

⁷⁴ Admittedly, there is room for debate regarding the religiosity of Dibdin's sailors, and Jack is no exception. I have suggested that he appears to espouse ideas aligned with orthodox Anglicanism for the reasons outlined above. However, if his religious transformation is conceived as a religious conversion in accord with contemporary Evangelical tenets, rather than the development of an orthodox Anglicanism, it opens up the possibility of reading these songs as engaging with dissenting rather than orthodox beliefs. Yet, even if this is the case, Jack is situated well within contemporary religious discourses.

The halter was made for the neck;
He that's now 'live and lusty—to-morrow
Perhaps may be stretch'd on the deck.

“Nautical Philosophy” complicates the idea of fate, however, arguing that while there's a plan (“Our berths, good or bad, are chalk'd out for us all”), we must live with the uncertainty of not knowing our fate. The speaker elaborates on the theme of the unknowability of life, directing his listeners in the final stanza

Then just as it comes take the bad with the good;
One man's spoon's made of silver, another's of wood;
What's poison for one man's another man's balm,
Some are safe in a storm, and some lost in a calm;
Some are rolling in riches, some not worth a souse,
To-day we eat beef, and to-morrow lobs-scouse:
Thus the good we should cherish, the bad never seek[,]
For death will too soon bring each anchor apeak.

Inequitable and incomprehensible as life is, the speaker counsels acceptance. This acceptance is interlaced with courage and may be read as a philosophical understanding of what it is to be human. Given the dangers associated with sea-faring, a “Nautical Philosophy” of acceptance makes sense in an island nation in which many of its inhabitants will spend time on the water. Moreover, given the specific historic context in which Dibdin was writing—ongoing war with France and the state's need for a continuous supply of manpower—this acquiescence to danger, risk taken on for the sake of others (king, kin, and country, for example), was a useful philosophy to inculcate in the nation's armed forces, and the male population generally, many of whom would volunteer for or be pressed into naval service.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ According to Roger Morriss, prior to 1763 approximately 5 percent of British men were in the armed forces. “By 1811, about 6 per cent were in the regular armed forces, the army and the navy, and another 4 per cent in the militia and volunteers. The state took this 10 per cent from agriculture, manufacturing, construction and commerce, giving Britain a higher ratio of men in the military forces than any other European nation” (223). Morriss claims that the navy employed 142,098 men at the end of the Napoleonic Wars (225).

In numerous songs death is seen as a transformative process rather than a final event. Transformation (both spiritual and physical) is a critical element in these songs, suggesting alterity and metamorphosis as essential to the human condition. Several songs employ Christian metaphors to discuss death and the grieving processes aboard ship. The speaker of “Tom Bowling,” one of Dibdin’s most popular songs, elegizes the passing of the titular crew member:

Here, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
The darling of our crew;
No more he’ll hear the tempest howling,
For death has broach’d him to.

As the song begins, the speaker gestures towards Tom Bowling’s dead body, seemingly reducing the deceased sailor to a mound of flesh (“a sheer hulk”). Very shortly, however, Bowling’s body becomes a locus of feeling, sexual and otherwise, as the speaker moves on to describe Tom as he was in life.

His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft,
Faithful, below, he did his duty,
But now he’s gone aloft.

A man of “manliest beauty,” kind, faithful and dutiful, Bowling was dearly loved, the “darling” of the crew. The term “darling”⁷⁶ suggests a level of affection commonly associated with intimacy, while simultaneously objectifying the sailor, positioning him as the recipient of the affections of others. This term, combined with descriptions of his soft heart and merry and sweet singing voice, implies a complicated masculinity which may be read as homoeroticized and/or feminized.⁷⁷ Though the sailor’s embodied form continues to haunt the song, the speaker suggests that Bowling, as a result of his goodness, is not bound by his earthly remains, but ascends to heaven.

⁷⁶ The *OED* defines “darling” as “A person who is very dear to another; the object of a person’s love; one dearly loved. Commonly used as a term of endearing address.”

⁷⁷ For a discussion of the feminization of the British sailor in theatrical representation during this period see Gillian Russell’s *The Theatres of War: Performance, Politics, and Society 1793-1815* (1995).

The second stanza continues to praise Bowling's virtues, but turns in the final two lines to place Bowling in the world as a friend, and lover, to switch the focus from Bowling to those who knew and loved him, and to remind us of how his loss is felt, and the emotions his death evokes in others.

Tom never from his word departed,
His virtues were so rare,
His friends were many and true-hearted,
His Poll was kind and fair:
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly,
Ah, many's the time and oft!
But mirth is turn'd to melancholy,
For Tom is gone aloft.

While Bowling may be free of the concerns of life, his family and friends are not. The living are left to mourn the dead and suffer loss: feeling is the domain of the living. The third and final stanza leaves no doubt that Bowling will be well received in heaven, leaving his "Poll" and community of "true-hearted" friends to grieve his passing.

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He, who all commands,
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
The word to pipe all hands.
Thus Death, who kings and tars despatches,
In vain Tom's life has doff'd
For, though his body's under hatches,
His soul is gone aloft.

Even the great leveller Death is thwarted as Bowling's soul rises above the earthly plain, suggesting that death holds no terror for the honourable. Only the weak, ignoble and unjust need fear their mortality. While this sentiment—that an honourable life on earth will be rewarded in death—may be seen (or heard) as reassuring for sailors facing danger and possible death at sea, there remains an underlying tension which is expressed as a series of polarities, the most obvious being that of the spiritual versus the material worlds.

The song continuously shifts our attention between the groundedness of physical existence and the ethereality of spiritual being. Bowling's body operates as evidence of

human mortality and a site of desire (to be desired and desiring, as implied in the reference to his beauty, his position as the crew's "darling," and his relationship with Poll). His spirit is released by death to ascend "aloft," a nautical term for above, on high ("up above the tops, at the mast-head, or anywhere about the higher yards, masts, and rigging of ships," W. H. Smyth 33), as well as a metaphor for heaven. Death frees Bowling of the terror of existence ("No more he'll hear the tempest howling"), but it also separates him from those he loves and who love him, ultimately transforming him into an otherworldly being. Integral to this transformation is a rupture with the world of feeling which, arguably, is the essence of being human. The song concludes by anticipating his being judged well on Judgement Day, and by resolving the binary it creates between the physical and metaphysical worlds through Bowling's metamorphosis. If, as it suggests, the body is the site of feeling, and feeling is the medium through which humans both experience the world and connect with each other, then death of the body—and its attendant rupture with the world of affect--signifies a radically transformative event which is figured in the song as an ascension into the sacred.

Part of this transformation entails the fulfillment of the obligations the living have to the dead. Dibdin explores this theme in songs featuring soldiers as well as sailors. "The Soldier's Last Return" argues that "All must obey fate's awful nod," yet there is still a need to enact a series of rituals which both acknowledge and honour the dead. While death is inevitable, how we live (for example, bravely and honourably) and how our deaths are marked do matter. This idea is developed more fully in "The Soldier's Funeral," a funeral song celebrating the honour shown the fallen soldier. The song argues that "the soldier lives" through the performance of rituals of commemoration. Music played, guns fired, tombs erected: all speak to the honour and courage of the fallen.

The martial pomp, the mournful train,
Bespeak some honour'd hero slain!
The obsequies denote him brave;
Hark the volley o'er his grave:
The awful knell sounds low and lorn,

Yet cease, ye kindred brave, to mourn.
The plaintive fife and muffled drum
The man may summon to his silent home!
The soldier lives:--his deeds to trace,
Behold the Seraph Glory place
An ever-living laurel round his sacred tomb.
Nor deem it hard, ye thoughtless gay,
Short's man's longest earthly stay;
Our little hour of life we try,
And then depart: we're born to die.
Then lose no moment dear to fame,--
They longest live who live in name.
The plaintive fife, &c.

The soldier lives on through remembrance, through the incorporation of his sacrifice into the cultural memory of the nation. Again, as we've seen elsewhere, transformation is integral to death as the speaker directs the listener to live heroically, and, in doing so, gain "An ever-living laurel": those who sacrifice themselves in service to their nation transcend the limits of human life to live eternally, not only in the sacred realm envisioned in Christian belief but also in the nation's memory, which, much like Homi Bhabha's Janus-faced nation, looks both backwards and forwards in a chronological endlessness.

Yet, rituals of mourning and commemoration are as much about the living as they are about the dead, as they reveal the beliefs and values of the community (whether local, regional, national or other) from which they arise. In Dibdin's "Comely Ned," mourning is an act of commemoration, focussed on those who are left to mourn the dead, rather than the dead themselves; it serves to reaffirm the continuation of the community and the connections between its members in the face of death. Moreover, mourning is shown to be both communal and performative as the speaker invites the listener to both listen and respond affectively to his "tale right full of woe":

Give ear to me, both high and low,
And, while you mourn hard fate's decree,
Lament a tale right full of woe
Of comely Ned that died at sea.

His father was a commodore,
His king and country served had he;
But now his tears in torrents pour
For comely Ned that died at sea.

His sister Peg her brother loved,
For a right tender heart had she,
And often to strong grief was moved
For comely Ned that died at sea.
His sweetheart Grace, once blithe and gay,
That led the dance upon the lea,
Now wastes in tears the lingering day
For comely Ned that died at sea.

His friends, who loved his manly worth
(For none more friends could boast than he),
To mourn now lay aside their mirth
For comely Ned that died at sea.
Come then and join, with friendly tear,
The song that, midst of all our glee,
We from our hearts chant once a-year
For comely Ned that died at sea.

The song reveals the constancy of mourning to the sea-going nation, Britain, which, as Linda Colley has shown, was at war almost continuously from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. “Comely Ned” is concerned with the effect death has on the living community rather than on the individual who is deceased, for though ostensibly a lamentation for “comely Ned who died at sea,” the song describes his family and friends, but tells us little of Ned (other than he is attractive and his friends valued “his manly worth”). The high regard of his kith and kin could be seen as evidence of Ned’s virtue, that he is collectively mourned because of his goodness. Yet, the song also suggests that an individual’s worth is established relationally, that Ned’s death matters because he is part of a community. His death has affected—and continues to affect—the community. His father, a commodore in the navy, has served his nation, “But now his tears in torrents pour / For comely Ned that died at sea.” The use of the conjunction “But” between the father’s naval service and his mourning suggests that the death of his son (to the same cause that he had served) has resulted in an interruption to his service. Either he has

retired or his grief has rendered him unable to serve; either way, he is no longer active in the nation's navy, working to fulfill and defend its military, political, and economic objectives. Like Ned, therefore, his father is lost to the nation, as are others. Ned's tender-hearted sister, Peg, continues to mourn her brother's death, as does his sweetheart, Grace, who, rather than being married to Ned and producing more Britons to serve the nation, "Now wastes in tears the lingering day." Both suggest a wasting of British womanliness, a loss of their reproductive power. Even Ned's many friends interrupt their activities to join together once a year and raise their voices in song to memorialize Ned's passing. If read through a nationalist lens, "Comely Ned" may seem to suggest that sacrifice—of self and others—is necessary, yet it also contains a powerful critique of war, and the ongoing effect it has on the life of the nation. Moreover, the song's invitation to the reader to join the singing serves to affirm the role of song culture in the creation and maintenance of national culture, and, implicitly, the significance of the cultural producer in the process.

Affective Masculinity: "For others let me feel"

Throughout his sea songs Dibdin combines nationalism, religion and gender to create a model of masculinity which incorporates self-sacrifice, duty, and courage. Yet, it would be mistaken to interpret these songs as offering a simplistic, formulaic model of national identity. As discussed above, Dibdin's sailors are often portrayed as emotionally, morally and intellectually complex, despite popular claims of their simple, trusting character. Dibdin's songs were seen to both reveal and generate a complex of beliefs and behaviours in Britain's sailors which resulted in the sailors' value to the nation being recognized; however, this was not always the case, for there were other, conflicting representations of sailors circulating during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These alternative versions suggest that though Land may have correctly identified a transition in the representation of the British sailor post-1750 (in that the sailor became associated with positive qualities and conduct, as discussed above), the image of the British sailor continued to be contested throughout this period. This, in turn,

speaks to Britons' ongoing investment in—and anxiety about—their armed forces, readily identifiable in the description of the sailor found in the Introduction to *The Naval Songster* (1798):

His thoughts reach not much above the topmasthead; and he pretends not to penetrate beyond his eye-sight. He has seen in his days more than enough to have made any thinking creature wise and honest; but this brave fellow views all things as sheep do the stars, or a dray-horse what passes in Cheapside, without any after-thought or reflection. (6)

According to Gillian Russell, the depiction of the sailor as an unthinking creature, comparable to a sheep or a dray-horse, “was a sign of an anxiety, especially powerful around 1797-8, that the ‘brave tars’ were not as bovinely passive as the authorities would have liked” (101). Russell credits Dibdin’s sea songs with positing a more “nuanced” image of Britain’s sailors than that presented in *The Naval Songster*. She notes that the characterization of the sailor—as “the kind, honest, and steadfast tar who was morally superior to his betters but always malleable and unquestioning”—was complicated by issues of gender, partly as the result of contemporary theatrical performances, in which “the stage sailor was not uncomplicatedly masculine” (102).

Combining a “martial vigour . . . with a ‘feminine’ capacity for tenderness and feeling,” the sailor could be both ferocious in war and compassionate in peace (102), as suggested in Dibdin’s “True Courage” (“In me let the foe feel the paw of a lion, / But, the battle once ended, the heart of a lamb”). Russell describes contemporary stage performances in which sailors were depicted as androgynous, arguing that “The fact that the stage-sailor could represent a congruence of so many strands of erotic desire—both heterosexual and homosexual—is an indication of the powerful fascination exerted by the navy upon Georgian society” (103). Moreover, she claims that the alignment of the British sailor with feminine and/or “‘masculine-feminine’” qualities (such as depicting the sailor as affective rather than intellectual in nature) was “linked to the persistent emphasis on him as passive and unthinking,” which, in turn, would ensure that what

Russell identifies as the “legitimation of plebeian patriotism” would be contained, and “would not go too far” (103).

The “many strands of erotic desire” identified by Russell can be seen in Dibdin’s “Bill Bobstay.” Kind, true, honest, Bobstay is generous to the point of self-sacrifice. The speaker’s description of Bobstay vexes any overly-simple assumptions of a manly model of seamanship, however.

Tight lads I have sail’d with, but none e’er so slightly
As honest Bill Bobstay, so kind and so true,
He’d sing like a mermaid, and foot it so lightly,
The forecastle’s pride, and delight of the crew!
But poor as a beggar, and often in tatters,
He went, though in fortunes was kind without end:
For money, cried Bill, and them there sort of matters,
What’s the good on’t, d’ye see, but to succour a friend?

There are multiple gender implications in this description. Beautiful, good, multi-talented, Bobstay is valued because of qualities which cast him performing a complicated form of masculinity. Not only a gifted dancer, Bobstay sings “like a mermaid.” He invokes pleasure in his shipmates; he is the “delight of the crew,” suggesting his value extends to more than his professional abilities as a sailor. The mermaid allusion adds to the complexity of Bobstay’s masculinity. Traditionally seen as “a seductive and dangerous enchantress, who personifies the beauty and treachery of the sea” (*Man, Myth and Magic*, 12: 1709), the mermaid presents as an ominous form of female hybridity, who constitutes both the human and non-human world. Moreover, misfortune usually follows a sailor’s sighting of a mermaid. Thus, the simile—“He’d sing like a mermaid”—contains an underlying sexualized, threatening otherness which heightens

Bobstay's ambiguous status.⁷⁸ It also gives rise to questions regarding Bobstay's sex: Indeed, could he be one of the many women like Hannah Snell who, dressed as a man, plied the seas? Dianne Dugaw, in *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry*, examines the "Female Warrior" as she is found in numerous ballads from the early modern to the Victorian periods. These ballads feature a woman disguised as a man who goes off to sea (or war) seeking her lover; while adventures typically follow, and often entail a reversal of the heroic ideal, the ballads usually conclude with womanliness safely contained within a heterogeneous union, the gender and sexual hierarchies intact. Like "Bill Bobstay," "Female Warrior ballads bend and parody strict categories of 'masculine' and 'feminine,'" yet unlike the woman warrior ballads, Dibdin's song offers no neat conclusion; rather Bobstay remains, like Dugaw's woman warrior, "an engaging if enigmatic figure," who challenges any notion of gender and sexuality as uniform or stable forms of identity (xi-xii).⁷⁹

Bobstay's lack of capital also problematizes any simple gendering as it places him outside of the public, masculine arena of economics and within the private, feminine arena of feeling. He is penniless because he is sympathetic, and this continues to be emphasized in the second stanza, which compares Bobstay to the purser.

There's Nipcheese, the purser, by grinding and squeezing,
First plund'ring, then leaving the ship, like a rat,
The eddy of fortune stands on a stiff breeze in,
And mounts, fierce as fire, a dog-vane in his hat.
My bark, though hard storms on life's ocean should rock her,
Though she roll in misfortune and pitch end for end,

⁷⁸ Dorothy Dinnerstein explains how "Myth-images of half-human beasts like the mermaid and the minotaur express an old, fundamental, very slowly clarifying communal insight: that our species' nature is internally inconsistent; that our continuities with, and our differences from, the earth's other animals are mysterious and profound; and that in these continuities, and these differences, lie both our sense of strangeness on earth and the possible key to a way of feeling at home here" (*The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise* 2).

⁷⁹ According to Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, "Women were few aboard ships of any kind in the eighteenth century but they were numerous enough to inspire ballads about cross-dressing female warriors that became popular among the workers of the Atlantic" (167).

No, never shall Bill keep a shot in the locker,
When by handing it out he can succour a friend.

The personification of capitalism, the purser trades in profits, always working to realize an economic advantage from the sailors to whom he provides goods aboard ship. He is differentiated from the seamen, who sail the ship and fight the battles, by his commercial activities, and both his name, Nipcheese, and the simile, “like a rat,” suggest his non-human and parasitic nature. Bobstay, on the other hand, continues to be described as generous, and there is a conflation of the speaker and Bobstay in the final four lines, whereby they become one voice as the speaker claims that regardless of circumstances, he (Bobstay) will never hoard supplies (unlike the purser) if he can provide comfort through sharing them. This conflation serves to emphasize the sense that the sailors constitute an emotional and ethical collectivity; it also de-emphasizes Bobstay’s difference from other sailors such as the speaker, despite his gender and sexual complexity, thereby suggesting that while Bobstay may constitute a transgendered presence aboard ship, he is not so much operating within and outside of (and crossing) sexual and gender norms, as exposing their fluidity. The final two lines (“No, never shall Bill keep a shot in the locker, / When by handing it out he can succour a friend”) reveal the wide range of comfort (material, sexual, emotional, for example) Bobstay can provide, if “shot” may be read to represent money, semen, or empathy. Ultimately, the stanza posits a series of binaries between the purser (competitive, individualistic, unfeeling, greedy, disloyal) and Bobstay (collaborative, communal, sympathetic, generous, loyal), implicitly claiming the moral superiority of the latter.

In the third stanza the speaker, taking on the persona of a landsman, voices the criticisms commonly levelled at sailors during this period. Accused of being foolish, simple-minded, even beast-like, sailors were thought to be incapable of handling the male, civilized world of commerce:

Let them throw out their wipes, and cry, ‘Spite of their crosses,
And forgetful of toil that so hardly they bore,
That sailors, at sea, earn their money like horses,

To squander it idly like asses ashore.’
Such lubbers their jaw would coil up, could they measure,
By their feelings, the gen’rous delight without end
That gives birth in us tars to that truest of pleasure,
The handing our rhino to succour a friend.

The speaker replies that the sailors’ generosity and compassion do, indeed, place them in a different kind of economy, an economy of affect, from which they gain “that truest of pleasure” through charitable acts. That landsmen lack compassion, that they are less-feeling than seamen, is unspoken. In the fourth stanza the speaker conjoins nationalism and affect in his discussion of the rights and obligations of citizenship:

Why what’s all this nonsense they talks of, and pother,
About rights of man? What a plague are they at?
If they mean that each man to his messmate’s a brother,
Why, the lubberly swabs! every fool can tell that.
The rights of us Britons we know’s to be loyal,
In our country’s defence our last moments to spend,
To fight up to the ears to protect the blood royal,
To be true to our wives, and to succour a friend.

The speaker’s allusion to the “rights of man” evokes the pamphlet war waged during the 1790s, initiated by Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), and fuelled by Thomas Paine’s response, *Rights of Man* (1791-2), which was part of the much larger ongoing debate regarding the French Revolution and the Revolutionary war. The Revolutionary debate, H. T. Dickinson reminds us, “had a profound influence on the political, religious, and cultural life of the country,” and the war with France “produced almost unprecedented economic and social strains, and forced Britain to make a huge military, naval and financial effort to counter French ambitions (1). This debate was to lead to “dramatic intellectual and theoretical innovations, not least for its principal protagonists,” notably Paine, whose political philosophy, Mark Philp argues, became more radical over time (43-44).

The stresses of the period permeate Dibdin’s songs, and the final stanza of “Bill Bobstay” is no exception. The speaker dismisses the ongoing debate concerning political

principles as “nonsense” and “pother,”⁸⁰ arguing that sailors already enact a social contract which entails loyalty, courage, self-sacrifice, and commitment to family, friends, country, and king. Again, as elsewhere, sailors are opposed to landmen. As the speaker moves through his speech on political rights, which he sees as self-evident (“every fool can tell that”), he collapses rights and obligations. All Britons are obligated in the same way, suggesting that obligations and rights are mutually binding, thereby implying an equal and inclusive form of national belonging. The passage remains ambiguous on several points, however, and though space prohibits me from more fully discussing the complexities of the ongoing debate, and, more specifically, the political principles outlined in Paine’s *Rights of Man* and Burke’s *Reflections*, I will suggest several points to which the passage appears to allude while simultaneously problematizing any clear endorsement of either position. For example, this stanza seems to invoke Paine’s argument that only the present generation can proscribe for the present generation and that we cannot be enslaved by history. The speaker suggests that the social contract is a product of reason (“every fool can tell that”), a position which Paine defended passionately (“There is a morning of reason rising upon man on the subject of government, that has not appeared before,” 240-4). In addition, the language employed is in keeping with Paine’s commitment to write “in language as plain as the alphabet” in order to aid comprehensibility and accessibility (quoted in Duff, 66). Also, the inclusivity and equality suggested by the passage (“each man to his messmate’s a brother”) can be laid at least partially at Paine’s feet, though he himself did not advocate universal suffrage until his *Letter Addressed to the Addressers*, published in the summer of 1792 (Philp 43). Burke, on the other hand, argued that national identity is at least partially constituted historically; precedence matters; hierarchy matters; and change must occur slowly; some of these ideas are echoed in this passage, such as the loyalty expressed for the monarchy (“To fight up to the ears to protect the blood royal”). Thus, the stanza seems to entertain various strands from both Paine’s and Burke’s arguments

⁸⁰ The OED defines “pother” as “Disturbance, turmoil, bustle; noise, tumult; an instance of this, a din, an uproar.”

while assuming a somewhat autonomous position which, as David Duff explains, reflects the diverse and wide-ranging political opinions of the day (56-7).

Yet, the song circles back upon itself. The speaker's allusion to Paine's *Rights of Man* and the heated debate it stimulated regarding the rights and obligations of Britons, suggests that the social contract is based on reason (rather than feeling), yet the song's final line ("To be true to our wives, and to succour a friend") draws us back to the affective realm, and the feeling-sailor who gains pleasure from acts of benevolence. Thus, a song which begins by praising a sailor for his generous, sympathetic nature (and whose gender identity is complicated; yet who is embraced by the crew despite--perhaps, because of--his differences), ends with an argument that citizenship is determined by actions which, in turn, are based on feeling; all Britons are equally obligated and equally British: citizenship is processual, not positional, even for transgendered sailors such as Bobstay.

The form of feeling masculinity modelled in Dibdin's songs evokes G. J. Barker-Benfield's discussion of the eighteenth-century culture of sensibility. "Sensibility," Barker-Benfield tells us, initially signified "the receptivity of the senses and referred to the psychoperceptual scheme explained and systematized by Newton and Locke."

It connoted the operation of the nervous system, the material basis for consciousness. During the eighteenth century, this psychoperceptual scheme became a paradigm, meaning not only consciousness in general but a particular kind of consciousness, one that could be further sensitized in order to be more acutely responsive to signals from the outside environment and from inside the body. (xvii)

Sensibility was often understood to be innate, yet it was also seen as a trait which could be developed. This latter potential was particularly important as sensibility itself became a possible signifier of social standing. "Variations between people in degrees of sensibility expressed a combination of environmental and innate differences between them. . . . Given the eighteenth-century connotations of 'degree,' the quality of sensibility could be seen as a badge of rank. Applied socially, Newtonian science could rationalize hierarchy,

as Darwinian science would in the next century” (8).⁸¹ At the same time, however, it could also provide the means by which agents, such as Britain’s sailors, or, at least, Britain’s sailors as imagined in Dibdin’s songs, could challenge the status quo through their expressed sensibility. No longer the dumb, brute animals of *The Naval Songster*, creatures to be praised for their unfeeling, unthinking loyalty, the nation’s seamen were emotionally complex and alive to the feelings of others.

“Foretop Morality” provides an excellent example of the “feeling” sailor.

Two real tars, whom duty call’d
To watch in the foretop,
Thus one another overhaul’d,
And took a cheering drop:
I say, Will Hatchway, cried Tom Tow,
Of conduct what’s your sort
As through the voyage of life you go,
To bring you safe to port?

Cried Will, you lubber, don’t you know?
Our passions close to reef,
To steer where honour points the prow,
To hand a friend relief:
These anchors get but in your power,
My life for’t, that’s your sort;
The bower, the sheet, and the best bower,
Shall bring you up in port.

Why then you’re out, and there’s an end,
Tom cried out blunt and rough,
Be good, be honest, serve a friend,
Be maxims well enough:

⁸¹ The rise and diverse theorizing and applications of “sensibility” throughout the eighteenth century is exceedingly complicated. In addition to Barker-Benfield, see James Chandler, “Moving Accidents: The Emergence of Sentimental Probability,” in Colin Jones and Dror Wahrman (eds.) *The Age of Cultural Evolutions: Britain and France, 1750-1820* (2002), 137-70; Northrop Frye, “Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility,” *English Literary History*, 23 (1956), 144-52; Chris Jones, *Radical Sensibility: Literature and Ideas in the 1790s* (1993); Jerome McGann, *The Poetics of Sensibility: A Revolution in Literary Style* (1996); John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (1988); Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen* (1996); and Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (1986).

Who swabs his bows at other's woe,
That tar's for me your sort;
His vessel right a-head shall go
To find a joyful port.

Let storms of life upon me press,
Misfortunes make me reel,
Why, dam'me, what's my own distress?
For others let me feel.
Ay, ay, if bound with a fresh gale
To heaven, this is your sort,
A handkerchief's the best wet sail
To bring you safe to port. (emphasis added)

In addition to highlighting a sensitive, sympathetic form of manliness, the song proscribes a moral code—be honourable, and of service to others (“be good, be honest, serve a friend”)—while operating as a Christian allegory (“As through the voyage of life you go, / To bring you safe to port”), thereby suggesting the various ways in which religion, sentiment, and masculinity were entwined during this period. As with most of Dibdin's songs (and song culture generally), the song is dialogic in nature, yet this particular song goes beyond the customary speaker/addressee convention by featuring a conversation between two sailors. These sailors, individuated through the naming process (Will and Tom), are authentic (“real tars”), and dutiful, and what follows is a dialogue in which they detail their moral code: Will specifies emotional discipline, honour, and generosity (“Our passions close to reef, / To steer where honour points the prow, / To hand a friend relief”), and Tom lists integrity, honesty, and generosity (“Be good, be honest, serve a friend, / Be maxims well enough.” Both sailors espouse principles particular to themselves while at the same time emphasizing honour, generosity and empathy, thereby suggesting that though sailors are individuals, collectively “real tars” constitute a moral, feeling, manliness. The final stanza brings these principles together to construct an sympathetic, ethical form of masculinity which is informed, at least implicitly, by a Christian ethos.

The Empire/Nation Embodied

Finally, within Dibdin's songs (as well as more generally), the British sailor is the embodiment of the increasingly globalizing British empire. Found throughout the world, in tropical and arctic regions, in transatlantic and pan-Pacific waters, the sailor, as both aligned with and a constituent of the nation, operates as a tropologically complex signifier of the nation. Long seen as integral to the nation's political, military, and commercial interests, the navy enjoyed a level of popular support not necessarily extended to the other armed forces. The army, especially when billeted at home, was associated with increased violence, the exploitation of local resources (material and sexual), and oppression (often being used to quell civil unrest); when actively engaged with battle, it was often away, on the continent or overseas, remote and somewhat disconnected from citizens' eyes (Jenks 3-5). The navy, on the other hand, was usually at sea, but ambiguously so, sometimes stationed in a particular location, but often times moving between ports both far and near. At any time, it could be, and often was, patrolling the waters surrounding the island nation, keeping its nationals safe from enemy incursions. During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, this—the perception of a naval omnipresence—was particularly important, as the sense of impending invasion was ever present.

Moreover, in times of peace, the navy was actively employed furthering the commercial aims of the nation in a way not shared by the armed forces. International trade, in turn, had profound repercussions for Britain's political standing around the globe. In *A Treatise on Maritime Affairs: or a Comparison between the Commerce and Naval Power of England and France* (1744), William Horsley discusses the role played by the navy in global politics:

The Thirst of acquiring Universal Monarchy, has been the Foundation of all the Disputes about Wealth and Power; which Nation is the most wealthy and powerful, has always been the Question? From whence we may conclude it is an establish'd Maxim, that Wealth is the Basis of Power; and, I believe it will be easily allow'd, that Wealth is no way to be acquir'd, but by Commerce; and Commerce no way to be establish'd and

ascertain'd, but under the Conduct, and Protection, of a naval Force. (74-5)

For Horsley, the navy provided the opportunity (through security) for the commercial nation to accrue the wealth necessary to exercise power in the international arena. This was an especially crucial point, given the period in which Horsley was writing. His *Treatise*, published in 1744, appeared in the midst of the war of the Austrian Succession (1739-1748), one of the many wars fought during the eighteenth century “as part of the long struggle between Britain and France for global hegemony” (Russell 3).

The central role played by British sailors in the economic, political, and cultural life of the nation is demonstrated in “Jack’s Claim to Poll”:

Would’s’t know, my lad, why every tar
Finds with his lass such cheer?
’Tis all because he nobly goes
And braves each boist’rous gale that blows,
To fetch, from climates near and far,
Her messes and her gear:
For this around the world sails Jack,
While love his bosom warms;
For this, when safe and sound come back,
Poll takes him to her arms.

Ere Poll can make the kettle boil
For breakfast, out at sea
Two voyages long her Jack must sail,
Encountering many a boisterous gale,
For the sugar to some western isle,
To China for the tea.
To please her taste thus faithful Jack
Braves dangers and alarms;
While grateful, safe and sound come back,
Poll takes him to her arms.

Morocco shoes her Jack provides
To see her lightly tread;
Her petticoat of orient hue
And snow-white gown in India grew;
Her bosom Barcelona hides,

Leghorn adorns her head.
Thus round the world sails faithful Jack
To deck his fair one's charms;
Thus grateful, safe and sound come back,
Poll takes him to her arms.

The song begins by posing a question to a “lad,” asking why sailors find such domestic happiness. The answer, apparently, is because the sailor travels the world, gathering goods for those at home. Bringing back tea from China, sugar from the West Indies, shoes from Morocco, and clothing material from India and Spain, he plays an essential role in provisioning the modernizing nation. The woman, as the female embodiment of Britain, a creature of appetites and taste, is both the reason for and a consumer of the goods of empire. Receptive when pleased, Poll (both woman and Britain) “takes the sailor into her arms.” Read metaphorically, the sailor is embraced by the nation, welcomed and honoured for his faithful service. Read more literally, the sailor is rewarded with procreative sex, thereby ensuring the continuous supply of Britons (and sailors) necessary for sustaining the nation’s position (political, militarily, and economically) in the international arena. While the sailors provide a professional service to the nation, and are integral to the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of the British empire, there is an underlying critique of the globalization of the cultural life of the nation. The tea and sugar requisite for British breakfast culture, for example, require two lengthy ocean voyages, both of which entail great expense and significant risks. The shoes allow Poll a delicacy of movement, and the clothing materials provide her with an opportunity to present herself as both elegant and modest. Sent on difficult, dangerous ventures to procure luxury items for a national culture increasingly dependent on foreign goods, sailors sacrifice continuously in their role of maintaining British national culture. At the same time, the song erases traces of the other human costs, such as slavery and colonialism.

Conclusion: Part One: “England’s hearts of oak”

Well into the nineteenth century, Dibdin’s songs continued to receive accolades as conveyors of national sentiment. According to W. Earp Thompkins, writing in *St. James’s Magazine* (XIII, 1865),

Whenever an English ship is found, beneath the tropical sun or in the ice of the poles, while an English sailor crosses the rolling deep, or Englishmen delight to speak of their country as the empress of the ocean, the name of Charles Dibdin will be known. His songs portray the sailor’s strength and weakness, his valour afloat and his joviality ashore, the warmth of his heart and the force of his hand, his fidelity to King and flag,—in short, they lay open every throb of England’s hearts of oak. (quoted in Fahrner 171)

This quotation speaks to the complex of attributes assigned to the British sailor in Dibdin’s songs and which continued to be aligned with the British seaman. “England’s hearts of oak” were, like the wood their ships were made of, not only physically strong, but indigenous, natural signifiers of the nation.⁸² The tropological play inherent in the figure of the sailor, especially in relation to the nation, is extremely complex, and, I would argue, fraught during the French and Revolutionary wars. In Dibdin’s “Poor Jack” the sailor is cast in synecdochical relation to the nation. He sees himself as a constitutive element; he “should be every inch / All as one as a piece of the ship,” his “heart” belongs to his lover, his money to his friends, and his life to the state. The metaphor suggests that the sailor, much like the ship in which he sails, is part of a larger nation, yet, while this image claims a place for the sailor in the life of the nation, it also contains an unsettling dismembering of the sailor as his various “parts” (emotional, fiscal, and political) are parcelled out in service to others.

⁸²In addition, “Heart of Oak” is the title of a famous sea song from David Garrick’s 1759 pantomime, *Harlequin’s Invasion*, written in celebration of the naval victories of Quiberon Bay, Quebec, and Minden of the same year (lyrics by Garrick, music by William Boyce). Thus, the phrase invokes multiple aspects of British naval culture. Moreover, Garrick and Boyce’s “Heart of Oak” continues to function as the official march of the Royal Navy.

Timothy Jenks notes the centrality of naval symbolism in British political culture during this period. He argues that the eighteenth-century navy was able “to sustain a conversation about the nation” which

allowed the navy to occupy a singular place in late eighteenth-century imaginings of national identity. Why did the navy achieve this position by the end of the eighteenth century? Primarily because it functioned as an effective social analogue, as a metaphor for British society. The notion of the ship as a microcosm of society—a ‘wooden world’—was long held. So, too were its constitutional associations as the ‘ship of state.’ Perhaps most central was the cultural stereotype of ‘Jack Tar.’ . . . the popular associations arising from this figure’s deployment in naval patriotism were crucial to the place the navy occupied in Georgian political and cultural discourse. (2-3)

Part of this “cultural stereotype of ‘Jack Tar’” can be traced to Dibdin’s sea songs, as evidenced by numerous commentators throughout the nineteenth century. However, unlike W.E. Thompkins (quoted above), who suggested that Dibdin’s songs revealed the inner and outer lives of Britain’s sailors, others argued for the generative powers of Dibdin’s songs; for them, these sea songs were not merely revelatory, but affective in their ability to engender moral qualities and behaviours. A notice in *The Morning Chronicle* (1 March 1810) announced a meeting held by “the FRIENDS of Mr. CHARLES DIBDIN” to raise funds for the financially ailing artist, at which it was argued that the nation had incurred a debt to Dibdin, not only for the many years of entertainment he had provided, but “for contributing, by his numerous patriotic songs to inculcate those principles of loyalty, honour, courage, and manly sentiment in British seamen and soldiers, for which they are so eminently distinguished.” The affective power of Dibdin’s sea songs to instil in Britain’s sailors the principles valued by the nation is clearly delineated. The “essential service” he has supplied to the nation is acknowledged and efforts made to provide him recompense. There are multiple economies at work here: the nation’s sailors are emotionally and morally shaped by song culture, for which the producer will receive remuneration. Several weeks later a notice in *The Morning Post* (5 April 1810) described a dinner (held the day before) to raise monies

for Dibdin at which the Chair, referred to as Incledon, echoed similar ideas. Incledon explained that the dinner was organized not only “to assist genius in distress,” but to

contribute towards the comfort of a man who had done much towards the solace of the leisure hours of our brave tars, and inspiriting them when going to meet the enemies of their country. For his own part he felt pride in owning that he had served his country on the ocean, and before the mast—(*thunders of applause*) and in that situation he had sung the songs of DIBDIN with enthusiastic admiration.—*The applause was here repeated.*)

Much like the earlier meeting, there is a conjuncture of social, moral, cultural, fiscal and political economies. Citizens have joined together to reward Dibdin for his affective productions which are valued for the behaviours and emotions they evoke. His songs provide “solace,” they “inspirit,” they instil “pride,” and incite “enthusiastic admiration.” They rouse sailors to song, and audience members to “thunders of applause” in celebration of their power. They are integral to the sailors’ experience of war, infusing them with the feelings and qualities necessary to face battle and thereby fulfill their duties to the nation. Similar claims of the effectivity of his songs appeared in his obituary notice in *The Morning Post* (26 July 1814): “it may truly be said, that they are calculated to support the interests of virtue, and to exercise the best affections of the heart, as well as to enforce the duties of loyalty and patriotism. The influence of his songs upon our gallant Tars has long been known, and probably has strongly contributed to stimulate their heroism, and inculcate submission to the hardships of their profession, and to the will of Providence.”

Moreover, citizen groups were not the only ones to recognize the efficacy of Dibdin’s work and its potential to further the military and political objectives of the state. In 1803, during a summer tour performing in northern England, Scotland and Ireland, Dibdin received a letter from a cabinet member asking him to contact him. On his return home, he learned that the government wanted him to write “war songs,” for which service Dibdin negotiated a deal for a £200 annuity as well as any profits realized from

publication of the music.⁸³ In June (1803) the government granted the pension “for his nearly 100 sea songs which, it said, did more to bring in recruits than did all the press gangs together” (Highfill, Burnim, and Langhans 373).

That cultural forms such as naval songs were purposefully disseminated throughout Britain and seen to influence public opinion is further suggested in contemporary accounts, such as Henry Lee’s *Memoirs of a Manager: Or Life’s Stage with New Scenery* (1830). In the second volume of his *Memoirs*, Lee, an actor, playwright, and provincial theatre manager, discusses the use of theatre to promote state interests: “it is by a modern author forcibly expressed, and almost universally admitted, that the best and wisest of legislators have frequently called to their aid the attractions of the Drama to make such impressions as the nature of the times required.” He begins with the example of Napoleon, acknowledging that “though there may be different opinions respecting Bonaparte, it will be readily be admitted, that he was not only a clever man, but a very politic one.” According to Lee, Napoleon provided funds for his troops to attend theatrical performances while garrisoned in France, and when campaigning in Egypt, “they took with them a Company of Comedians to play such pieces as were calculated to please the inhabitants of the country, and to diffuse amongst them such ideas as were favourable to the to the French interests.” Lee then goes on to discuss “our English rulers [who] were not entirely neglectful of considerations of this kind.” He recalls having “several times received (free of any expence) packets and parcels, containing popular songs, &c. with polite requests from persons of consequence, that such songs might be sung at my different Theatres. I remember having a number of Mr. Dibdin’s songs sent to me many years ago” (11-12). While admittedly, Lee fails to

⁸³At this time, Dibdin brought out an entertainment *Britons Strike Home* (September 1803). Described by Fahrner as “the most patriotic of Dibdin’s entertainments,” its focus was “clearly indicated in the Advertisement to be an edition of the songs Dibdin published shortly after the premiere: ‘Devoted as I have ever been to my public, it was impossible that, at the present moment, I should sleep at my post. The British War Songs I threw out as a signal to announce my preparations and I now venture to appear in force’” (155). The entertainment was positively reviewed in *The Morning Chronicle* (19 September 1803), and Dibdin published two editions of the songs from the entertainment. Also at this time Dibdin published his *British War Songs*.

name any individuals or institutions as the senders of the songs, it seems reasonable to assume (especially given his prefacing having received the songs with a pointed reference to the state's use of drama to influence military and civilian populations), that the "persons of consequence" wishing to influence the public by having specific works performed on stage, may have been aligned with the state or those associated with state interests. Lee considers Dibdin's influence on the nation's seamen:

I think the character of an English sailor has been (if not formed) at least greatly fashioned by the influence of Dibdin's songs. The sailors have been taught to think and to be (what he often is) 'All as one as a piece of his ship!'—'A Lion in battle, and afterwards a lamb!' and 'when on board'—he 'braves all! dreads nought!' for he knows that 'There is a little cherub that sits up aloft to keep watch for the life of poor Jack!' I think the English Navy, as well as the English nation, have thus been greatly served by Mr. Dibdin. (2: 12)

The passage suggests a conjunctural relation between power, culture and the nation. The songs are important to the nation because of their affective capacity, their ability to influence the "character" of the nation's seamen. The English sailor is both epistemologically and ontologically shaped by Dibdin's songs, songs which Lee suggests have been distributed by those in power. There is a coalescing of public and private interests here, with the government using private theatres as distribution networks for materials which serve their military and political objectives. Moreover, Lee's representative seaman is a montage of phrases extracted from several different songs. And while phrases extracted this way may operate synecdochically, the whole they represent is no longer the song (or songs) from which they are taken, but, in this case, the many and diverse tropes which collectively constitute an idealized representation of the nation's seamen of which the songs become a part. The subtleties of Dibdin's songs become erased under the pressure to create a kind of symbolic shorthand for the British navy and its sailors. Certainly accounts such as Lee's (as well as government pensions such as that awarded to Dibdin) are evidence of the recognition of the importance of cultural work to the promotion of state interests. More specifically, they demonstrate the

recognition—by government and cultural authorities—of the capacity of song culture to shape national identity during this period.

Sailors were not just bearers of contemporary ideology or the social and political expectations of others, however; they were fully imbued with their own ideological investments, motivated by their own social and political interests which were in part a function of the various landscapes—social, political, and gender—they inhabited. Gillian Russell's work on the theatre during the Romantic period shows how sailors rebelled against and simultaneously reinforced the kinds of identities constructed for them in cultural works:

As Henry Lee suggested, the stage-sailor of Dibdin's ballads may have been important in determining the character of the British tar, but the naval community was far from being a group of eager students, ready to be moulded. As much as the stage was a vehicle for propaganda, conveying an image of what the authorities and civilian society would have liked the navy to be, the auditorium was the place in which these pressures could be challenged and resisted. In going to the theatre, one was confronted not only with the idealized sailor on stage but also with the sailor as he really was in the audience—rum-drinking, lascivious, and brutalized. (105)

In addition to representations of sailors on the stage and in song, sailors were represented—and representing themselves—in print. Autobiographical accounts became increasingly self-conscious, Land tells us, in the post-1750 period. Sailors themselves became cognizant of the economic and cultural capital to be gained from their cultural products featuring tales of nautical life. In their works

They make much of the distinct ethos, language, dress, and behaviour of sailors. . . . Sailors deployed a web of cultural references, showing a sophistication about what their readers might already have seen in the theatre or read about previously that concerned Jack Tar and his attributes. Sometimes their aim was to endorse that viewpoint, in other cases to rebut it, but the awareness is unmistakable. (22-23)

For some there was a disjuncture between the cultural mediations and the “reality” of sea life. Drawing on the autobiographies of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sailors, Land

argues that “many sailors—whether volunteer or conscript—experienced disorientation and disillusionment when they joined the Royal Navy. . . . even though they had been exposed before hand to patriotic songs, stories, and theatrical productions to prime them for the experience” (33).⁸⁴

Conclusion: Part Two: “What of all this?”

Sailors themselves were becoming increasingly self-aware, especially with regard to their relation to the nation. Was Dibdin exploiting the sailors’ evolving sense of national identity? He casts himself as an early advocate of the British sailor, one who recognizes the sailor’s noble qualities and value to the state. Of his own work and its influence, Dibdin offered the following:

Let my pretensions be weighed by this standard. If I have no claim to popularity, let me be undecided; if I have, let me enjoy the advantages of fortune and reputation to which I am entitled. This done, I should have no sort of objection to let my right to the suffrage of posterity shift for itself.
C. DIBDIN.LEICESTER-PLACE, *Jan. 1, 1803. (Professional Life 1: xxv)*

Dibdin was not at all embarrassed by the notion that those who produce popular work should be rewarded, that pleasing the masses has value. In his *Professional Life*, he notes the many dramatic pieces and songs he has written, declaring,

With all these the streets have echoed, and barrel-organs and other mediums have proclaimed their popularity, totally without my participation. I never wrote nor connived at a single puff in my life, if exaggeration be meant by the term puffing; and I have been so constantly at my post, so alert, and so indefatigable in my public duty, that, in two-and-forty years, no apology has ever been made for my non-attendance.
(1: 6)

⁸⁴ In fact, Land claims that those who grew up inland, away from the sea, and whose expectations of a seafaring life had been shaped by “books, songs, and poetry that glorified ‘England’s Wooden Walls’ or the heroic Jack Tar,” were the most disillusioned and bitter (33).

Dibdin constructs himself as a prolific producer of works whose popularity has been determined by the public, which he has served diligently throughout his long professional life. Yet, he felt that he had not received the appropriate recognition for his work, especially from the navy. “What of all this? What has the devotion of so much time, pains, and attention done for me? Have my sea-songs procured me a single public compliment from the navy?” (7). Apparently, Dibdin felt slighted by the navy, for “When celebrated and noble commanders have arrived, and, from their meritorious and glorious exertions, have worthily demanded the applause and acclamations of the people,” the entertainments were not held at Dibdin’s performance space. Instead, using his materials (he claimed), they were held at other theatres, which, in turn, would receive the money and fame realized from the performances (*Professional Life* 1: 7).

In short, though in common with the rest of the world, I have learnt that my songs have been considered as an object of national consequence; that they have been the solace of sailors in long voyages, in storms, in battle; and that they have been quoted in mutinies, to the restoration of order and discipline, all which, I could indubitably prove, if it were worth my while; yet, the only symptom of acknowledgement I ever received, was a hearty shake of the hand from ADMIRAL GARDNER, when I gave him my vote for WESTMINSTER. (7-8)

Denied the cultural and economic capital that he believed rightly to be his, Dibdin felt unappreciated. And while the streets of the nation may well have “echoed” with his songs far into the nineteenth century, his own voice gradually died away. However, the attributes assigned to his imagined sailors—loyalty, courage, professionalism--continue to be associated with Britain’s navy, which declares itself to be fully engaged, as did Dibdin’s sailors, “Protecting the Nation’s Interests” (<http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/>).

In 1810, at the peak of the Napoleonic wars, there were 306,293 seamen in British merchant and Royal naval ships, the majority of them deriving from the lower orders of British society.⁸⁵ If, as Land claims, “finding room for the sailor’s voice—any sailor’s

⁸⁵ For statistics on sailors in British merchant and naval ships see Robert Morriss’s *The Foundations of British Maritime Ascendancy: Resources, Logistics and the State, 1755-1815* (2011) (226-7).

voice—was itself a radical development that could have unpredictable circumstances,” then Dibdin’s work needs to be reassessed with a view to the role it played in creating a space for the sailor’s voice. For, as Land points out, “Charles Dibdin, no friend to revolutions, had trained the London theatre audience to listen for that voice, even though he did so in the pay of Pitt’s counterrevolutionary regime” (167). As I have argued here, however, not only did countless Britons—sailors and non-sailors alike—*listen* “for that voice,” they, in singing Dibdin’s songs and mouthing the words of and about sailors, *became* “that voice” in performance. An essential aspect of Dibdin’s songs, therefore, was their capacity to effect change. Equally important, however, is how they effected change. Multiply mediated through oral, scribal, and print cultures, Dibdin’s songs were sung on the stage, disseminated through letters, and published in print. As singers, auditors, and readers, Britons engaged with, and were affected by, Dibdin’s songs. In turn, these songs were understood generally “to support the interests of virtue, and to exercise the best affections of the heart, as well as to enforce the duties of loyalty and patriotism” (*The Morning Post*, 26 July 1814, discussed above), seen to be effecting change through the forging of bonds of feeling both within and beyond the naval community. As this chapter has demonstrated, by foregrounding the sailors’ voices, albeit in a partial or limited manner, Dibdin’s sea songs represented a significant broadening of the concept of national belonging both in terms of numbers and class and further suggests the vital role played by song culture, in all of its multiple, complex forms, in effecting—and being seen to effect—the formation of national identity.

Chapter 4.

Textual Materialities in *A Selection of Irish Melodies with Symphonies and Accompaniments* by Sir John Stevenson . . . and Moore's *Irish Melodies*

In 1808 the Irish publishers James and William Power brought out the first number of what would be a ten-number collection of Irish songs.⁸⁶ Keen to capitalize on the burgeoning interest in national song culture, and looking to the work of Scottish song collectors and editors such as James Johnson and George Thomson,⁸⁷ the Power brothers recruited the help of two Irishmen for this first number: composer Sir John Stevenson to arrange traditional Irish airs, and poet Thomas Moore to write English lyrics for the airs. Both Stevenson and Moore proved apt choices: Stevenson arranged the music for the first seven numbers until Henry R. Bishop took over for the final three; and Moore's lyrics proved so popular that the brothers retained him for the entire collection. The song project, in its initial form published by the Power brothers under the title of *A Selection of Irish Melodies, with Symphonies & Accompaniments, by Sir John Stevenson Mus. Doc. and characteristic words by Thomas Moore Esqr.* (1808-1834),⁸⁸ is a multi-volume vehicle involving numerous voices in a complex remediation of national culture, in which

⁸⁶ The volumes were referred to as "numbers," and were published in 1808 (first and second volume), 1810 (third), 1811 (fourth), 1813 (fifth), 1815 (sixth), 1818 (seventh), 1821 (eighth), 1824 (ninth), and 1834 (tenth). I employ the term "volume" sparingly and only to avoid confusion, such as in the introduction when explaining that the Longman edition was a single volume edition.

⁸⁷ For details of the production history of *A Selection of Irish Melodies* (1808-1834), see Chapter 6 (140-163) of Leith Davis's *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender: the Construction of Irish National Identity, 1724-1874* (2006).

⁸⁸ This was the title for the first seven volumes. Henry R. Bishop's name was substituted for Stevenson's for the final three volumes when he replaced Stevenson. For the remainder of this chapter, the original edition published by the Powers will be referred to as *A Selection of Irish Melodies* and the 1846 edition published by Longmans will be referred to as *Moore's Irish Melodies*.

tunes from the Gaelic tradition play a prominent role. This early edition--its textual space dominated by musical scores and emphasising the relational quality of music and words--suggests the social performance of national song culture involving people from both the Irish Gaelic and settle cultures moving in time and space together, embodying and simultaneously creating a shared national culture.

The collection was to metamorphose, appearing in numerous editions brought out by assorted publishers in various forms throughout the nineteenth century. In 1846, Longman published *Moore's Irish Melodies* (1846) as a single volume focussed on Moore's lyrics, from which the music is removed and which includes illustrations by Irish-born Daniel Maclise (1806-1870).⁸⁹ The elision of the musical score with its Gaelic traces suggests in some ways a shift from the articulation of national culture as a public, social process enacted through song to national culture as a private, individual process enacted through reading (or writing). Some critics have argued that the removal of the music scores with their Gaelic referents have resulted in the de-politicization of Moore's songs in this second edition. Yet, in this chapter I argue that despite the removal of the traditional airs from the later Longman edition (1846), it, much like the earlier Power edition, models a form of national belonging which is both sensitive to and critical of the political landscape of contemporary Ireland. The interplay of Moore's lyrics and Maclise's illustration in the Longman edition (1846) complicate any overly simply comparison of these editions. Maclise's illustrations, if read through Lorraine Kooistra's theory of bitextuality and Claire Simmon's popular medievalism, not only provide extra layers of meaning, serving to both challenge and reinforce Moore's lyrics, but offer an equally trenchant commentary on contemporary issues such as the popular repeal movements of the 1840s. This chapter will compare the initial Power edition with the Longman edition of 1846 to consider how the materialities of textual production effect

⁸⁹ Attendant to this is the appropriation of a public resource (national culture) for private gain, but, more importantly, in the case of the *Irish Melodies* at least, there is an obscuring of its history as a collectively formed, and thus collectively held, resource. In this way, Moore, as a producer of his nation's songs, stands in stark opposition to Burns who generally refused remuneration for his work with Scottish song culture.

the form of national culture articulated. I argue that both the early Power edition and the later Longman edition engage with the idea of the nation in equally complex ways, invoke a national culture which is collaborative, reveal the pivotal role that cultural forms play in the mediation of national identity, and demonstrate a sensitivity to the historical, political, and cultural moment of their inception.

The reception history of the original editions of the *Irish Melodies* demonstrates the song collection's capacity to generate complicated, diverse, and, at times, incongruous responses, both in Ireland and beyond.⁹⁰ It also provides a helpful basis from which to launch an examination of the two editions, as it demonstrates the various interests invested in the nation's cultural productions, specifically national song culture, while also revealing the complex ways in which the nation's cultural life was mediated in the contemporary cultural field. From the beginning, the song collection was well-received, prompting the Power brothers to quickly offer Moore substantially more money to continue with the project than the £50 they initially paid him for the copyright of the first number. According to the Irish antiquarian Thomas Crofton Croker: "So successful did the speculation prove to be that Mr. Power and his brother soon afterwards entered into an agreement to pay Moore £500 per annum, for seven years, to produce in each year another Number of the Irish melodies, with a few single songs in addition" (*Notes from the Letter of Thomas Moore to his Music Publisher, James Power*, quoted in ní Chinnéide, 110). In addition to providing an annual quota of songs, Moore was to perform the songs in the drawing-rooms and parlours of England, presumably to stimulate interest in the collection.

Numerous critics have commented on what they identified as the political tenor of the collection. As early as 1812 a review for the *Monthly Review* laments the inclusion of

⁹⁰The critical response to the *Irish Melodies* has been, as Hoover H. Jordan succinctly puts it, "diversified and extensive" (1: 149). For an overview of the critical reception of the *Irish Melodies*, as well as an introduction to recent trends in Moore studies, see Francesca Bennatti, Sen Ryder, and Justin Tonra's edition, *Thomas Moore: Texts, Contexts, Hypertext* (2013).

political sentiment, remarking that the collection's "most remarkable fault . . . is a superabundance of ballads upon topics merely Irish." While suggesting that Moore should have "excluded all topics of a local or political nature" so as to avoid readers' "indifference" or "absolute disgust," ultimately the reviewer expresses satisfaction with the collection, concluding that "The songs accompanying the Irish melodies, contain, together with some faults, a proportion of beauties more numerous and striking than can readily be found in any similar work with which we are acquainted." An 1818 review in the *Quarterly Musical Magazine*, however, noted "the unsavoury odour of politics about them" (*Quarterly Musical Magazine* quoted in Jordan, 158).

For his performance efforts, he incurred the censure of those who felt he should have served Ireland's interests rather than his own (or those of England). *The Citizen: A Monthly Journal of Politics Literature and the Arts* for December 1839 chastises Moore accordingly:

Moore has devoted so much of his time to [the service of the young English gentlepeople]; instead of working for his own country, which admitted of, and greatly needed a nobler and more strenuous devotion of life to literary toil. Had he spent the last forty years of his life in Ireland worked but half as hard, to supply a few of her many wants, as he had been compelled to do for the booksellers in England, his position, in Ireland, and in Europe, had been far different now. Instead of being, as it were, the ambassador of the national genius in England, he might have been, for a time, its honoured chieftain at home. (quoted in Davis, *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender*, 164)

Moore was seen by some to be pandering to the middling and upper classes with his polite, nostalgic, and sentimental lyrics, while others saw him as a rabble-rouser and political agitator. A Tory critic writing in the conservative British periodical *The Anti-Jacobin Review*, for example, claimed that a number of the *Irish Melodies* "were composed with a view to their becoming popular in a very disordered state of society, if not in open rebellion; . . . [they are] the melancholy ravings of the disappointed rebel, or his ill-educated offspring" (*Anti-Jacobin Review*, 58 (1820), 315, quoted in Jordan, *Bolt Upright*, 1: 158). There were still others, such as Daniel O'Connell, however, who

praised Moore. In a speech at a meeting of the Dublin Political Union in November 1832, O'Connell declared, "I attribute much of the present state of feeling, and the desire for liberty in Ireland to the works of that immortal man—he has brought patriotism into the private circles of domestic life" (quoted in Jones 292).

This polarization haunted the reception history of the *Irish Melodies* throughout the nineteenth century and continues to inform, at least partially, current critical approaches to the song collection. Leith Davis, in her analysis of the interplay of gender, nationalism, and postcolonialism in Moore's *Irish Melodies*, for example, notes how the *Melodies* performed "seemingly contradictory activities," simultaneously inspiring Irish nationalists such as Daniel O'Connell "in their quest for cultural nationalism and repeal of the Act of Union," while also making "Ireland consumable in English parlors where, although there may have been sympathy for the Irish, there was no question of accepting Irish Home Rule" (140). In a similar vein, Harry White claims, "if the *Melodies* would never quite shake off the aura of the drawing-room, neither would they lose their symbolic force as a cumulative petition for self-regulation" (49).⁹¹ Although White also recognizes the disparate cultural functions the *Melodies* seemed to perform (and endorse), his analysis differs from Davis', focussing on Moore's "auditory imagination" and the "transmission of Irish music as a vital intelligencer of verbal meaning." He argues that to read the lyrics of Moore's "At the Mid Hour of Night" (one of Moore's songs from the *Irish Melodies*) divorced from the music for which it was written, and thus, "without any cognizance of the air by which it is generated, and to which it is permanently attached, is to deprive Moore's verse of the auditory intelligence which gives it significance" (70).

⁹¹In *Music and the Irish Literary Imagination* (2008), White outlines the reception history of Moore and the *Irish Melodies*, suggesting that Irish music (in which he includes the *Irish Melodies*) "became both expressive and symbolic of dispossession and loss" well into the nineteenth century. Situated between "the integrity of Gaelic revivalism" on one hand and "the aspirations to develop an art music at once expressive of Ireland and worthy of Europe," lay "the balladry of popular agitation, the unfulfilled promise of art music, and the representation of Moore himself as a pro-British sentimentalist and wailer after a lost cause" (50).

White posits an authenticating condition—the “original” relation between music and words—by which to “read” (interpret) a song. However, as this dissertation has argued, songs—both music and words, together and independently—are involved in a continuous, open cycle of remediation. There is no authenticating condition by which to determine a song’s significance. Each performance establishes afresh the interpretative possibilities available to any song; in addition, each performance is the result of collaborative, communal effort regardless of—but at the same time, determining—the form through which it is mediated. As my analysis of the original edition and the edition with illustrations by Maclise will demonstrate, music and words are not bound inevitably or infinitely together through time and space; they are fluid, processual, continuously evolving, made new through each performance, on or beyond the page. Moreover, in investigating the materialities of these two texts, I also consider the effect of the collaborative conditions of textual production on the form of national identity articulated. Although the *OED* defines “collaborative” as “A group of people working in collaboration to achieve a common goal,” I suggest the important distinction that “a common goal” may not be intended, desired, or achieved in the production of song culture. Thus, integral to this position is an understanding of song culture—and its mediation—as determined by the various landscapes (historical, cultural, aesthetic, political, social, and gendered, for example) in which it is embedded. We see this complex of music, national identity, textual materialities, and collaboration take specific shape in each of the editions of the *Irish Melodies* discussed below.

The Power Edition (1808-1834): Collaborative Authorship in the *Irish Melodies*: “Power will be much obliged by the communication of any Original melodies which the lovers of Irish music may . . . contribute to this work.”

The collaborative nature of *A Selection of Irish Melodies* was apparent from the publication of the first number of the project. In the Preface, William Power delineates his and his brother’s plan to publish “a WORK which has long been a desideratum in this

Country,” which would address what they identified as a serious problem facing Irish song culture:

Though the beauties of the National Music of Ireland have been very generally felt and acknowledged, yet it has happened, through the want of appropriate English words, and of the arrangement necessary to adapt them to the voice, that many of the most excellent Compositions have hitherto remained in obscurity. It is intended therefore to form a Collection of the best original Irish Melodies, with characteristic Symphonies and Accompaniments; and with words, containing as frequently as possible, allusions to the manners and history of the Country.

As indicated above, to assist them with their project the Power brothers had enlisted the help of Stevenson and Moore. Of Stevenson’s suitability for the project, Power assures the public (again, in the preface of the first number) that “the Lovers of simple National Music may rest secure, that in such tasteful hands, the native charms of the original Melody will not be sacrificed to the ostentation of Science.” Power is equally quick to extol Moore’s abilities, claiming that his “lyrical talent is so peculiarly suited to such a task, and whose zeal in the undertaking will be best understood from the following extract of a letter to Sir JOHN STEVENSON on the subject.” Power follows his puffing of Stevenson and Moore with a lengthy extract from Moore’s correspondence (February 1807) to Stevenson regarding the need for (and difficulties inherent to) this kind of project. In the letter, Moore expresses his anxiety regarding the work and the neglect from which Irish music has long suffered (“I FEEL very anxious that a work of this kind should be undertaken; we have too long neglected the only talent for which our English neighbours ever deigned to allow us any credit”). Moore also notes the need for the compilation of Irish music, suggesting that in doing so the Irish will be claiming authority over their own cultural productions and protecting them (and national culture more generally) from the appropriation of others (for example, composers from the continent who “have enriched their Operas and Sonatas with melodies borrowed from Ireland, very often without even the honesty of acknowledgment, we have left these treasure in a great degree unclaimed and fugitive. Thus our airs, like too many of our countrymen, for want of protection at home, have passed into the service of foreigners”).

Like Robert Burns, Moore privileges the oral/aural mode when producing lyrics to set to the nation's airs. He explains that the adapting of words to the nation's airs is complex, requiring the poet be sensitive to "the various sentiments which they express, and must feel and understand that rapid fluctuation of spirits, that unaccountable mixture of gloom and levity, which composes the character of my countrymen, and has deeply tinged their Music." For Moore, the process of adaptation requires a sensitivity to the affective quality of music as well as a knowledge of Irish nationalism; interpretation of the nation's culture and its role in the construction of subjectivity is integral to the process. Moreover, there are mechanical issues involved. Irish music itself is distinctive; many airs feature an "irregular structure . . . and the lawless kind of metre which it will in consequence be necessary to adapt to them" requires the poet to "write, not to the eye, but to the ear." Yet, despite the difficulties involved in the task, Moore concludes that "the design appears to me so truly national, that I shall feel much pleasure in giving it all the assistance in my power."

By including Moore's theoretical and methodological approach to Irish song culture in the prefatory pages of this first edition, Power structures these opening pages so as to produce a powerful parallelism throughout the book. Just as he incorporates Moore's critical voice in the paratextual materials, he incorporates Moore's poetic voice in the songs which follow. Yet, while he embeds Moore's voice within his own prefatory comments in which he outlines his design for the project, its objectives, and the terms under which it will continue, he does not appropriate Moore's voice. He places the two-paragraph excerpt from Moore's letter in quotation marks, in smaller font, and apart from his own prose, thereby clearly distinguishing his voice from Moore's, while simultaneously drawing on Moore's cultural capital to lend support to his objectives, those being to ensure that Irish music is properly acknowledged and to prevent non-Irish interests from exploiting Irish culture for aesthetic and economic gain. Power explains in what form the work will appear ("in Numbers, containing each twelve Melodies, several of them arranged for one, two or three voices"); when a subscription list will be appended (to the second number); where people can sign up for "succeeding Numbers" (at the

Powers' Music Ware-houses in Dublin and London); and the price ("Subscribers half a Guinea each Number, Non Subscribers three Crowns"). He expresses his desire to make the songs performable, thus they must be arranged as "necessary to adapt them to the voice." He provides English words (via Moore's lyrical contributions) for the traditional airs and arranges the airs so as to be suitable for singing. He demonstrates his cultural acumen by promising to render accessible "many of the most excellent compositions [which] have remained in obscurity." He will not only rescue Irish music from oblivion (and the appropriation by the non-Irish other), but he will choose "the best original Irish Melodies." His project is one of recovery, taste, and knowledge as he assures his readers that the song lyrics will reveal the nation's culture, "containing as frequently as possible, allusions to the manners and history of the Country."

While William Power positions himself and his co-publisher brother as the organizing authorities in these opening pages, the collaborative nature of the project continues to evolve, becoming more apparent in the following numbers. The Powers' presence is minimal, maintained primarily through each number's dedication which reads, "To the Nobility and Gentry of Ireland, The following Work is respectfully Inscribed by The Publisher," and through occasional addresses to the readers. In the third number, for example, Power includes a one-page advertisement in which he thanks the public for their patronage, applauds Moore's work, and declares (yet again) the significance of the project in terms of advancing the nation's interests. He announces his "hope that the unabated zeal of those who have hitherto so admirably conducted it will enable him to continue it through many future Numbers with equal spirit, variety, and taste," as there remains "an abundance of beautiful Airs, which call upon Mr. MOORE, in the language he so well understands, to save them from the oblivion to which they are hastening." His language is that of the nationalist, appealing to his fellow Irish to support a project of cultural recovery and conservation. In this same advertisement, he expresses pride

as an Irishman, in even the very subordinate share which he can claim in promoting a Work so creditable to the talents of the Country—a Work,

which, from the spirit of nationality it breathes, will do more, he is convinced, towards liberalizing the feelings of society, and producing that brotherhood of sentiment which it is so much our interest to cherish, than could ever be effected by the arguments of wise, but uninteresting, politicians.

Thus, though he provides a structuring presence, retaining his voice as publisher and sometimes editor, especially in the early numbers of the *Irish Melodies*, his appeals are wide-ranging and his approach inclusive, incorporating other cultural, social, and political interests within the collection, quick to assign himself a role as sharing in, rather than governing over, the production of the nation's culture.

This third number provides an excellent example of how—and to what effect—the work's textual space is shared amongst the numerous cultural producers involved in the project. Power's one-page advertisement is followed by Moore's four page treatise on Irish music entitled "A Prefatory Letter to the Marchioness Dowager of D----." Moore's treatise serves several functions. First, it constructs the Irish nation as capacious and inclusive. One way it does this is by reaching out to and including in the nation all those residing within *and* beyond the geographical boundaries of Ireland. Moore begins his address to the Marchioness of Donegal by singling her out from her peer group: "While the Publisher of these Melodies very properly inscribes them to the Nobility and Gentry of Ireland in general, I have much pleasure in selecting *one* from that number, to whom *my* share of the work is particularly dedicated." His act of distinction positions her as a member of the Irish social and political elite while at the same time setting her apart from that group. In a similar fashion he positions himself as one of the contributors to the song collection while distinguishing his contribution as singularly his ("*my* work"). If seen through the lens of national belonging, his act postulates the possibility of simultaneously belonging and not-belonging, or, of belonging in various ways, much as he and the Marchioness continue to belong to the Irish nation, though both—as expatriates—reside beyond its shores. Belonging can be mediated variously, Moore suggests, and one of the ways of continuing to belong, to continue to identify with the nation of origin, is through

remembrance, especially for those who, like the Marchioness, have been “so long absent from Ireland.” Moore declares:

I know that you remember it well and warmly—that you have not allowed the charm of English society, like the taste of the lotus, to produce oblivion of your country, but that even the humble tribute which I offer derives its chief claim upon your interest from the appeal which it makes to your patriotism. Indeed, absence, however fatal to some affections of the heart, rather strengthens our love for the land where we were born; and Ireland is the country, of all others, which an exile from it must remember with most enthusiasm.

The Marchioness has remained resolute, disciplined, an Irish patriot, ably resisting the “charm” of the adopted country which functions much like an exotic drug, threatening to induce forgetfulness of her place of origin, and, implicitly, her sense of national identity. By comparing “English society” to an exotic, sensorial effect (“the taste of the lotus”), he aligns England metonymically with colonies such as India. Rather than the authoritative metropolitan centre of empire, England becomes the alien, illicit other. Moore thereby inverts the binary upon which English and Irish political, economic, social, and cultural relations are based, and makes possible a reconceptualising of Ireland as occupying a position in the world other than “England’s first and nearest colony” (Julia Wright 1).

In addition to noting the crucial role of memory in the construction of national identity, Moore’s treatise serves a second function, that being to trace what he identifies as the complicated association between the history and music of Ireland:

It has often been remarked, and oftener felt, that our music is the truest of all comments upon our history. The tone of defiance, succeeded by the languor of despondency—a burst of turbulence dying away into softness—the sorrows of one moment lost in the levity of the next—and all that romantic mixture of mirth and sadness, which is naturally produced by the efforts of a lively temperament to shake off, or forget, the wrongs which lie upon it,—such are the features of our history and character, which we find strongly and faithfully reflected in our music; and there are even many airs, which it is difficult to listen to, without recalling some period or event to which their expression seems applicable.

The nation's music is a means by which to know the nation's history; it reflects and evokes the historical record, stimulating an emotional and intellectual response; at the same time, it reveals the national "character." Moore draws on classical and contemporary scholarship to support his conclusion that while rooted in tradition, Irish music is continuously evolving, due, at least partially, to theoretical and technical developments (for example, new approaches to harmonic intervals, such as the use of the fourth; and changes in musical instrumentation, such as adding strings to the harp).⁹² He applauds innovation, though his language betrays a concern with changes which threaten the origin and purity of the nation's musical culture:

In profiting, however, by the improvements of the moderns, our style still keeps its originality sacred from their refinements; and though Carolan had frequent opportunities of hearing the works of Geminiani and other masters, we but rarely find him sacrificing his native simplicity to the ambition of their ornaments, or affectation of their science. In that curious composition, indeed, called his Concerto, it is evident that he laboured to imitate Corelli; and this union of manners, so very dissimilar, produces the same kind of uneasy sensation which is felt at a mixture of different styles of architecture. In general, however, the artless flow of our music has preserved itself free from all tinge of foreign innovation (3: prefatory pages)

Here and throughout the treatise, Moore reveals the multifarious and complex nature of national culture and the theory which surrounds it. He expresses anxiety regarding modern "refinements" and "foreign innovation," worried they may affect the integrity of Irish music. Yet he develops a theoretical approach to music which is itself a "mixture," informed by a wide range of scholars and artists (cultural critics, historians, composers, and musicians, for example) from different periods (ranging from ancient Greece to the contemporary moment) and nations (many of them not Irish). In doing so, Moore differentiates between theory and praxis: while theory may develop in dialogue with

⁹² Among those named in his treatise are Joseph Walker, John Pinkerton, Sir William Jones, Abbé du Bos, Edward Bunting, Giraldus Cambrensis, O'Halloran, Carolan, Haydn, and Handel. He also cites various Greek and Roman sources (such as Virgil, Plato, and Cicero).

diverse critical and aesthetic positions, national culture must keep “its originality sacred” and preserve “itself free” of alien influences.

This issue, of aesthetic refinement as potentially threatening to the nation, is taken up in the fourth number’s “Lesbia hath a beaming eye” (Power 3: 77; Longman 68). The speaker addresses his beloved, Nora Creina, comparing her to the refined, witty Lesbia. The fact that Nora is referred to using a Gaelic term of endearment suggests her identification with the Irish nation.

Lesbia hath a beaming eye,
But no one knows for whom it beameth;
Right and left its arrows fly,
But what they aim at no one dreameth.
Sweeter ’tis to gaze upon
My Nora’s lid that seldom rises;
Few its looks, but every one,
Like unexpected light, surprises!
Oh, my Nora Creina, dear
My gentle, bashful Nora Creina,
Beauty lies,
In many eyes,
But Love in yours, my Nora Creina.

Unlike Nora, whose discriminating gaze shines with love, Lesbia constitutes an enigmatic presence. Her gaze—imagined as arrows flying in all directions (“Right and left”)—is ubiquitous, its target unknown. Rather than engage the gaze of Lesbia, who looks everywhere yet nowhere, the speaker prefers to “gaze upon” Nora, hoping she will return his gaze, for her every look, however infrequent, “Like unexpected light, surprises!” The stanza’s final three lines helix the problem, twisting the language in a way which both clarifies and complicates the speaker’s position regarding aesthetic refinement. Many women are beautiful, the speaker tells Nora, but she is distinguished by the love in her eyes. Implicitly, the speaker opposes beauty as an expression of nature to beauty as an aesthetic refinement. The beauty of nature, as personified by Nora, can be trusted. However “Beauty”—as an aesthetic refinement—“lies” he says, and here he seems to

imply beauty's capacity to deceive, mislead, betray. Certainly Lesbia's gaze, her clothes, and her wit are strategies of evasion, concealment, and/or misdirection. This idea is further developed in the second stanza. The speaker describes Lesbia's "robe of gold" which Lesbia has laced so tightly as to distort her figure. Exerting control over her form through the manner in which she clothes herself, Lesbia literally and metaphorically fashions herself, but the result is unnatural, earning her the speaker's censure ("Not a charm of beauty's mould / Presumes to stay where nature plac'd it"). In contrast, Nora's flowing gown reveals her figure, liberating its "loveliness" ("Leaving every beauty free, / To sink or swell as Heaven pleases") from the confines of a false aesthetic such as that employed by Lesbia, and leading the speaker to conclude that the female form--simply and gracefully displayed—is the beauty of nature embodied. However, in the third stanza the speaker offers a final critique, that being his treatment of wit as yet another mode of artifice. While the speaker acknowledges Lesbia's refined wit, he sees "its points" as potentially threatening ("Who can tell if they're design'd / To dazzle merely, or to wound us?"). In contrast, Nora is simple, unadorned nature:

My mild, my artless Nora Creina!
Wit, tho' bright,
Hath no such light,
As warms your eyes, my Nora Creina.

The model of womanhood most valued, the speaker suggests, is chaste, modest, artless, and unthreatening.⁹³ If Nora represents Ireland (as the embodiment of the nation and/or its culture), then this lyric echoes Moore's distrust of aesthetic refinement, artifice, or ornamentation which endangers the simple, unadorned "nature" of the nation.

Moore concludes his treatise by defending his lyrical contributions to the collection. "With respect to the verses which I have written for these Melodies, he

⁹³ In *Mirrors: William III and Mother Ireland*, Belinda Loftus discusses representations of "Irish woman," remarking that "'Tom Moore's *Irish Melodies*, so frequently sung in English drawing rooms, and the popular songs offered by Irish artistes in English theatres and song sheets, made Irish womanhood . . . sentimental, melancholy . . . and submissive'" (quoted in Fintan Cullen 129).

explains, “as they are intended rather to be sung than read, I can answer for their sound with somewhat more confidence than for their sense.” He is quick to add, however, that while privileging the oral/aural aspect of the collection’s songs, he has worked hard to avoid dishonouring “the sweet airs of my country, by poetry altogether unworthy of their tenderness.” To critics (and he provides a footnote drawing the reader’s attention to “Letters published in the *Morning Post*, *Pilot*, and other papers”) who claim that he has “chosen these airs but as vehicles of dangerous politics,” he answers: “To those who identify nationality with treason, and who see, in every effort for Ireland, a system of hostility towards England, . . . I shall not deign to offer an apology for the warmth of any political sentiment which may occur in the course of these pages.” Yet, he allows that “there are many, among the more wise and tolerant, who, with feeling enough to mourn over the wrongs of their country, and sense enough to perceive all the danger of not redressing them, may yet think that allusions in the least degree bold or inflammatory should be avoided in a publication of this popular description.” To these people, he disavows any interest in rousing “the passions of an ignorant and angry multitude.” In fact, “a work of this nature” is not even intended for “that gross and inflammable region of society,” but rather “It looks much higher for its audience and readers: it is found upon the piano-fortes of the rich and the educated—of those who can afford to have their national zeal a little stimulated, without exciting much dread of the excesses into which it may hurry them.” Here he would seem to be identifying the middling and upper classes as the work’s target audience. Arguably, however, Moore is constructing a resource-based rather than class-based ideal, suggesting that those possessing the resources that he identifies as necessary for responding effectively to the work (wealth or education or emotional discipline, for example), are capable of engaging with nationalist discourse. A resource-based ideal broadens the arena for political participation, including those who, like Moore, may lack the material, social, and political advantages associated with the middling and upper classes but possess the educational and/or affective capital required for inclusion in the nation. Ultimately, we are faced with the paradox of having cultural producers such as Burns, Dibdin, and Moore constructing theoretical models of national

belonging who, while not entirely excluded perhaps, occupy a liminal position in the life of the nation in terms of its institutions of power.

Moore's final comments are spent praising Stevenson's contributions to the collection. He defends the composer from accusations "of having spoiled the simplicity of the airs by the chromatic richness of his symphonies, and the elaborate variety of his harmonies," claiming that "the admirable Haydn . . . has sported through all the mazes of musical science, in his arrangement of the simplest Scottish melodies." Yet, Moore makes an important distinction between Stevenson and Haydn, based on Stevenson's Irish identity and the affective economy he aligns with it: "It appears to me, that Sir John Stevenson has brought a national feeling to this task, which it would be in vain to expect from a foreigner, however tasteful or judicious. Producing the nation's culture is no mere intellectual exercise for which knowledge and technical skill ("musical science") will suffice, Moore insists; it requires affective engagement, the ability to feel the nation, "a national feeling," such as that Stevenson brings to the work, "which it would be vain to expect from a foreigner, however tasteful or judicious." Stevenson imbues his music with "a vein of Irish sentiment, which points him out as peculiarly suited to catch the spirit of his country's music." Neither the nation nor its musical "spirit" is a simple, homogenous entity, however. As Moore makes clear in his prefatory materials, lyrics, and annotations, the nation is a fluid complex of interests which take musical form in the collection's songs, perhaps especially so in the airs harmonized by Stevenson. Moore writes:

In those airs, which are arranged for voices, his skill has particularly distinguished itself; and, though it cannot be denied that a single melody most naturally expresses the language of feeling and passion, yet often, when a favourite strain has been dismissed, as having lost its charm of novelty for the year, it returns, in a harmonized shape, with new claims upon our interest and attention; and to those who study the delicate artifices of composition, the construction of the inner parts of these pieces must afford, I think, considerable satisfaction. Every voice has an air to itself, a flowing succession of notes, which might be heard with pleasure, independently of the rest—so artfully has the harmonist . . . *gavelled* the melody, distributing an equal portion of its sweetness to every part.

For Moore, the harmonized airs have a significant (and signifying) function. They provide the opportunity for the individual voice to be heard independently of—yet in unison with—others. They also reveal the capacity of the temporal space of the nation to entertain many voices simultaneously, hearing one and all in the same chronological moment, much as historical Ireland simultaneously exists and affects contemporary Ireland. Moreover, Moore’s analysis pushes the reader to recognize the tropological play within and between the songs and the nation; much as the nation’s songs are constituted by various voices, so is the nation.

The harmonized airs also enact a polyvocality particularly well suited to—and reflective of—the collaborative and performative national culture articulated in the collection. Certainly, the song collection, as published by the Power brothers, is an amalgamation of numerous cultural producers, representing diverse fields of knowledge.⁹⁴ In addition to the materials contributed by the Power brothers and Moore, the musical scores arranged by Stevenson and Bishop, and the illustrations provided by various named and unnamed artists and engravers, there were countless other details of book production which were attended to by others who helped construct the *Irish Melodies* as a material object. Yet, while many of these contributors have yet to be identified, their role in the production of the text in its material form would not have been lost on the nineteenth-century cultural field. Lorraine Janzen Kooistra opens her treatment of Victorian illustrated gift books with a quotation from the nineteenth-century magazine *Anglo-American* which draws attention both to the visual presence of books as well as to all those workers “who built books out of texts and brought them to the reading public”: “‘I sing,’ says the modern Bard, ‘speaking to the eye alone, by the help of type-founders, papermakers, compositors, ink balls, folding, and stitching’” (*Poetry, Pictures, and Popular Publishing: the Illustrated Gift Book and Victorian Visual Culture 1855-*

⁹⁴ In addition to those named, I have identified several artists and engravers who contributed to the collection: T. Hunter (engraver), Pocock Junr. (del. et sculpt); A. Minasi (sculpt), Silvester (del. et sculpt), T. Stothard R.A. (artist), J. A. Mitton (engraver), W. H. Brooke (artist), Henry Melville (engraver), H. F. Rose (del. et sculpt), Marianne Nicholson (artist), Letitia Byrne (engraver), and W. Bromley A. E. (engraver).

1875 1). All books produced during this period, then, were collaborative projects; however, we see the model of collaboration expand, embrace the nation, and take on additional layers of meaning in the *Irish Melodies* as print culture becomes a mediating presence for—and integral to—national song culture as a communally developed, performative process.

In keeping with their design of inclusion, the Power brothers asked the public to play an active role in forming the national culture found in the *Irish Melodies*. Beginning with the first number, the publishers invite the public to contribute songs to the collection: “Power will be much obliged by the communication of any Original melodies which the lovers of Irish music may have the kindness to contribute to this work.” Both he and Moore were to repeat this request in several numbers. In the third number, for example, Power thanks the public for their patronage, explains they still have many songs, yet ends his address with a request for additional songs: “Power will be much obliged by the communication of any original Melodies which may have escaped his research, and which are worthy of a place in this Selection.” Moore takes a similar tack in the fifth number, explaining that the project is nearing completion (the next number will most probably be the last) and though they still possess much excellent material and are interested in continuing the project, they don’t wish to cause a decrease in support due to “any ill-judged protraction of its existence.” Claiming that “the Airs . . . are, of course, the main attraction of these Volumes,” if they ended up having to deal with less excellent music then the “Poetry too would be sure to sympathize with the decline of the Music.” But Moore then ends by saying that they will continue the project as long as they have “Airs as exquisite as most of those we have given,” and he urges those wishing the project to continue to submit “any really sweet and expressive Songs of our Country, which either chance or research may have brought into their hands.” In the sixth number Moore continues the dialogue with the public, saying that while the publishers had previously said that this would be the final number, they were only saying that out of fear that they would lack music of a high enough quality. However, they have since received contributions which “have enriched our collection with so many choice and beautiful

Airs, that if we keep to our resolution of publishing no more, it will certainly be an instance of forbearance and self-command, unexampled in the history of poets and musicians.” He also notes that

To one gentleman in particular who has been many years resident in England, but who has not forgot, among his various pursuits, either the language or the melodies of his native country, we beg to offer our best thanks for the many interesting communications with which he has favoured us; and we trust that he and our other friends will not relax in those efforts by which we have been so considerably assisted.

In the seventh number, the final number in which appeals for music appear, Moore once more addresses the public. Again explaining the conditions under which the present number has been brought out (in response to public desire, and supplied with additional airs through public appeals), he justifies the publication of the current number based on the public request being “so general,” they have received a high number of “old and beautiful airs,” and feeling that to not print the material is to suppress the nation’s culture. Again he mentions the contributions of “One gentleman” who contributed “near forty ancient airs” as well as poetry fragments and ethnographic information regarding local traditions complete with illustrations. The continuous appeals for music, the acknowledgement of the materials sent, the public’s interest and support cited as the recurring justification for continuing the project: the Power brothers, Moore, and the public engage in an ongoing dialogue regarding the *Irish Melodies* and the Power brothers and Moore make it very clear that the public’s participation is integral to the building of the nation’s culture.

Another form of inclusion found in *A Selection of Irish Melodies* is the list of subscribers appended to the third volume (1810).⁹⁵ There are several aspects of this

⁹⁵The list consists of 622 subscribers subscribing for 739 copies. The list I examined was appended to volume one of a two volume set of *A Selection of Irish Melodies* in the British Library (BL shelfmark: Music Collections H.1391). The first volume consists of the first-sixth numbers, vol. 1-3; the second volume consists of the seventh-tenth numbers, vol. 4-5. Shortly after they appeared, *The Irish Melodies* were published as volumes, each consisting of two numbers. Thus, the “volumes” I worked with were created at a later date. The back board of each “volume” reads “BOUND 1947.”

particular list which are noteworthy when compared to lists found in works by other authors dealt with in this dissertation (see table below). The first is the high percentage (46.5%) of women recorded.⁹⁶ This stands in stark contrast to Allan Ramsay's *Poems* (1721) (4%), Robert Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1787) (10%), and Charles Dibdin's *Songs of the late Charles Dibdin* (1841) (8.6%). One conclusion which may be drawn is that women were enthusiastic supporters of *A Selection of Irish Melodies*. Certainly, women were becoming increasingly active in the cultural field during this period. Women readers, Anne K. Mellor tells us, "entered British print culture in numbers large enough to form a critical mass," and literary forms (such as "magazines, gift-books, and annuals") were developed and publishing projects undertaken with the female consumer in mind (183). Such was the degree of female participation in the British cultural field that satirists such as James Gillray took aim at female tastes, and male critics expressed anxiety over what they perceived as women's potential to "trivialize literature, substituting their vulgar, low-brow taste for the aesthetic judgements of the better-educated gentlemen who had hitherto controlled the formation of the literary canon" (Mellor 183). Women's increased presence in the cultural field, their access (however limited) to intellectual pursuits, their exposure to poetry, their "extreme sensibility . . . to the charms of music, and their sympathy with the tone of feeling, which the words connected with that music breathe," are noted by an anonymous critic reviewing *A Selection of Irish Melodies* for the *Quarterly Review* (June 1812), who

⁹⁶ The complexities associated with subscription publishing, especially in relation to gender, are suggested by Robert Heron's 1797 *A Memoir of the Life of the Late Robert Burns*, in which he recounts details surrounding Burns's publication of the second edition of *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1787): "The subscription-papers were rapidly filled. The ladies, especially, vied with one another—who should be the first to subscribe, who should procure the greatest number of other subscribers, for the poems of a bard who was now, for some moments, the idol of fashion" (22-23). Heron's account, written ten years after the second edition of Burns's *Poems* was published, suggests that women were keenly interested in subscribing as well as gathering subscriptions, yet they make up only 10% of the subscribers named in the list. 90% of the subscribers were men and 6.6% of the subscribers were titled; while further work is needed on the roles played by gender, genre, geography, and nationalism in subscription publishing, it's interesting to compare these figures with Frances Burney's 1796 subscription publication of her third novel, *Camilla*, in which 58.6% of the subscribers were female and 25% were titled. Charlotte Smith realized similar results when publishing the fifth edition of her *Elegiac Sonnets* (1797) by subscription, with 58% female subscribers and 27% peers.

also remarks that “of all the poetry which women usually read, the verses that accompany their music form by far the most important portion.” From this, the critic concludes that “If then it be of consequence to form and guide the taste and pursuits of those who are to be wives and mothers, we should encourage the genius of our lyric poets to its utmost attainable perfection.”

The anxiety—regarding women’s engagement with and consumption of Moore’s *Melodies*, and music’s potential to effect change both in womanly behaviour and the life of the nations (Ireland and Britain)—is reflected in the critical reviews of the song collection as well as Moore’s work more generally and, in turn, led to attempts “to regulate the impact of his work by reinforcing the gendered standards both of the national imaginary and of the literary sphere” (Davis 160-161).⁹⁷ Davis suggests the nexus of interests (politics, national culture, gender, for example) mediated by song culture, when explaining the consequences of “Moore’s popularity among female consumers and his activity as a singer [which] made him an object of female consumption himself.” According to Davis, “This association was used to establish the feminine nature of his work, and, correspondingly, the judgment of his work as feminine was used to weaken its politically radical potential” (161). Davis’s conclusion complicates the question of female agency and the subscription list. While the relatively high percentage of female subscribers may be a comment on the popularity of Moore’s work, it may also signify that the work—a collection of Irish songs--was deemed an appropriate venue for women to appear in as supporters because of the cycle of feminization and de-radicalization she theorizes. Thus, while the list may seem to problematize efforts to influence female taste and behaviours of consumption, and to control and/or minimize women’s presence in the cultural life of the nation, critiques such as Davis’s which attend to the political, social, gender, and cultural contexts in which texts are produced, disseminated, and consumed

⁹⁷ According to Davis, “The publication of the ten volumes of the Irish *Melodies* in their original form, then posed a national threat not just because of their appeal to an Irish population that was potentially disruptive to the foundations of the British constitution but because of their appeal to a female population that was potentially disruptive to the British republic of letters” (160).

suggest the necessity to rethink any simple reading of the subscription list functioning as a public claim to agency. While the women listed as subscribers appear to have the economic, cultural, and symbolic capital to actively participate in the nation's culture as critics and consumers, they are perhaps assigned—rather than choosing--their place amongst the peerage and the male citizens of the state.

Author	Work	Publication Date	Subscriber Total	#Copies Total	Female (%)	Male (%)	Peers (%)
Allan Ramsay	Poems	1721	475	509	19 (4%)	456 (96%)	138 (27.5%)
Robert Burns	Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect	1787	1526	2778	153 (10%)	1373 (90%)	106 (7%) [6.94%]
Thomas Moore	A Selection of Irish Melodies	1808-1834 List of subscribers found in 3 rd # 1810	622	739	289 (46.5%)	332 (53.4%)	69 (11%)
Charles Dibdin	Songs of the late Charles Dibdin	1841	221 List of patrons and subscribers to 1 st + 2 nd editions found in 1841 edtn	2888	19 (8.6%)	196 (88.4%)	39 (17.6%)

In addition to having a large number of women subscribers, the list abandons the ordering by rank typically seen in subscription lists of the eighteenth century. In those lists, peers are usually ranked alphabetically, according to their station, with the highest station appearing first in the alphabetical listing. Exceptions to this are persons of the highest stations, such as members of the Royal Family, who are usually found at the top of the subscription list, or recorded on a page separate from—and preceding--the other subscribers, such as seen in the first and second pages of the subscription list of Dibdin's *Songs*. Thus, the lists reinforced the political and social hierarchies of the period. In the

list appended to *A Selection of Irish Melodies*, however, the usual social hierarchy is not in place. The list of subscribers is arranged alphabetically with no attention paid to rank. For example, the “B” list begins with Thomas Neville Baggot, esq., with the first peer, Lady Bellingham appearing in seventeenth place. The “C” list begins with Miss Caldwell, and the first peer to be noted is Lord Carberry in fourth place. Of the 622 subscribers listed by name, 69 are peers (under which are included titles such as “Sir,” “Hon,” “Lady,” in addition to all obvious titles such as “Earl,” “Countess,” and “Duke”). The list’s abandonment of rank (and its associated political and social capital) could be interpreted as a radical gesture; the hierarchies of the larger society are denied, resulting in a restructuring of the social order, if only on the page, but on the page of a book claimed by some to be “‘mischievous,’ ‘a vehicle of dangerous politics,’ and ‘jacobinical’” (quoted in Davis, *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender*, 140).⁹⁸

This early edition of the *Irish Melodies* (1808-1834) was produced through the collaborative effort of many people. In addition to the Power brothers, Stevenson, and Moore, there were numerous others—artists, engravers, printers, book binders, for example—who were involved in the production of the song collection in its material form. Both the traditional airs and Moore’s copious footnotes spoke to the complexity of Irish song culture. The collaborative nature of the endeavour was extended to involve the public, with whom the Power brothers and Moore conducted a continuous dialogue through the paratextual spaces of the work. Part of that dialogue involved appeals to the public to contribute music to the collection. In 1846, the publishing firm of Longman brought out another edition of the *Irish Melodies*, and while its title, *Moore’s Irish Melodies*, suggests a moving away from national culture as a collaborative endeavour, the dynamic relationship between Moore’s lyrics and Maclise’s illustrations produced an equally complex and fluid form of national culture, as we shall see in the next section.

⁹⁸ Davis is quoting the British journals *Blackwood’s* and the *New Monthly Magazine*. Moore was very conscious of the critical reception of his work, commenting on various critical responses in his letters to family, friends, and professional associates. In his “Letter to the Marchioness Dowager of Donegal” (*A Selection of Irish Melodies*, third number), Moore draws the readers’ attention to critical treatments of his work published in the *Morning Post* and *Pilot*.

The Longman Edition of *Moore's Irish Melodies* (1846): “To see the poetry of Moore worthily illustrated, is what we had not dared to hope; but the twin-star has risen . . .”

The Longman edition of the song collection was published in 1846 under the title *Moore's Irish Melodies*.⁹⁹ Both its title and architectural design established it as a national project distinct from that of the earlier Power edition. Whereas the title of the Power edition—*A Selection of Irish Melodies, with Symphonies and Accompaniments by Sir John Stevenson Mus. Doc. and Characteristic words by Thomas Moore Esqr.*—depicts the collection to be a collaborative, multi-mediated project, and assigns first place to the songs themselves before listing the composer followed by the lyricist, the title of the Longman edition positions the collection as a single-authored work and privileges Moore as a genitive (and generative) force of the nation's culture. The music scores that dominate the Power edition are removed, and the prefatory materials of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and tenth editions are collected and together with Moore's copious annotations placed in the back of the one-volume Longman edition. The removal of the music scores is perhaps in itself not noteworthy; after all, this was not the first time Moore's lyrics had appeared without the scored traditional airs; yet, when previously published without music, they had appeared in volumes of Moore's collected works, as part of his *oeuvre*.¹⁰⁰ They had signified his work as a poet, not as a representative of the song culture of the nation. In the Longman 1846 edition, however, they move beyond their previous position as synecdochically tethered to the nation's songs through music to become the songs themselves.

Whereas song collections were published with and without music scores during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, an analysis of the page ratio (music score to non-

⁹⁹ While a publication date of 1846 for *Moore's Irish Melodies* is generally agreed upon, a critical review of the work appeared in the November 1845 issue of *The Art-Union* (341).

¹⁰⁰ Both Longman (1820) and Power (1821) published early, authorized editions of the *Irish Melodies* without music (Davis, *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender*, 155; Jeffery Vail, *The Unpublished Letters of Thomas Moore*, 1: 198n).

music score) of the Power edition reveals the primacy of music to this particular collection. A page count of the ten numbers of *A Selection of Irish Melodies*, beginning with the first page of the first song and ending with the final page of the last song of each number (and excluding imprints and prefatory materials) reveals that of the ten numbers' 614 pages, 490 (80%) feature music scores.¹⁰¹ Not only are the pages dominated by the musical scores, but their sources are often cited in Moore's prefatory addresses and his copious footnotes. Veronica ní Chinnéide has traced many of the sources for the airs of *A Selection of Irish Melodies*, concluding that 126 airs have been employed in the collection's 124 songs (lyrics with airs).¹⁰² In each of the 124 songs "Moore gives the title of the original air or calls it 'Unknown'; 120 have titles and six are marked 'Unknown.'" The titles, when provided, "prove to have been copied fairly faithfully, including those which, being written in a rough phonetic script intended to represent the original Irish, may have presented some difficulty, e.g. 'Thamam hulla' or 'Cummilum'" (ní Chinnéide 110). The sources, both scribal and print, are wide ranging, and include Irish antiquarians such as George Petrie,¹⁰³ Thomas Crofton Croker, Joseph Cooper Walker, Edward Bunting, as well as others such as "a certain Dr. Kelly, who has not been identified" (111). Irish band-master and song collector Smollet Holden, and English composer William Shield are also mentioned.¹⁰⁴ Some remain unknown. Others Moore comments on in the paratextual materials. In the prefatory pages of the first and second numbers, for example, a footnote to Moore's letter to Stevenson reads: "The writer forgot, when he made this assertion ["Our National Music has never been properly collected"], that the public are indebted to Mr. Bunting for a very valuable collection of Irish Music, and that the patriotic genius of Miss Owenson has been employed upon

¹⁰¹ See Appendix A for an analysis of the page ratio of *A Selection of Irish Melodies*.

¹⁰² The additional two airs result from one song in the third number, "Ill Omens," being set to two separate airs, and another in the sixth number, "Oh! where's the slave?" being made up of two airs combined (ní Chinnéide 110).

¹⁰³ According to ní Chinnéide, Petrie provided Moore with airs in three ways: Petrie sent airs to Moore via a friend (Richard Wrightson); Petrie gave airs to Francis Holden, which were then published by Francis's father, Smollet Holden, in his *Collection of Old-Established Irish Slow and Quick Tunes* (1806); and Petrie sent Moore airs through William Power (110-112).

¹⁰⁴ ní Chinnéide provides a "List of Moore's Printed Sources" (Table I).

some of our finest Airs.” He draws attention to the work being done by those collecting, arranging, and composing the nation’s songs (both traditional and contemporary). In doing so, he conceptualizes the nation’s cultural producers as constituting an imagined community similar to Benedict Anderson’s nation; however, Moore’s nation is cultural rather than political. In addition, he names—and thereby individualizes—the agents, past and present, through whose efforts the nation’s culture is constituted. Thus, whereas Anderson delineates the political nation as “*imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (5-7), Moore moves beyond the faceless, nameless community of abstract imaginings to construct a nation of beings whose identity is both affirmed and mediated through a collaboratively developed national culture.

Certainly, the prefaces and advertisements of the Power edition identified the traditional airs as vitally important signifiers of Irish cultural practices, as well as a means for the transmission of Irish history. They were described by Moore himself, in the preface to the fifth number, as “of course, the main attraction of these Volumes.” Several years later, in the preface to the *Irish Melodies* (lyrics only) published in the Longman edition of the *Poetical Works of Thomas Moore* (1840-1841), Moore again suggests the crucial role played by music. He explains the pressure he has long been under to consent to the publication of “an edition of the Poetry of the Irish Melodies, separate from the Music.” He regrets the “divorce” of words and music, declaring, “I should with difficulty have consented to a disunion of the words from the airs, had it depended solely upon me to keep them quietly and indissolubly together”; however, he notes that the widespread, unauthorized (Davis 155), and, at times flawed, publication of his work throughout America, Europe, and Ireland has led him to agree to “a revised and complete edition of the Poetry of the Work, though well aware that my verses must lose even more than the ‘*animæ dimidium*,’ in being detached from the beautiful airs to which it was their good fortune to be associated” (*Poetical Works* 94).

Leith Davis, one of the few critics to analyze multiple editions of the *Irish Melodies*, argues that the publication of the lyrics without music effectively depoliticized the songs (*Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender* 155). In editions such as *The Poetical Works of Thomas Moore* (Longman 1840-1841) and *Moore's Irish Melodies* (Longman 1846), which included neither music nor references to the traditional airs, all that remain are the titles which Moore himself assigned the songs. Davis sees this as a process of “dehybridization”: “All of the elements that constituted the dynamic Irishness in the *Melodies* were omitted.” Gone are the music scores and their original titles, “and with them the traces of the original tunes” (155).¹⁰⁵ Paying special attention to the materialities of the text, Davis also comments on the illustrations in both the Power edition (1808-1834) and the Longman edition (1846). While she describes the illustrations of the earlier edition as “provocative,” and sees them employing “symbols of Irish identity, juxtaposing them and infusing new meaning into them,” she finds Maclise’s illustrations of the later edition to be “elaborate medievalizations [which] de-emphasize the Irish context of the poems and replace ambiguity with sentimental nostalgia” (156-157). She is not alone in dismissing Maclise’s illustrations. Herbert F. Tucker describes Maclise’s illustration of Moore’s “Take Back the Virgin Page,” as “the one bright spot among the many plates Daniel Maclise designed for the sumptuous, appallingly timed Longman edition of Thomas *Moore's Irish Melodies*.” Connecting Maclise’s aesthetic with the contemporary moment, Tucker suggests an unsettling disjuncture: “What made Maclise the premier illustrator of his day now makes his work cloying—makes it something worse than that, if across his feast for the eyes falls any thought of the famine in

¹⁰⁵ Davis also sees the dynamics of the mass market contributing to the depoliticization of the songs. Working with Clifford Siskin’s theorization of cultural hierarchy, Davis explains, “that the mass market after 1830 was ‘configured hierarchically into different levels of “culture” through procedures of reprinting, anthologizing, and illustration.’ This cultural hierarchy also played a large part in depoliticizing Moore’s work, each subsequent reprinting rendering it more harmless and nostalgic rather than potentially disruptive” (155-56).

contemporary Ireland” (190-191).¹⁰⁶ A more positive assessment of Maclise’s work for the *Irish Melodies* is provided by Edward Hodnett, who claims that as the illustration of Moore’s “The Wine Cup is Circling in Almhin’s Hall” (Power Supplement: 1; Longman 197) demonstrates, “Maclise went well beyond the poet in rendering the scene concrete and contemporary” (130). In doing so, Hodnett suggests Kooistra’s theory of bitextuality, which she elaborates in *The Artist as Critic: Bitextuality in Fin-de-Siècle Illustrated Books* (1995). Kooistra defines bitextual studies as integrating “the strategies of both visual and verbal interpretation in order to understand how the dialogue between picture and word produces meaning within a network of cultural discourses”:

Representation—whether verbal or visual—is best understood as a social relationship in which various forms of power, knowledge and desire are enacted and disseminated. The marriage of image and text operates within this kind of social structure. (5)

Concerned with the contextualization of image and text, Kooistra analyzes the meanings which are produced through the relationship (contiguous and conjugal) between visual image and verbal text, arguing that “illustration always works with the text to establish meanings and direct interpretations for the reader,” while being simultaneously rooted in its historical and geographical landscape. Seeing the illustration as providing a “pictorial reading” of the work it is illustrating, Kooistra claims an interpretive role for the illustrator, further suggesting that “illustrated books are composed of two texts—a verbal/creative text and a visual/critical text” (4). This theory is an especially useful tool when applied to the medievalizations within Maclise’s illustrations for *Moore’s Irish Melodies*.

¹⁰⁶ Discussing the work of several illustrators (such as Phiz, Richard Doyle, and George Cruikshank) at mid-century, Paul Goldman claims that while “there is charm . . . in abundance . . . there is little or no true ‘high seriousness’ or intellectual vigour. The designs, fine though they often were, decorated the text rather than interpreted it.” Goldman aligns Maclise with this stylistic development, and though he designates *Moore’s Irish Melodies* “[o]ne of the finest books in this style,” he opposes these illustrators to those such as Rossetti and his who “saw illustration as central to their art,” and who, seeing a parity between their work and the text, decided “to take on the texts and raise the entire status of illustration to a serious and intellectual endeavour in a manner which one would suggest is something entirely new in Britain” (28).

In *Popular Medievalism in Romantic-era Britain* (2011), Clare A. Simmons analyses what she calls “popular medievalism,” which she describes as

the imaginative use of the past in creating a vision of what Britain should be in the future by looking back to the origins—as always, real or imagined—of British rights as conceived by those who did not have full political rights at a time when the right to participate actively in the political process depended on property and gender. (6)

According to Simmons, Romantic era “popular medievalism uses the Middle Ages as a way to challenge class structures rather than to justify them,” and she reminds us that this period was one in which many people became increasingly aware of their exclusion from the polity, partly due to the discourses of revolution which had been mediated through oral, scribal and print cultures and circulated widely. Moore had been a student at Trinity College in the 1790s and had formed friendships with Edward Hudson and Robert Emmett, both of whom were imprisoned for their involvement with the United Irishmen, Hudson arrested at a meeting of the United Irishmen in 1798, and Emmett arrested during the 1798 United Irishmen’s uprising, imprisoned for three years, and then later executed for his role in the 1803 uprising.¹⁰⁷ In fact, Hudson introduced Moore to traditional Irish music, and Hudson’s drawing on his prison cell wall inspired Moore’s “Origin of the Harp.” Simmons notes Moore’s “use of fragments of medieval history in song [as] a means of allegorizing nationalist critique” (13). Medievalism served a signifying function which was both fluid and complex; while at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was associated with the discourses of the natural rights of Britons, towards mid-century it began to be aligned with propertied culture. “On several occasions during the 1830s,” Simmons tells us, “medievalism was coopted not to argue that all British people have the same historic rights but rather to justify a stratified society” (191).

Certainly, Maclise’s illustrations for *Moore’s Irish Melodies* evoke both Kooistra’s bitextuality and Simmons’ popular medievalism, providing additional layers

¹⁰⁷ Though Moore was questioned by university authorities following the 1798 uprising, he provided information only on himself, remaining silent as to the activities of others.

of meaning, at times serving to subvert Moore's lyrics, at others, reinforcing them. Moreover, as Nancy Weston remarks, Maclise's illustrations may be seen to comment, however obliquely, on the contemporary political, social, and cultural landscape. Weston's analysis of Maclise's illustration for Moore's lyric "Come, Rest in This Bosom" (Power 6: 90; Longman 133-134) demonstrates both of these components of his art, his layering of meanings and his critique of the contemporary moment. The illustration features a young woman seated left-mid-centre, embracing a young man kneeling at her left side. The woman's "long full dress and fur trimmed jacket evoke the medieval period," as does the young man's cloak and sword (Weston 158). The lyrics are as follows (though the third stanza is overleaf, framed within a border of foliage, with no additional illustration):

Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,
Tho' the herd have fled from thee, thy home is still here,
Here still is the smile, that no cloud can o'ercast,
And a heart and a hand all thy own to the last.

Oh! what was love made for, if 'tis not the same
Thro' joy and thro' torment, thro' glory and shame?
I know not, I ask not, if guilt's in that heart,
I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.

Thou hast call'd me thy Angel in moments of bliss,
And thy Angel I'll be, 'mid the horrors of this,--
Thro' the furnace, unshrinking, thy steps to pursue,
And shield thee, and save thee,--or perish there too!

According to Weston, the lyrics and the image work well together, yet she notes that though "The imagery of the poem calls to mind the illegal activity of poaching," the female speaker's response to the young man "surely . . . would constitute a major overreaction even on the part of the most law abiding." The young man's feathered hat is on the floor as is his cloth mask and dagger. The hat, mask and dagger, Weston tells us, "allude to the activities of the Irish secret societies that destroyed the farms and livestock of offending landlords and magistrates." Though unusual, assassinations could follow

these actions, suggesting the significance of the events referred to. While “[a]n image like this is too easily dismissed in our world as overly sentimental,” Weston cautions us to recognize it “as a disguised comment on the most serious features of modern Irish politics.” Thus, “[w]ith the legacy of *Captain Rock* behind him and his own southern birth, Maclise’s allusion is to the increasingly numerous secret societies and he, when in the spirit of the loving maiden in the print,¹⁰⁸ offers forgiveness in the face of contrition” (158).

Weston’s analysis is valuable in providing insight in to the complex ways in which Maclise’s illustration can be seen as interpreting Moore’s lyrics, using the historical and cultural frame of medievalism to allude to and interrogate actions undertaken by agents seeking to subvert the social and legal hierarchies operating during this period. In the engraving based upon Maclise’s original oil painting, the woman’s clothing is lavish, her fur trimmed jacket is short-waisted, open at the front, revealing her décolleté gown, which falls in thick folds around her body, elegantly and discretely suggesting her womanly form. The aesthetic richness and material abundance of her clothing position her as a woman of wealth, so depicting her as a figure of forgiveness, comforting a male insurgent, enfolding him in her arms as he looks up to her with what Weston interprets as “contrition,” serves to further complicate the illustration’s political commentary. Does the woman suggest Burke’s “age of chivalry,” with its “loyalty of rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself the spirit of an exalted freedom” (99)? Or, is she the Irish nation embodied, offering absolution to all those who resist the oppressive forces which work against the nation and its people?

The scene is framed by a border of branches, around which a leaved vine wraps. Both the foliage framing this image as well as the abundance of verdure used throughout Maclise’s illustrations for *Moore’s Irish Melodies* tie the song collection to developments

¹⁰⁸ Weston’s analysis is based on G. H. Every’s engraving of Maclise’s oil painting, which is very similar to the image in *Moore’s Irish Melodies* (1846).

in popular political movements in Ireland, such as the repeal movement of the 1840s. Following the failed uprising of the United Irishmen in 1798, the Act of Union in 1801 abolished the Irish parliament, moving the Irish seats to Westminster. While interest in national independence declined in Ireland following the devolution of the Irish parliament, Daniel O’Connell’s “brand of constitutional nationalism” stimulated renewed interest in Irish independence. As Cian T. McMahon notes, not only did O’Connell organize a successful campaign for Catholic Emancipation (realised in 1829), but he mobilized the people “into a new political instrument called the Loyal National Repeal Association, which was designed to repeal the Act of Union and replace it with a form of—purposefully ill-defined—self-government. For O’Connell, as for the United Irishmen, political health demanded that the spirit of the people be reflected in the laws of the nation-state” (15). Part of the Repeal movement involved “monster meetings,” mass gatherings which included parades, speeches, and nightly dinners. In addition to the political messages delivered by leaders such as O’Connell, messaging which was clear and unambiguous, Gary Owens tells us that there were “other symbolic devices and ritual forms” employed during these occasions “whose meanings were more deeply hidden” (252). As with all symbols, these “devices and forms” radiated multiple meanings, often drawing on forms of knowledge specific to the audience at which they were aimed. Those wishing to operate outside or beyond the official discourses of power found ways to communicate with their audience through symbolic gestures which remained undecipherable to those unaware or outside of the cultural framework which gave these gestures their political and cultural meaning(s).

Plants, for example, “were widely used to decorate meetings and demonstrations throughout the British Isles during the nineteenth century”:

In Ireland during the repeal campaigns of the 1840s they adorned streets, houses, parade floats, and even people. Days before O’Connell arrived in Ennis in June 1843, men, women, and children could be seen bearing branches and whole trees into town on their shoulders. They planted so many of them along the streets and used so much shrubbery to decorate buildings that by the time O’Connell arrived, the town was said to resemble a green wood. (Gary Owens 252)

That the use of plants was both dramatic and effecting is evidenced by an article in the *Limerick Reporter* (May 1843) of a monster meeting held in Charleville in 1843. According to the newspaper report, the crowd escorting O'Connell into town resembled “a vast mass of humans . . . carrying laurels and boughs of trees in their hands, so as to present the appearance of a moving forest” (quoted in Owens 252). In this description, the people are seen as the land in motion, thereby suggesting a refiguring of the nation as a whole in which people and land are synecdochically related. Certainly, plants had long functioned as signifiers of certain qualities, such as laurels which connoted “amity, peace, and regeneration”; according to Gary Owens, however, “in Ireland plant symbolism was more complex and multi-vocal than this. Trees and bushes had been worshiped as sacred objects since antiquity and they continued to be venerated well into modern times.” During the Romantic period, plants became imbued with political meaning, and in the Ireland of the 1798 Uprising, greenery (“green boughs and springs”) was associated with dissidence. “The image of the withered tree became a familiar device in the literature of the United Irishmen; it was the dead plant that would bloom again, the lost cause that would one day triumph” (252). In fact, the image of the withered tree is found in two of the illustrated imprints of *A Selection of Irish Melodies* (first and second numbers) as well as the illustration for Moore's song “St. Senanus and the Lady” (second number). The political, especially subversive, use of “greenery” was recognized by the government, as witnessed by the passage of the party-processions act (1832) which Owens explains, rendered unlawful “for anyone who took part in public demonstrations in Ireland to ‘bear, wear, or have amongst them . . . any banner, emblem, flag, or symbol’ that might provide sectarian animosity. The act effectively banned green flags and political banners from repeal processions.” Irish nationalists, however, countered with their own greenery; marching en masse during the monster meetings of the 1840s, bearing branches, plants, sometimes “whole trees,” they displayed their nationalism ardently, if symbolically (Owens 253).

Maclise would have been familiar with the Repeal Movement, with its “monster meetings” attended by thousands, and its nationalist project debated in parliament and the

popular press. And, certainly, he uses plant imagery throughout *Moore's Irish Melodies* to such a degree, in fact, that there are moments when it threatens to overwhelm what may be considered the focus of the illustration. I would like to turn now to Moore's song, "Go Where Glory Waits Thee," to suggest how Maclise's illustrations function as an interpreting lens, directing our gaze in ways which both enforce yet subvert Moore's lyrics. The song's female speaker addresses an unidentified male who is or will be away. She remonstrates with him to remember her. She repeats the phrase "remember me" nine times through the course of the song.

Go where glory waits thee,
But while fame elates thee,
Oh! still remember me.
When the praise thou meetest
To thine ear is sweetest,
Oh! then remember me.

The first stanza, like many of the lyrics in this collection, is placed within the illustration whose central figures are a man and a woman (figure 4.1). The man faces front, dressed in armour, holding a long spear in his right arm, away from his body. He leans to his left, his head tilted down, his gaze directed at the woman, who we see from the side, and who leans toward him, her gaze raised to meet his, her left arm reaching up to rest on him. A shield, half seen, seems to hang off the top of his left arm, and his left arm reaches around her waist, drawing her closer though there remains a considerable space between their lower bodies. In the left background (our viewing left), a boy stands, holding a horse, looking towards the centred man, apparently waiting for him. Behind the boy, troops are aligned on horseback, blowing horns. A dog, his back to us, looks towards the troops. The foreground objects, two horns, a pendent, and a sword are placed around the lyrics, seemingly randomly, thereby producing uncertainty whether they are instruments of battle, scattered in the chaotic preparations to leave for battle, or placed purposefully, framing the lyrics and thereby suggesting the motifs of music, military culture, and song which are found throughout the *Irish Melodies*.

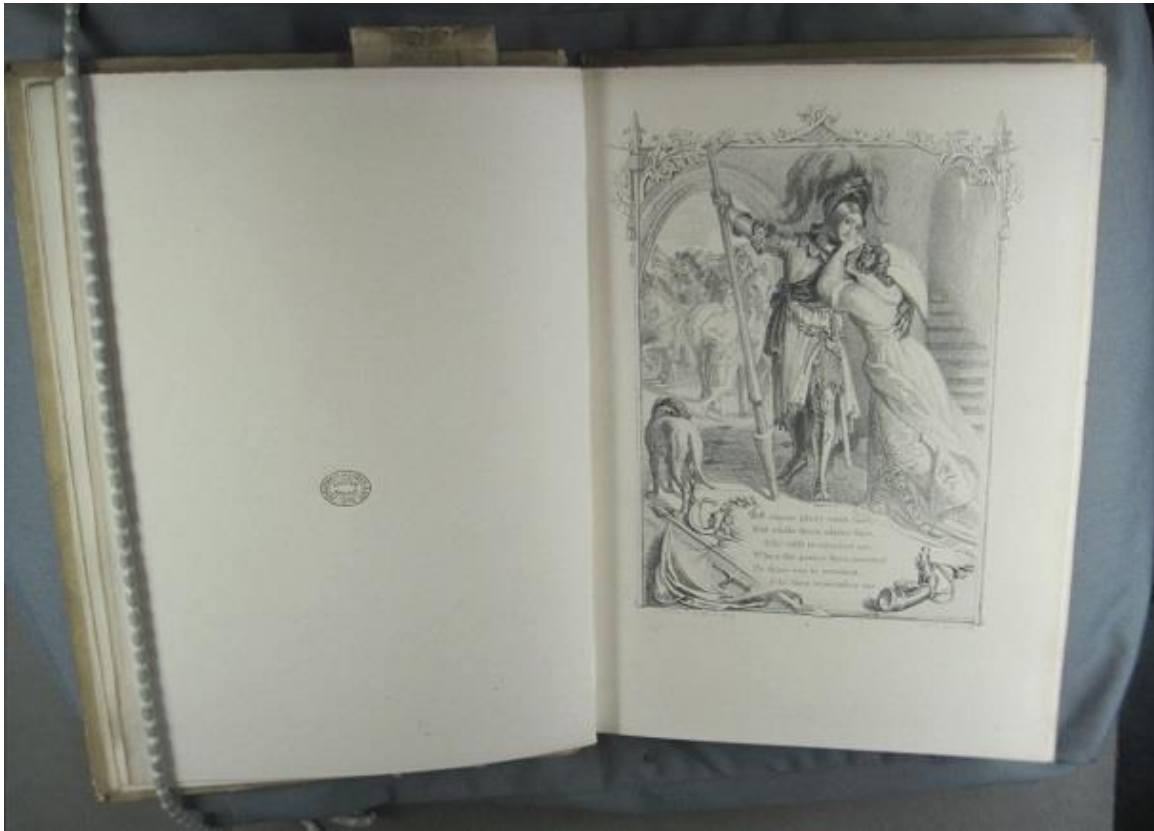


Figure 4.1. “Go Where Glory Waits Thee,” *Moore’s Irish Melodies* (1846)

Within this first illustration, the foliage is limited to a small piece which functions as a partial frame for the lyrics, though the ornate decorations at the top of the spears framing the illustration may also be organic matter. In the right background a staircase leads the viewing eye up and away, creating a distancing effect which works well with the lyrics as they evolve overleaf to move beyond the contemporary moment. In this first stanza, however, the female speaker is in the present, looking ahead to a time when she and the man she addresses will be parted. This temporal distancing continues in the second stanza, also encased in the second illustration, overleaf (figure 4.2#):

Other arms may press thee,
 Dearer friends caress thee,
 All the joys that bless thee,
 Sweeter far may be;
 But when friends are nearest,
 And when joys are dearest,
 Oh! then remember me!

When, at eve, thou rovest
By the star thou lovest,
Oh! then remember me.
Think, when home returning,
Bright we've seen it burning,
Oh! thus remember me.
Oft as summer closes,
When thine eye reposes,
On its ling'ring roses,
Once so lov'd by thee.
Think of her who wove them,
Her who made thee love them,
Oh! then remember me.

This second illustration features three figures, a young man and young woman in the bottom half of the image and a young man in the top left. There is an interesting layering effect, created by placing the young man, lying on his right side, his body facing us; his face is turned away from us and to his right, gazing toward the young woman who looks down at the roses she weaves. His left hand is placing a rose in her hair, but the action suggests ambiguity. Does this image capture him in *media res*, is the speaker remembering him active, moving, a living force continuing on? Or, is he frozen in the timelessness of her memory? Indeed, are these the speaker's memories or the young man's? Enwreathed by lush foliage, the young man and woman are almost womblike, the limited background dark, undifferentiated, and cave-like; overhead is the young man, presumably the same man as below (though his face is again turned away from us), but here spatially and chronologically distanced, apparently in the future, looking upward, enacting the speaker's directions given in this second stanza to gaze upon the night sky and "remember." In addition to her initial directions, to remember her when he is happy with success ("fame elates thee") and when kindly or gently praised ("When the praise thou meetest / To thine ear is sweetest"), she now broadens her list to include a variety of activities which suggest her imagining his future life to consist of increasingly intimate moments with people whom he has yet to meet. Yet however distanced they may be, she reminds him that they will share the things of the sky and earth; thus, when the stars shine or the seasons change, he is to remember her.

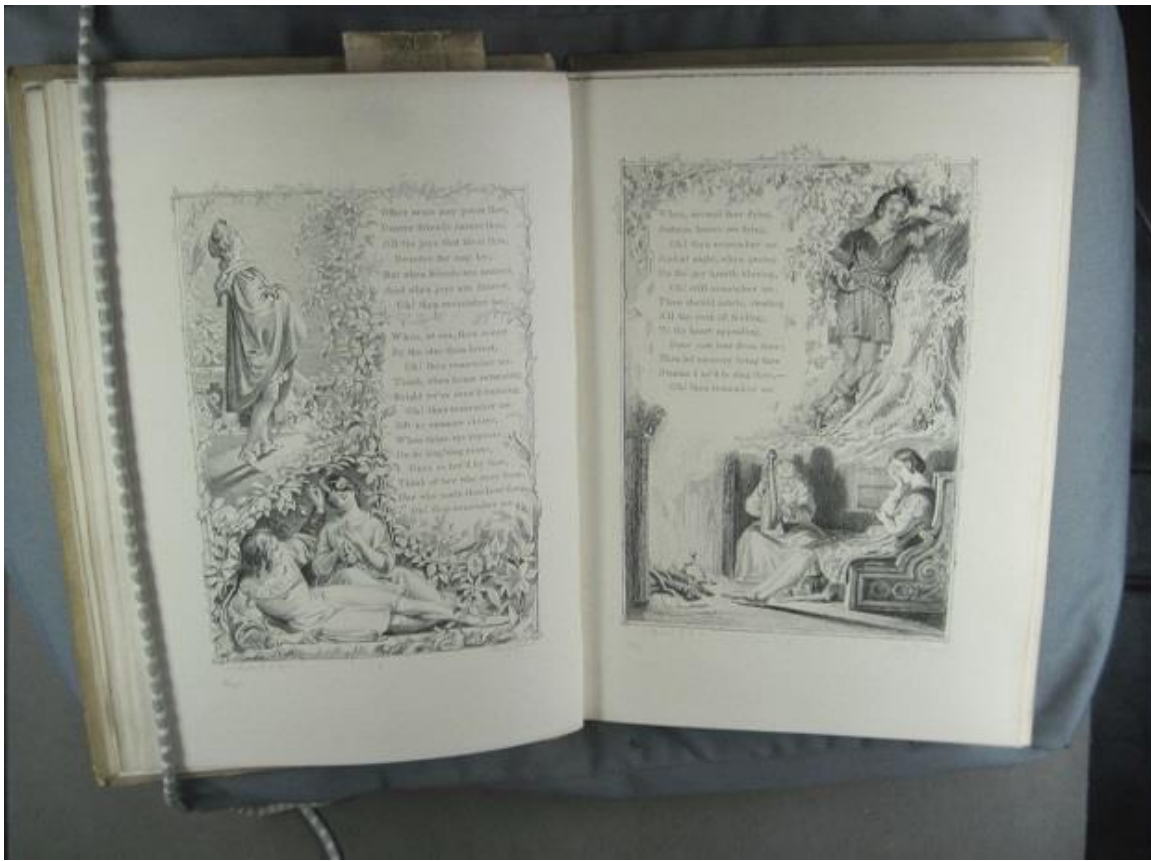


Figure 4.2. “Go Where Glory Waits Thee,” *Moore’s Irish Melodies* (1846)

In the third illustration, the final stanza, made up of fewer lines than the second, speaks of darkness, grief, and death; the words, placed in the cloud of smoke rising from the fire, threaten to dissipate, like memory itself. Yet, Maclise’s illustrations complicate any simple reading of the role of memory, especially in relation to national identity. In the second image, the past, imagined as lovers enwombed by foliage, suggests the fecundity of memory, and its procreative role in the production of identity. In the third image, however, the lush foliage of the second illustration is replaced by dead and dying leaves. The young man cast in shadow, gazing down, leans against the tree, its leaves falling around him. While the scene is again layered, suggesting chronological divergence, here the past is absent as any recognizable image, both the top and bottom of the illustration portraying present or near future images which reflect the despair of the lyrics:

When, around thee dying,
Autumn leaves are lying,
Oh! then remember me.
And, at night, when gazing
On the gay hearth blazing,
Oh! still remember me,
Then should music, stealing
All the soul of feeling,
To thy heart appealing,
Draw one tear from thee;
Then let memory bring thee
Strains I us'd to sing thee,—
Oh! then remember me.

While the speaker continues to direct the young man to remember her, she suggests no warm and loving memory to which the man can retreat; surrounded by death, he is to remember her; in darkness lit by fire, he is to remember her; and when moved by music, he is to remember her. In this final stanza, the speaker completes the cycle of memorialization she has been building throughout the song: memory, emotion, and music continuously inflect, evoke, and mediate each other. Moreover, if the speaker is seen as the Irish nation embodied, her continuous admonishments to remember the past suggest the importance of history to the nation, a theme which is underscored by Maclise's medievalizations. Particularly germane here are the two major characteristics of nineteenth-century medievalism identified by Simmons, those being "an acute awareness of one's subject-position as identified by nationality, history, social status, religion, and gender," and a comparativism which induces "some level of conscious contrast between the reader's (or observer's) present and recreated medieval past" (12). The important point here is that medievalism provokes the observers' sense of their present moment as historical, a point which Maclise's use of medievalism enforces. This edition of the *Irish Melodies* suggests an articulation of national identity and national culture which is comparable in complexity to that found in the earlier *Irish Melodies*, published by the Power brothers. While radically different in design and constitution, it speaks to an equally rich and dynamic aesthetic which, when read through Kooistra's theory of

bitextuality and Simmon's popular medievalism, reveals the numerous ways it engages, reflects, and challenges the contemporary nation.

Collaborations, Contextualizations, and Conclusions

In this chapter I have argued that these editions are self-consciously collaborative cultural endeavours, each articulating a form of nationalism which suggests the active, fluid, and often disruptive dynamic of collaboration, while simultaneously expressing in diverse ways the historical, cultural, and political moment of its production. In conclusion, I would like to discuss two notices of *Moore's Irish Melodies* found in the London based periodicals, *The Art Union* (November 1845) and *The Dublin Review* (September 1857), both of which comment on the collaborative nature of the *Irish Melodies*, and suggest the value assigned by these critics to the materialities of cultural production. In doing so, they provide a historical, critical contextualization for my analysis of these two editions of Moore's *Irish Melodies*, the Power edition of 1808-1834, and the Longman edition of 1846.

The review in the *Art-Union* of the 1846 edition of the *Moore's Irish Melodies*, illustrated by Maclise, extols the publication for its outstanding illustrations, suggesting that "this work with its profuse wealth of poetic conception and exquisite composition, distances everything akin to the great family of illustrated books." The reviewer notes the collaboration of poet and artist, claiming that such collaboration has resulted in aesthetic excellence : "To see the poetry of Moore worthily illustrated, is what we had not dared to hope; but the twin-star has risen, and, unlike the sons of Leda, Moore and Maclise do not enjoy one immortality between them, but each has his own particular glory." Thus, "These 'Melodies,' we say, might have remained unwedded to Art, but for such a genius as that of Maclise. The proposal of such a union we acknowledged with the happiest anticipations and its fulfillment must be hailed by the public as one of the rarest combinations that has yet been achieved in Poetry and Art." The reviewer goes on to critique several of Maclise's illustrations before concluding with some comments regarding the materialities of the text. Though he judges the designs of the illustrations to

be excellent, for example, he finds the quality of the engravings uneven, resulting in “certain inaccuracies in drawing occasionally apparent.” He acknowledges the work to be the product of the labour of many, singling out the printer McQueen’s contribution as especially praiseworthy. Such is the quality of this edition of *Moore’s Irish Melodies*, he claims, that it “cannot fail to obtain a large circulation on the Continent, where it will go far to enhance the reputation of British Art.”

Similarly, the book notice in *The Dublin Review* (September 1857) praises Longman’s recent edition of *Moore’s Irish Melodies, with the Symphonies and Accompaniments, by Sir John Stevenson* (1857). As its title suggests, the work reunited music and lyrics, a fact commented on by the reviewer who emphasized several additional aspects of this publication. The reviewer begins by noting the longstanding relationship between Longman’s and Moore. Describing Longman’s as providing “uniform support of Moore,” the reviewer commends the publishers for their “good service to the cause of literature and art. This friendship survives the grave, and has in this republication of the *Melodies* erected a lasting memorial to this Prince of Song.” While suggesting that “those who like ourselves have heard these melodies sung by Moore himself, must be sensible of something wanting in every other expression of their exquisite poetry,” the reviewer suggests that “their intrinsic beauty is imperishable.” The reviewer goes on to praise Longman’s for providing, at a comparatively low cost, “their beautiful and inexpensive edition of the *Melodies*, with the airs, reduced (for the most part) for one voice.” The reviewer adds that while “We are not sure that we should not have preferred the publication of the *Melodies* in their complete harmonized form, even though it would have required two volumes to complete the work,” the method adopted by the publishers will make the work “more accessible to every class of singers.” He concludes by noting that “The work, as to paper and typography, is excellently got up, and we can only hope that it will be as profitable as it is honourable to its munificent publishers.” Thus, this reviewer, much like the reviewer in the *Art-Union*, notes multiple aspects of cultural production which he values (though with slight differences): publishers who ensure the continuous publication of works (in affordable editions)

deemed important to the cultural field; accessibility of cultural works ensured through low cost; the capacity of published works to accommodate the polyphony of the nation; and a high standard of production regarding the text in its material form. These result, the reviewer implies, in the democratization of the nation's culture through greater accessibility, while also attending to the aesthetics of the materiality of the text, both of which the reviewer implies are important to the production of the nation's culture. Above all, he identifies collaboration as integral to the production of the 1857 edition of *Moore's Irish Melodies*, and suggests the continued interest in the specificities of the text in its material form.

Conclusion

I began this project with three objectives. The first was to examine the various ways in which song culture mediated national belonging during the eighteenth century. The second was to enlarge our critical understanding of the production, dissemination and reception of song culture. The third objective was to position songs in the centre of the culture of the Romantic period. It seemed to me at the time that I began formulating my plan, that there were a lot of songs circulating during the eighteenth century, yet they seemed to garner relatively little scholarly attention. Conferences featured few papers on song culture, as did journals, and university courses focussing on song culture were very rare. Yet, this has been slowly changing with the widening of the Romantic canon so as to include popular cultural products such as songs. I anticipate that the renewed interest in media studies may also stimulate interest in song culture.

In keeping with these objectives, I started reading song collections and found an enormous archive of material, which both confirmed the value of my project, while making clear the need to further refine my search area. I realized quite shortly into the project, as I began to read these songs through the lens of nationalism, that even the most seemingly banal lyrics were a means of transmission for often complex and diverse expressions of national identity. I also realized that there was a great range of songs available so I decided to focus on diversity as a conceptual framework. I chose four cultural producers operating within Britain during the late eighteenth century. I selected Allan Ramsay, Robert Burns, Charles Dibdin, and Thomas Moore because they were actively involved in their cultural field in varying capacities, and, I thought, well-positioned to test my theory regarding the centrality of song to cultural production. At the same time, by choosing case studies who were prolific, exceptionally good at networking,

and who were professionally engaged with their contemporary cultural field, I thought there would be opportunity to see if and how they engaged with song.

While my focus was on the Romantic period, my first chapter set the stage by discussing Allan Ramsay's song collection, *The Tea-Table Miscellany* (1724-1737). The first volume was published in 1724 thereby providing early example of a song collection which—at least by its 1726 title, *The Tea-Table Miscellany, or a Collection of Scots Sangs*—identifies itself as a national cultural project. Ramsay's songs demonstrate the complex interplay between nationalism, gender, and song. They also reveal the metaphorical richness associated with “voice” within his work, as well as the capacity of song culture to operate as a medium for the expression of varied, and sometimes contradictory forms of national belonging. His work, like that of Robert Burns, Charles Dibdin, and Thomas Moore, operates as a medium for the expression of multiple interests and demonstrates the fluidity and heterogeneity of national identity within Britain during this period.

In Chapter Two I examine the fluid form of national identity expressed in the songs of Robert Burns. Entangling history, national identity and his activities as a producer, collector, and reviser of Scottish songs, Burns outlines a theoretical and methodological framework for the nation's songs while simultaneously interrogating the idea of national belonging. The sea songs of Charles Dibdin are the focus of Chapter Three. As this chapter demonstrates, Dibdin's songs offer an expansive form of national belonging while at the same time suggesting the important role played by song culture in the forming of that identity. Finally, Chapter Four examines the issue of context, considering how the material (con)textualization of Moore's Irish songs affects the form of national belonging they express. These case studies provide evidence of how national song culture during this period could serve multiple, sometimes oppositional political purposes.

What these case studies establish then, is the wide array of voices within the nation. The results of my research have confirmed the position of song as a major mode

of cultural production as well as established the effective (and affecting) quality of song. My research has also demonstrated song culture's role as a form of cultural transmission, as well as its capacity to entertain—and give expression to—multiple, even contrary positions. While it has provided some excellent material, much more work needs to be done. Based on my research so far, and my focus on the Romantic period, I have identified three areas for further research. First, the role of song culture both as a mediating and mediated mode of cultural transmission needs to be addressed and theorized, especially in relation to scribal culture which I now see as vitally important to song culture as a field of study. Second, while I have used terms such as “song culture” and “textualized oralities” in this dissertation, I think work in song culture would benefit from a community of scholars who collaboratively develop a language to assist in investigation. Third, the field of song culture would be greatly assisted by archival research on the relationship between song culture and theatre during the Romantic period. I am confident that these three areas would prove extremely valuable to song culture studies.

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[anon] *The jovial songster, or sailor's delight; a choice collection of chearful and humorous songs, that are sung by the brave tars of old England, and other jolly and merry companions, Who over a Cann of Flip are disposed for Mirth and Good Humour. Being the most laughable and droll Collection ever published; including, among other diverting subjects, the sailor's description of a hunting*. A new edition. Gainsbrough, M.DCC.XCII. 1792. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. Web. 2 Feb. 2014.

[anon] *The merry companion: or, universal songster: consisting of a new collection of over 500 celebrated songs, with their tunes fix'd to each song. Disposed under the following Heads, viz. 66 Scots Songs, With a Glossary explaining the difficult Words, 210 English Love Songs, Expressing their different Passions, 93 Songs for the Bottle, And others of Wit and Humour, 139 Miscellaneous songs, Including those of Hunting and Jollity, the Free-Masons, Songs in Praise of Admiral Vernon, and all the Favourite Ones in the late Operas, Entertainments, and Farces.* The second edition. London, M,DCC,XLII [1742]. *Eighteenth Century Collections*. Gale. Online. Web. 14 March 2009.

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Appendix A.

Analysis of Page Ratio and Song Placement

A Selection of Irish Melodies, with Symphonies and Arrangements by Sir John Stevenson Mus. Doc. and Characteristic Words by Thomas Moore Esqr. 10 numbers [volumes] (London, Dublin: James and William Power, 1808-1834).

Analysis of page ratio (prefatory, score only, lyrics only, lyrics with score, score with and without lyrics [total number of pages with score], illustrated imprint, additional illustrations, number of annotated song lyrics.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
#	Page total*	Pages prftry**	Page score only	Page lyrics only	Page lyrics with score	Page score [with/out lyrics]	Illustrated imprint Yes/No	Additional Illustration	# of Annotated Song Lyrics
1	51	7 (14%) [0.137]	6 (12%) [0.117]	12 (23.5%) [0.235]	39 (76%) [0.764]	45 (88%) [0.882]	Yes	No	6/12 (50%) [0.50]
2	56	5 (9%) [0.089]	0	12 (21%) [0.214]	37 (66%) [0.660]	37 (66%) [0.660]	Yes	Yes St Senanus	7/12 (58%) [0.583]
3	63	11 (17%) [0.174]	7 (11%) [0.111]	12 (19%) [0.190]	41 (65%) [0.650]	48 (76%) [0.761]	Yes	Yes After the Battle	9/12 (75%) [0.75]
4	48	6 (12.5%) [0.125]	0	12 (25%) [0.25]	36 (75%) [0.75]	36 (75%) [0.75]	Yes	No	6/12 (50%) [.50]
5	50	8 (16%) [0.16]	0	12 (24%) [0.24]	38 (76%) [0.76]	38 (76%) [0.76]	Yes	No	5/12 (42%) [0.416]
6	64	6 (9%) [0.093]	0	12 (19%) [0.187]	50 (78%) [0.781]	50 (78%) [0.781]	Yes	Yes History's Muse	4/12 (33%) [0.333]
7	63	6 (9.5%) [0.095]	0	12 (19%) [0.190]	51 (81%) [0.809]	51 (81%) [0.809]	Yes	No	3/12 (25%) [0.25]
8	72	5 (7%) [0.069]	0	12 (17%) [0.166]	58 (80.5%) [0.805]	58 (80.5%) [0.805]	Yes	Yes Oh, Ye Dead	4/12 (33%) [0.333]

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
#	Page total*	Pages prftry**	Page score only	Page lyrics only	Page lyrics with score	Page score [with/out lyrics]	Illustrated imprint Yes/No	Addition-al Illustration	# of Annotated Song Lyrics
9	60	5 (8%) [0.083]	0	12 (20%) [0.2]	46 (77%) [0.766]	46 (77%) [0.766]	Yes	Yes As Vanqshed Erin	5/12 (42%) [0.416]
10	64	5 (8%) [0.078]	0	12 (19%) [0.187]	52 (81%) [0.812]	52 (81%) [0.812]	Yes	No	6/12 (50%) [0.50]
Splt	23	3 (13%) [0.130]	0	4 (17%) [0.173]	19 (83%) [0.826]	19 (83%) [0.826]	No	No	¾ (75%) [0.75]
Total	614	67 (11%) [0.109]†	13 (2%) [0.021]‡	124 (20%) [0.201]	467 (76%) [0.760]	490 (80%) [0.798]		5 imprint only 5 additl illustratns	58/124 (47%) [0.467]

*Page count begins with first song and ends with final page of last song of number, and includes all pages in between (including illustrations, blanks, pages with lyrics but no music, pages with music only, and pages featuring music with lyrics). Does not include prefatory materials.

**Page count begins immediately following imprint and includes all pages (including blanks) prior to first song.

†Percentage based on total of column 2 and 3 (total pages and prefatory pages).

‡Percentage based on number of score only pages of column 2 (total pages).

A Selection of Irish Melodies, with Symphonies and Arrangements by Sir John Stevenson Mus. Doc. and Characteristic Words by Thomas Moore Esqr. 10 numbers [volumes] (London, Dublin: James and William Power, 1808-1834.

Moore's Irish Melodies. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1846.

Analysis of song placement, comparison of Longman edition (1846) to Power edition (1808-1834).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Songs in same place as Power edition	Songs within 1-5 places	Songs within 6-10 places	Songs beyond 10 places	Songs within 0-5 places [total of col. 1+2]	Songs within 1-10 places [total of col. 2+4]	Songs within 0-10 places [total of col. 1+2+4]	Songs beyond 10 places	Total of songs [music with lyrics]
16 13% (0.129)	81 65% (0.653)	15 12% (0.120)	12 10% (0.096)	97 78% (0.782)	96 77% (0.774)	112 90% (0.903)	12 10% (0.096)	124 100%