

Honourable Warriors and Wonderfully Vulgar Fops: The
Representation of the Scottish and French Culture in
STARZ's Outlander



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Abstract

The *Outlander* series, both the novel and the TV show, have considerably risen in status within the historical drama genre ever since their release. The show has been praised for its depiction of the female gaze and its authenticity to historical facts. However, some have expressed criticism of the way it stereotypically depicts the Scottish and French cultures in the show. To date, no academic research has been dedicated to this topic. Therefore, this thesis explored the representation of these cultures in the TV show *Outlander* (2014). It did so through an inductive approach based on the materials presented in the first and second seasons. The research was embedded in the theory of imagology by outlining past and current to trace the extent these were used to represent the Scottish and French culture and whether it created a stereotypical image. This was done by considering what techniques and aspects *Outlander* employed to depict a set of ethnotypes for each culture. Additionally, the thesis considered the role of genre in light of these presented ethnotypes due to the prominence of authenticity within this genre which impacts the cultural representation. The results have shown that the show relies on existing ethnotypes to create an authentic image thereby perpetuating a stereotypical image of these cultures. Simultaneously, it also depicts a more nuanced image of certain cultural stereotypes.

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION.....	4
SYNOPSIS	6
CHAPTER 1 LITERATURE REVIEW	8
1.1 WHAT IS CULTURE?	8
1.2 IMAGOLGY	8
1.3 STEREOTYPES AND FILM	10
1.4 STEREOTYPES AND GENRE	10
1.5 ETHNOTYPES OF THE SCOTS	12
1.6 MODERN REPRESENTATION OF THE SCOTS IN FILM	13
1.7 ETHNOTYPES OF THE FRENCH	14
1.8 MODERN REPRESENTATION OF THE FRENCH IN FILM	16
1.9 PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON OUTLANDER.....	17
1.10 ACADEMIC RELEVANCE	18
CHAPTER 2 METHOD	19
2.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH.....	19
2.2 MATERIALS	19
2.3 PROCEDURE.....	20
CHAPTER 3 ANALYSIS.....	22
3.1 SCOTLAND.....	22
3.1.1 Tartanry	22
3.1.2 The Warrior	25
3.1.3 Kailyard	29
3.1.4 Kin, Clan and Honour.....	32
3.2 FRANCE	35
3.2.1 Fashion, Elegance and the Superficial.....	35
3.2.2 Sexual Liberty	39
3.2.3 Arrogance and Superiority	43
3.3. INFLUENCE OF GENRE	45
CONCLUSION.....	48
WORK CITED.....	51

Introduction

Jamie McCrimmon, an 18th-century kilt-wearing Scot, featured in a *Doctor Who* episode is the catalyst behind the popular book series *Outlander* (1991) and its TV adaption of the same name. The character prompted Diana Gabaldon, an American author, to write a novel with a Scottish setting knowing she “had to have a lot of Scotsmen” (Flood) in it, because the image of “the men in kilts [...] stayed in [her] head” (“Outlander Author Diana Gabaldon”), despite never having visited Scotland and being unfamiliar with the country’s rich history. It is thus a prime example of how images of national cultures are passed on and reproduced through media, especially when they reach incredible popularity in mainstream culture.

The images of the French and Scottish cultures presented in *Outlander* (2014) have been met with criticism as being stereotypical. For instance, Dennison argued that “Outlander promotes a deeply distorted view of the known nature of the Gàidhealtachd” by presenting it with “lots of raw sex, fantasy and slick Hollywood production values”. Similarly, Bastián wrote how “the new [French] characters embody every French stereotype”. Corresponding opinions about the apparent stereotypical and incorrect cultural image can also be found on forums such as Reddit. Making the characters refer to themselves as Scots or French generalises them to a national level, which, in addition to their sub-culture being the sole representation of culture in *Outlander*, makes their image and characteristics symbolise the entire national culture. This has led me to question whether *Outlander* (2014) indeed perpetuates national stereotypes about the Scottish and French culture and if so, in what ways.

I will examine these questions from an academic perspective in my thesis, mobilising the field of imagology to understand how *Outlander* (2014) represents the Scottish and French cultures and to what extent it renders a portrayal based on existing ethnotypes. Scholars in imagology have long been studying the depiction of national cultures in texts, media and discourses (Leerssen “History and Method” 27) thereby focusing solely on what is said about

X culture (27) rather than uncovering the truth behind these representations. Specifically, imagology focuses on stereotypes, a “particular character” (Leerssen “Imagology” 17) that is extended to the entire nation, which arises from ethnocentric perspectives, wherein individuals regard their own culture as better than others (17) in intercultural interactions.

Yet, no study has been conducted on *Outlander*, despite its considerable status and popularity, within the historical drama genre, that can be partially attributed to globalisation and digitalisation. Moreover, mass media entertainment’s role in transmitting popular culture transnationally adds a further necessity for an academic study on this type of media. Globalisation and digitalisation brought about a shift in the way information is consumed, with easier distribution and wide reach leading to increased consumption of mass media entertainment and thus popular culture, “the cultural traditions of the ordinary people of a particular community” (“Popular Culture”). It entails popular beliefs and perceptions with the idea of establishing and upholding a unified public space across the nation to foster social and cultural cohesion (Göttlich 355), thus playing a significant role in expressing cultural identities (355). As popular culture now transcends national boundaries, audiences, including individuals like Gabaldon, are frequently introduced to new foreign cultures through mass media entertainment. It offers them a lens through which to explore and engage with diverse narratives and cultural identities thereby exceeding mere entertainment.

Outlander demonstrates this transnationalism, as it not only formed a way for Gabaldon to engage with the popular culture she saw on TV but, in turn, also transmits popular culture transnationally. This is evidenced by *Outlander*’s global sales of over 50 million copies and translation into 38 languages by 2021 (“Delacorte Press”), along with its 3.7 million viewers (Hibberd) upon the premiere of the TV adaptation in 2014. A number that has continued to grow over time due to its availability on streaming platforms like Netflix. The image of the Scottish and French culture that this show created, as perceived through an American lens, is

thus consumed by many people. Therefore, this type of media asks for a critical approach toward the portrayal of cultures, given that many individuals are exposed to representations that may be distorted due to the subjective nature of popular culture.

To achieve that entailed considering key theoretical concepts and providing an outline of existing national stereotypes (Chapter 1), which informed the method that I took to conduct this research (Chapter 2). Moreover, it guided my analysis in which I discussed how the various stereotypes are represented in *Outlander* based on the collected data. More specifically, how the Scots are depicted through stereotypical elements associated with Scotland and as a primitive culture with warriors obsessed with kin, clan and honour and the French, on the other hand, as sexually liberated, elegant, superficial people who display arrogance due to their feelings of superiority (Chapter 3). To close this thesis, I briefly summarised my findings to answer my research questions and discussed the topics that can be researched in the future but are beyond the scope of this thesis or that resulted from some of the limitations that I experienced (Conclusion).

Synopsis

Outlander follows the story of Claire Beauchamp Randall Fraser, a World War II nurse, who travels to Inverness, a place in the Scottish Highlands, for her second honeymoon. Here, she visits an ancient stone circle called Craigh na Dun where she accidentally travels back in time from 1946 to 1743. It leads her to join an 18th-century clan called the MacKenzie clan where she tries to remain safe to go back through the stones to her husband Frank. This results in her becoming involved in the rivalry between the Scots and English as well as distrust by both parties due to her initial modern attire, having no relatives around, her British accent and extensive medical skills. It also brings her love as she meets this young Highlander called James Fraser, whom she is forced to marry to keep her safe from Jamie's sadistic nemesis

Black Jack Randall. They quickly realise that they are each other's soul mates and develop a fierce romance that leads to danger as Jamie is a wanted man with a price on his head. It means that they are frequently occupied with saving each other from the English. All the while, Claire becomes integrated into the clan which introduces her to clan life, including their participation in the Jacobite Rebellion. This leads Claire, Jamie and Murtagh, an old family friend to France in season two, in an attempt to thwart the Jacobite uprising and the impending bloodshed by preventing Charles Stuart from gathering the financial support needed. To do so means becoming involved in court politics and French aristocratic life to try to uncover key figures that support Charles, which leads to friendships and enemies.

Chapter 1 Literature Review

In this chapter, I will discuss relevant theories and concepts concerning my research question and subsequent sub-questions.

1.1 What is Culture?

Culture has been an essential concept within the humanities and social sciences to how people “conceive their identities, build communities, draw group boundaries, and claim rights” (Lentz 181). The dynamic and complex nature of the concept makes establishing a fixed meaning difficult, resulting in a wide range of definitions. In the existing body of work, culture was often defined based on national boundaries, implying an imagined community consisting of people from the same nation who share the same norms, practices and beliefs (Anderson qtd. in Jackson 47). Even though contemporary scholars now criticise this view for homogenising culture and ignoring diversity as well as the existence of sub-groups or co-cultures (Jackson 47), I will use this understanding of the term due to the generalisations made in the show.

1.2 Imagology

As I delve into the portrayal of Scottish and French cultures, generalised as national cultures, imagology is a pertinent field for examination. This is due to imagology's focus on how cultures, especially national cultures, are represented, in literature, media and other forms of discourse, thereby revealing the perceptions and attitudes toward these cultures. Unlike anthropology and sociological studies, the field of imagology does not attempt to understand the culture itself but rather “a discourse of representation” (Leerssen “History and Method” 27). This is done by analysing images, which is the “mental silhouette of the other, who appears to be determined by the characteristics of family, group, tribe, people or race” (Beller 4). Due to the cultural differences between the Self and the Other, these images are subject to selective

perception and selective evaluation. This can lead to both positive and negative images, such as stereotypes, of foreign people, cultures and nations.

As a result, these images should be questioned. This is done by considering the culture that is represented (the *spected*) from the perspective of “the representing text or discourse (the *spectant*)” (Leerssen “History and Method” 27). The dynamic between those auto-images and hetero-images reveals the stereotypes or ethnotypes (ethnic stereotypes), attitudes and prejudice towards other cultures, which shape national characterisation. Schweinitz defines stereotypes as “conceptions concerning social or ethnic groups and their members” (43) that consist of “structured and stable mental images [...] – ideas rooted in everyday cultural consciousness and therefore conventionalized” (43). The field of imagology often considers these images on a national level, but it can be applied to all sorts of cultures.

Leerssen argues that due to imagology’s focus on ethnotypes and the power they gain from their recognisability and effective presentation in discourse or communication (“On Using Ethnicity” 19), the research process should consider three elements: intertextual, contextual and textual. Intertextual analysis means that the ethnotypes in preceding works should be traced to create a more profound image of the ethnotype that is being analysed since a “characterological profile of a given ethnotype” (20) is the product of the accumulation of representations in previous works. Context means that the historical, political and social context in which the ethnotype was produced should be considered whereas the final step, the textual analysis, only focuses on the text itself. The latter analyses how the ethnotype functions within the text thereby doing an analysis that falls more into literary criticism. This three-fold procedure means that I need to trace what ethnotypes, both historical and modern, exist about the French and Scottish culture to understand in what ways these are depicted in *Outlander*.

1.3 Stereotypes and Film

While imagology originated within the field of comparative literature, it now extends to cinematics as well. Therefore, I will consider this form of imagology as my research topic pertains to the representation in a TV show. Schweinitz poses that stereotyping in film occurs on different levels: character and plot development, visual and auditory, and acting (42). Degler notes that motion pictures often use optical signification to create an unambiguous identification of the character. Therefore, the imagology of cinema should focus on the visible and audible aspects that are used to characterise the characters and the film setting. The optical markers allow an audience to identify a character as part of a certain nation or culture, which can invoke commonplaces or clichés. It can be done visually through the setting and physical appearance including the hairstyle, clothing, posture, and accessories. These can serve as an indication of aspects of identity like gender, age or profession as well as the character's social environment (Degler 295; Hermann 350). It can also be done textually through the type of language and the manner of speaking such as accents (Hermann 350). Moreover, the plot and the actantial roles assigned to the foreign characters can also contribute to the establishment of clichés (350). In cinematic imagology, the positioning of the Self and Other can be done through stereotypes (Degler 295), explicit statements about the Other or the Self, or can “be deduced from the contrast between protagonists and foreign characters, or referred to by means of allusions to national traditions or everyday life” (Hermann 350). Based on this information, my analysis should consider how visual, audible and plot elements are utilised to establish characters as part of a culture and how they contribute to the existing ethnotypes.

1.4 Stereotypes and Genre

As *Outlander* belongs to the historical drama genre, it significantly influences the portrayal of characters and the development of the plot, consequently shaping the representation of the

depicted culture. Hence why I will consider the literature on genre and stereotyping as the latter also affects the “conceptualisation of film genre” (Schweinitz 42). Ryall defines the genre as the “patterns/forms/styles/structures which transcend individual films and which supervise both their construction by the film-makers, and their reading by an audience” (qtd. in Abercrombie 41). It thus, to a certain extent, governs the content of the series such as the plot and the setting. Moreover, each genre has its icons and signs that indicate establishing a certain genre (Abercrombie 42). These signifiers and expectations can be easily met through the use of stereotypes. *Outlander* falls under multiple genres but is most importantly classified under historical drama. This type of genre presents a fictionalised idea based on actual historical people or events. It combines fiction with reality and presents a dramatised version of the past based on how it is understood in the present (Woods 1).

One of the major debates surrounding this genre, and historical fiction in general, regards the question of authenticity (1). It is often believed that authenticity refers to the “truthful representation of historical reality” (Lees 200) while it is more a process of speculation that is based on impressions due to the incompleteness of history (202). In reality, it lies closer to the notion of ‘verisimilitude’ meaning that it “entails notions of propriety, of what is appropriate and therefore probable” (Todorov qtd. in Lees 202). Authenticity then becomes based on what is commonly believed to be true about the period. As Schweinitz mentions, “for spectatorship to function, [...] a film and its characters, [...] should relate closely to the world of everyday beliefs and values” (43). It is thus connected to public opinion and the viewers’ “cultural understanding of the past” (Lees 203), which is achieved through visual elements such as filming locations, costumes and widely known historical events. It also largely draws on the audience’s “stereotypical knowledge reservoirs of the imaginary” (Schweinitz 57) rather than their knowledge of the actual world. These stereotypes are often based on the intrinsic aspects of a certain culture such as the morals and values since these are

left up to interpretation and perception rather than actual historical events. These can be employed by the author or producer to imitate authenticity because it only has to seem authentic in the audience's eyes (Rosenbaum qtd. in Lees 203). As a result, fictionality develops as a discursive reality that seems plausible, legitimate or coherent (Schweinitz 57). As the theory suggests, genre, more specifically historical drama, may rely on stereotypes to meet modern perceptions and expectations. Hence, I will consider how genre influences the portrayal of Scottish and French cultures in *Outlander* (2014).

1.5 Ethnotypes of the Scots

The Scots have been represented in various ways throughout the years. Before the 15th century, the image of the Scots became related to warfare. Scots were commonly depicted as “military people, albeit one living on the verge of European civilization” (231) and “useful and heroic allies in the war against England” (231). This image was reinforced by the victories that the Scottish booked. According to Urtz, the “Scottish soldier became a type of heroic resistance by hard mountaineers” (qtd. in Pittock 231). This image prevailed until around 1500 when a shift occurred. A distinction started to be made between the Highlands and the Lowlands of Scotland. The positive image of the Scots started to change into a negative depiction of the Highlanders as “wild, savage, thieving Catholics, brutal and vengeful, noble and touchy and obsessed with kin, clan and honour” (231).

This division between Highland and Lowland created an image of Scotland as “culturally, ethnically and politically two” (232) from 1550 to 1800. The positive image of the Lowlands included “hard-working, decent, Protestant, loyal to England, uptight, shrewd, careful with money, liberty-loving, clever and professional” (232) whereas the Gaelic-speaking Highlanders were negatively viewed as “lazy, feckless, Catholic, Jacobite, fawners on tyranny, indigent, priapic, verminous, brave but primitive and savage-very” (232). However, English

representation of the Scots, between 1638 and 1746, often ignored this distinction and collectively represented all Scottish people as “filthy, flea-ridden, gasping, treacherous and violent” (232). In the 19th century, the image of Highlanders reverted to the older image of the Scots as “brave, soldierly and valorous” (232). The image of the Lowlanders became more and more linked to the image of the English leading to the image and presentation of Scots as associated with Highlanders and Highland culture, such as the kilt. This image has persisted through the years and led to the stereotypes of the Scots with “kilts, pipes, dour bankers and Presbyterianism” (233). The prevailing image of the Scots depicts them as “greedy, savage, claymore-wielding [...] often combined with more modern gibes about Scottish drinking habits” (234), thus presenting the idea of “Scottish greed [...] and militancy” (234).

1.6 Modern Representation of the Scots in Film

The portrayal of Scotland, especially by international filmmakers including Hollywood is commonly divided into three different myths: Tartanry, Kailyard and Clydesideism (Butt 169; McArthur qtd in Edensor 147; Martin-Jones 5). The latter often focuses on heavy-drinking, working-class men in West Scotland (e.g., *Trainspotting*), which does not apply to this thesis topic. Tartanry, on the other hand, was adopted by Hollywood in the 20th century and constructed Scotland as a “pre-modern wilderness, [...] a nation lost to, or lost in, the past” (Martin-Jones 5) by purposely ignoring “the existence of the thriving Lowland cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow” (Martin-Jones 5). It is recognisable for its signifiers such as the tartan, kilts, bagpipes, and haggis as well as the “romantic and noble Highlander, associated with the Jacobite Rebellion” (Petrie 3). This image influenced the current image of Scotland as a magical and romantic place, which is reflected especially in costume drama, the genre in which Scotland is most often represented, that is constructed around “the romance, tropes, and symbols of eighteenth-century Jacobitism” (Petrie 69).

Part of this is the Scottish rebellion against the British, which worked well for Hollywood's narrative of "individual struggle against a powerful enemy" (Butt 170) which served as a "sort of 'prequel' to the American War of Independence" (170), as well as the opportunity to depict masculinity (170) with power over women. Therefore, Scottish national identity is commonly portrayed in juxtaposition with the English, stemming from Scotland's inclusion in the union of Great Britain. This depiction serves to Other the English, thereby affirming Scottish masculinity. Kailyard, on the other hand, refers to a "domesticated village Scotland, parochial, sentimental, backward-looking, small-scale, deeply-religious" (Richards 191; see also Petrie 3). Traces of these myths, the two often being interrelated, can be found in 21st-century narratives as well as the influence that they have had on the image of Scotland. As such, the image of Scotland as a "cinematic fantasy space" (Martin-Jones 15) has inspired films to depict Scotland in relation to magical realism (Scullion qtd in Martin-Jones 15). The most well-known, namely Tartanry, is reflected in films such as *Braveheart* (1995) and Disney's *Brave* (2012) and characters like Groundskeeper Willie. In these films, modern-day stereotypes are shown that relate to drinking habits, being red-headed and dour, noble, head-strong warriors, and a grumpy, aggressive temperament. This is similarly reflected in the famous Scottish character *Shrek* (2001-2010), whose cultural background is demonstrated by his Scottish accent, and who is attributed with other negative stereotypes of the Scots such as close-fisted and misanthropic.

1.7 Ethnotypes of the French

The French have been attributed both positive and negative characteristics dependent on the perspective of the observer, which changes with the context and type of text. The first images of the French date back to antiquity when the French were considered "arrogant, licentious, changeable, but also bold, well-dressed, aristocratic, amiable and spirited" (Florack 154). This

optimistic nature of the French is then often seen as the cause of their “inclination [...] towards flightiness and sociability as well as their love of passionate affairs” (154). The supposedly French fickle nature becomes often associated with their considerable love for fashion (156). In the 17th and 18th centuries, stereotypes of the French throughout Europe were heavily dependent on the absolute power that the king wielded and his court.

This type of influence caused similar stereotypes to be either phrased positively or negatively, the latter often done as an “affirmation of homegrown values” (156). When viewed positively, the French were seen as cultured and very civilised in “eloquence, social manners and presentation, as well as refined taste, style, elegance, courtesy, gallantry, sociability, light-hearted, self-expression and wit” (155). These traits could also be construed negatively as being loquacious, sensual, immoral or possessing “vanity, showiness, arrogance, frivolity, superficiality and dishonesty” (155). The image depicts them as “fops, effeminate flatters and hypocrites” (156). All these stereotypes stem from criticism targeted at the aristocracy, their customs and behaviour, as dictated by the French court (156).

Finally, the French have been stereotypically represented in entertainment; stereotypes which often pertain to gender (Rosenthal 897). French men have been represented as “cultivated, elitist, or feminine and arrogant characters” (Verdaguer qtd in Florack 157) whereas the image of the French woman has been in line with the image prevalent in Europe from 1800 onwards (Chew qtd in Florack 157). The most common stereotype about the French concerns sexual liberty (Florack 155), notably female sexual liberty as part of the *savoir-vivre* (Rosenthal 898). French women are often depicted as “assertive, elegant, erotically exciting, seductive and easy, displaying herself with the aid of fashion and cosmetics” (Florack 157). They were either portrayed as an “attractive or repelling model of femininity” (157). This image is reflective of the spaces that French women inhabited in early modern times; the image being

reminiscent of the culture of the court and the salons as well as their participation in the public sphere.

1.8 Modern Representation of the French in Film

French, specifically, Paris has been used as a prevailing setting for the US film industry producing a blend of films and series with historical (e.g., *Reign* and *Marie Antoinette*) and modern-day settings, especially romantic comedies. This reflects the American depiction of France with a fantasised, romanticised version of Paris as the city of love. Within this, certain patterns of representation can be found, some more common and clear-cut than others. For instance, this image of Paris as the city of love means that the French are often portrayed as romantic or, especially French women, as “seductive and loose” (Humbert 82). Moreover, series like *Emily in Paris* (2020) depict acceptance and normality of infidelity. As a result, relationships between French women and American men are more common than vice versa thereby presenting France through the feminine. This is in keeping with the French association with “feminine weakness” (Verdaguer 445) or the “archetypal effeminate Frenchmen” (442). American media, especially Hollywood, genders France as “[i]n the American mind, the conception of France typically includes the best womanly qualities of its female citizens. It is considered a land of beauty, refinement, culture, art, elegance and style” (Rosenthal 898).

With this feminine association comes the depiction of the French as sophisticated and artistic. For instance, Disney’s *Aristocats* (1970) focuses on the kitten’s education in music and art, while their mother, the Duchess, is characterised for her grace and beauty. Another common stereotype about the French is their rudeness, arrogance and vanity. This can be seen in shows like *Emily in Paris* (2020) or films like *National Lampoon’s European Vacation* (1985), *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and *French Kiss* (1995) where the American encounters French characters who are not very welcoming or who are “haughty and mocking, when they

are downright not dishonest” (442). This is also reflected in their attitude towards non-native speakers of French indirectly portraying them as feeling superior to others, while French characters are often ridiculed for their French accent (443).

1.9 Previous Research on *Outlander*

Existing literature on *Outlander* mainly pertains to gender studies. Numerous studies have researched the transitioning representation of gender and sex in contemporary films with *Outlander* as their case study. It frequently touches upon the use of the female gaze (Goodman & Mosely; Phillips; Frankel “Scots Sassenachs”). For instance, Bellas analysed the female gaze through cinematography, arguing that tracing Jamie’s naked body establishes an aesthetic in “which the ‘trace connection’ or ‘connective tissue’ between the screen body and spectatorial body [...] becomes a potential site for female pleasure and erotic agency” (508). Similarly, Pinedo explores the depiction of female sexual pleasure and the “eroticised female gaze” (73) to question conventional representation, such as illustrating the “physical and psychological abuse [...] and the long-term damage it wreaks” (86) through a male victim rather than a woman.

Additional studies have been conducted on the genre (McAlister; Frankel “Short Stories”) and the perception of time and space (Potter). However, no research has been conducted on the representation of cultures within *Outlander*. Potočnik-Topler and Špenko’s article on *Outlander* and film tourism (see also McGucken), meaning how the setting of a TV show can increase tourism for that specific place, comes closest to discussing the representation of Scotland. They consider this type of representation based on historical facts and not how it is represented from an imagological perspective as well as leaving out the other cultures shown in *Outlander*.

1.10 Academic Relevance

Through my research on the representation of culture in *Outlander*, I aim to provide new insights and contribute to the field of imagology, particularly to imagology in film. By examining how both historical and contemporary ethnotypes are incorporated into a genre that often depicts historical settings, and how this influences modern perceptions of these cultures, I seek to investigate the impact of genre on cultural representation. By doing so, my research will contribute to the study of historical fiction, particularly historical drama, by taking a different interdisciplinary approach that merges imagology with this field.

Chapter 2 Method

In this chapter, I will discuss the method that I adopted in this research.

2.1 Qualitative Research

In this thesis, I undertake research in a field that is inherently subjective and challenging to quantify. Therefore, qualitative research is appropriate, involving a “language-based analysis” (Dörnyei 243), which relies on words rather than numbers to analyse and present findings (25). Additionally, qualitative research is iterative, with the researcher alternating between data collection, analysis, and interpretation of results (243).

2.2 Materials

I have chosen to focus my analysis on the first and second seasons of *Outlander* due to the commonality between them. Both seasons centre on European cultures, thereby presenting a hetero image of another continent while also having similar themes and topics as they both depict the events leading up to the battle of Culloden. Finally, the characters within the series are a part of or fully immersed in the culture, allowing a more extensive image of cultural representation compared to the other cultures that play a smaller part and are more in the background. More information on the two seasons is displayed in the table below along with the official posters for each season.



Fig 1. Poster season one



Fig 2. Poster season two

Table 1

Information on the Seasons

Season	Episodes	Duration	Setting	Release Date
1	16	15h 19 min.	Scottish Highlands	9 August 2014
				4 April 2015
2	13	12h 2 min	Paris & Versailles (7 ep.)	9 April 2016
			Scottish Highlands (6 ep.)	

2.3 Procedure

In this study, I used the inductive approach described in Dörnyei. This means that I started by watching the first two seasons with a specific focus on phrases and behaviours that characterise the relevant cultures. It helped to discern the relevant material needed for my research. I followed this step by researching relevant theories and previous ethnotypes (see Literature Review). After, I coded the data into common themes for each culture. These themes included social roles, beliefs/religion, values, attitudes, and perceptions of others besides the culture-specific themes of clan (Scottish) and sex/affairs (French). Based on this and the theory, I decided to divide the analysis into covert and overt characteristics. It required me to revisit both seasons to skim for overt characteristics like physical appearance, setting and

language/accent. However, as it provided me with a comprehensive understanding of which elements contribute to the representation of each specific stereotype, I chose to restructure my analysis based on stereotypes.

Chapter 3 Analysis

In this chapter, I discuss how certain Scottish and French ethnotypes are represented in *Outlander* and the influence of genre on perpetuating stereotypes.

3.1 Scotland

3.1.1 Tartanry

Outlander evokes Tartanry, the stereotypical depiction of Scots based on signifiers such as tartan, kilts, and bagpipes (Petrie 3), through visual and auditory elements such as clothing and language. At the same time, these aspects are utilised to offer a deeper understanding of their cultural dynamics thereby challenging the stereotype. Appearance can convey significant aspects of their cultural identity and serve as a visual cue to indicate their belonging to a particular culture (Degler 295). *Outlander* does so through clothing. The male Scottish characters wear traditional Highland dress, the typical signals of Tartanry, which includes a kilt, a Tam O'Shanter, and plaid. (Figure 3; "Both Sides Now" 23:46). Interestingly, this type of dress is worn at all times by all the male Scottish characters, except for one character: Ned Gowan, who appears only in episodes three and eleven. He wears the plaid, but no kilt thereby depicting his allegiance with the clan while also retaining his identity as a Lowlander. As he is a side character with limited screen time, little to no exposure to Scottish characters from other regions with different attire, typical of Tartanry (Martin-Jones 5), is shown, meaning the audience perceives a predominantly stereotypical image portraying all Scots wearing Highlander clothing, particularly kilts. The only alternative dress showcased to the audience is from another culture, namely, the redcoats worn by British soldiers.

Simultaneously, *Outlander* endeavours to present a more nuanced portrayal of Highlander dress by depicting how it is worn by Scots native to the Highlands. More specifically, the show illustrates the organisational system governing their attire, particularly

regarding the tartan pattern. It does so by contrasting the perception of the English Redcoats with scenes that illustrate the meaning behind it. When Claire and Dougal accompany the Redcoats to an Inn at Brockton, a brigadier voices the stereotypical image of the Highlander dress. He calls Dougal's kilt a "woollen skirt" ("The Garrison Commander 08:13) and "thing" (08:17) while saying that it fits with his title as a war chief. He also alludes to the widespread myth that Scots wear no underwear under their kilt by stating "I'm told it's a grave insult to ask a clansman what he wears underneath that thing... [...] So tell me, from one laird to another ..." (08:15–08:26), but upon Dougal's refusal to answer, he concludes that "the kilt will remain an enigma" (08:50). However, this oversimplified depiction is nuanced by demonstrating how characters like Ned Gowan and Jamie wear the MacKenzie plaid, signifying their affiliation with the MacKenzie Clan. He does so to conceal his identity as a Fraser from the English. Upon marrying Claire, the audience learns that his true surname is Fraser and wears the Fraser plaid instead. It demonstrates that tartan patterns aren't arbitrary; instead, they vary based on clan membership, with distinct colours and designs representing each clan. It is also illustrated in the way Claire and the other Scottish women dress. Their dresses have the Mackenzie tartan somehow incorporated into the skirt or the plaid, while Claire's dress includes some type of tartan pattern that does not resemble Mackenzie or Fraser. She only wears the Mackenzie tartan when she is formally introduced as their guest and thus part of the clan thereby signalling her affiliation.



Fig. 3. Still from "Rent" (40:55)

Gaelic is also central to the image of Tartanry (Hagemann 152), which presents it as an alterity or as something quaint or exotic whereas *Outlander* uses it as a tool to assert national identity (Hermann 350). The Scottish characters use Gaelic on three different occasions: during official ceremonies or occasions, during heartfelt moments and to exclude outsiders like Claire from their conversations. While Gaelic is a language not widely spoken or understood today, the audience is occasionally provided with a translation. For instance, Colum MacKenzie, the laird of clan MacKenzie gives a speech in Gaelic before the clan officially pledges loyalty to him, which is then translated by Murtagh for Claire to understand (“The Gathering” 17:26–18:46). Similarly, part of Jamie and Claire’s wedding vows are also spoken in Gaelic (“The Wedding” 39:38–40:07), which are later translated by Jamie to Claire after she asks him about it. It is thus always translated by characters whose native language is Gaelic. By doing so, instead of letting Claire try to decipher it herself thereby resulting in misunderstandings or Othering the language and the people who speak it, *Outlander* depicts it in a way that lends seriousness to the language and its cultural significance. This is also achieved by allowing the characters to engage in complete conversations in Gaelic, rather than inserting random words to make the character seem more interesting or exotic. However, during heartfelt moments, like when Jamie asks Murtagh to put an end to his suffering after enduring trauma from being raped by Black Jack Randall (“To Ransom a Man’s Soul” 27:16–28:19), no subtitles or translation is offered. Likewise, when Claire travels with the clan, they talk around the campfire in Gaelic to exclude Claire as she is still considered a ‘sassenach’, meaning ‘outsider’ or ‘an English person’. In all these instances, the absence of a translation or allowing Claire to ask for one position her as the audience surrogate, both entitled to the same information and part of the out-group. The Gaelic language thus forms a way for the Scottish characters to create an in-group with people from the same cultural background thereby reinforcing their national identity.

3.1.2 The Warrior

In both the present and throughout the past, Scots have been stereotyped based on their warfare (Pittock 232-34), which is illustrated through various aspects such as the plot, appearance, social roles and music. The image that has been created of the Scots characterises them as “brave, soldierly and valorous” (Pittock 232) as well as attributing them with characteristics that are associated with this image. These include “wild [...] brutal and vengeful” (231), “priapic” (232), “violent” (232) and “claymore-wielding” (232). Firstly, all male Scottish characters have similar appearances, either having long hair or a full beard, with most of them having both (Image 1). It portrays the stereotypical appearance commonly associated with the 'wild' masculine warrior, which contrasts with the Redcoats who are all cleanly shaven and have their hair neatly tied. It also evokes the stereotypes of civilised (English) and uncivilised (Scottish). This image is further reinforced by the emphasis on Jamie’s height, being called of “muckle size” (“The Wedding” 24:38), while also showing all the characters wearing swords and weapons at all times, including the hidden Sgian-dubh, a single-edged knife worn in traditional Highlander dress.

Notably, as depicted in image one, Jamie (the second-facing character from the left) is the only Highlander without a beard, with shorter hair, and who does not wear a Tam O’Shanter, a traditional Scottish bonnet, when travelling while all the others do. His appearance, as the main character, thus sets him apart from the other side characters, giving him a more civilised look that bears a closer resemblance to the appearance of the Redcoats. By omitting the Tam O’Shanter, Jamie’s distinctive red hair can be displayed, a vital feature that characterises him and is emphasised throughout the show, unlike any of the other characters’ hair colours. For example, Jamie is called Red Jamie by the English when he becomes a fugitive, referring to his hair colour. It is also frequently mentioned by characters like Murtagh and Claire. Giving Jamie this hair colour reinforces another stereotype, arguably

the most prominent modern stereotype of the Scottish (and Irish), of being red-haired. Though not all Scottish characters have red hair, Jamie's hair is consistently accentuated and highlighted, ensuring that it becomes a memorable trait to the audience. Since little else about his appearance, aside from his height, is emphasised, these characteristics serve as a synecdoche for the rest of the Scots, thereby reinforcing the stereotype.

The ethnotype of Scots as warriors is not solely defined by their appearance but also by their social roles, wherein masculinity plays a significant role. This perception encompasses the notion that Scots are "priapic" (Pittock 232), suggesting a great concern for their masculinity and male sexuality. *Outlander* depicts this through gender roles where the men are engaged in traditionally masculine duties such as fighting, providing, protection and politics. The women, on the other hand, take up feminine tasks such as gathering food, mending clothes or looking after the children. The men's preoccupation with asserting their masculinity is evident in their discussions about women, often revolving around sex and attempting to establish their virility through such conversations. For example, Angus, Dougal, and Rupert frequently entertain their fellow clansmen with jokes or stories centred on sex and women during their drinking sessions, reinforcing a modern stereotype that Scottish people are heavy drinkers. One such example is Angus telling the others about how he was "slipping her the wee man all night long and she was ganting for it. Ganting! I gave the lassie such a seeing-to. She'll be walking bow-legged for months" ("Rent" 27:33). Similarly, whenever they try to insult another man, it is often related to sex and women. As this example illustrates, among many others, it is often a means for them to showcase and assert their masculinity in front of other men by emphasising their sexual talents. Interestingly, before Jamie consummates his marriage with Claire, the other provide him with advice that suggests that women do not care for sex and do not derive the same pleasure from it, a notion contradicted by Jamie and Claire's love

life. It shows how these men exaggerate their performances by saying that she was “ganting” (27:33) and that Jamie is the only man who can actually please a woman.

Jamie and Claire’s relationship illustrates how traditionally men assert their masculinity by dominating their wives’ behaviour through physical aggression, while also challenging this stereotype of the Scots. After being rescued from Randall’s captivity, Jamie expects Claire to apologise for not obeying his order to stay put, sparking an argument about their gender roles. Jamie states, “ye won’t listen to me, why mind me, I am not but yer husband” (“The Reckoning” 14:57), implying that a wife should be submissive. In response, Claire challenges this notion by remarking that he also does not listen to her as women are “only fit to do as they’re told and obey orders” (15:18), and questioning, “[y]ou think I’m your property, don’t you? You think I belong to you” (16:08). These highlights the belief in the subordination of the wife, which is reinforced by Jamie asserting that “[he] is [her] husband. [She] mustn’t embarrass [him] in front of [his] family and servants” (“Lallybroch” 15:58), emphasising the expectation for her to not publicly undermine his authority as his Lady. Whenever their behaviour could not be dominated, the husband or father was responsible for reprimanding them as illustrated by Jamie’s flogging of Claire to make her comprehend that disobedience could have life-or-death consequences in their time and place. It has been the “tradition, custom and ritual” (“The Reckoning” 48:24) that the Highlands are steeped. A tradition Jamie learned from his father, and he, in turn, from his father and so forth. This evokes the Kailyard stereotype of the Scots as being “sentimental [and] backward-looking” (Richards 191), emphasising traditional values and customs. However, Jamie challenges this stereotype, and that of the stoic warrior, by realising that a traditional marriage does not work for them due to Claire’s 20th-century background. He pledges his “fealty [...] [and] loyalty” (“The Reckoning” 48:55) to Claire, swearing to never hit her again. By making this gesture, Jamie breaks with tradition, sets his masculinity aside and reveals a more vulnerable side of himself, demonstrating

sensitivity and emotional intelligence. Jamie's departure from the stereotypical image, as the sole main character, contrasts sharply with the other side and main characters, who all embody the stereotypes, thereby reinforcing this image. His non-conformity to the stereotypes is an exception that creates a more appealing image to the audience. It aligns him closer to 21st-century standards while also being a plot point that strengthens Claire and Jamie's relationship, rather than deliberately challenging the stereotype. It makes it fit within the romance "genre [that] has always placed value on the happiness of women and the opportunities for freedom and fulfilment offered them in terms of [...] romantic love" (Kamblé et al. 5).

The stereotype of the warrior is not only visually and behaviourally reinforced, but audible tactics are also used to connect the image of fighting with the Scottish culture. *Outlander* mainly uses instrumental music based on "Scottish instrumentation and folk music" (McCreary), with instruments such as the fiddle and bagpipes. The latter's strong connections to the Scottish culture, which is signified by being one of the icons associated with Tartanry. It is usually in the background. However, during fighting scenes like the barfight and the battle of Prestonpans in season two, the bagpipes and drums are brought to the foreground with no other sounds other than screaming, swords clashing or gunshots. As Kathryn Kalinak argues, music can call "attention to elements on screen" (1) as well as that musical conventions can elicit certain associations with specific contexts or emotions (14). This suggests that when drums are played, the idea of warfare is emphasised. By incorporating the bagpipes alongside, which draws upon viewers' associations with Scottish culture, these two associations become intertwined, further reinforced by the visual representation on the screen of Scottish male characters engaging in combat.

3.1.3 Kailyard

The stereotypical image of the Scots as brave, primitive and savage-very while also living on the periphery of European civilisation (Pittock 231; Goodman and Mosely 57), akin to the image associated with Kailyard (Richards 191), is depicted in *Outlander* through the setting, their religion and the perceptions of the English. As with the Tartanry stereotype, the Redcoats are employed to voice the existing ethnotypes by calling Scots “creature[s]”, “ill-mannered people”, “savages”, “barbarian”, “a fine specimen” and “aggressors who wantonly shed English blood” (“The Garrison Commander” 05:07–09:56). They are also called uncivilised, with the Redcoats expressing a desire to return to “more civilized environs” (07:44) and suggesting to Claire that her time in Scotland has “muddled [her] proper English thinking” (17:45). Later Randall also describes the Scottish as a “squalid, ignorant people prone to the basest superstition and violence” (42:56). These hetero-images Others the Scottish by suggesting that they exist outside of civilization, with their own distinct social system, reinforcing the perception of them as primitive. This perception is reflected in the show's setting in the Scottish Highlands, which establishes the groundwork for a narrative in which the landscape and nature hold significance for the characters and the plot. The setting is initially established by inserting short clips of the Scottish landscape (Figure 4 and 5), which serve to “frame the story and define the historic and cultural context” (Helphand 3) of the TV show. This is illustrated in the contrasting lifestyles of the Scottish characters compared to the English. Castle Leoch (Figure 6) and Lallybroch (Figure 7) show a more rustic lodging, situated in remote and picturesque landscapes whereas the English lodgings (Figure 8) radiate more luxury. Since the Highlanders are surrounded by nature, numerous scenes take place in nature, such as camping overnight when travelling. The remainder of the scenes portray the daily routines of castle life, collectively contributing to the depiction of clan members' lives. It shows rural life with scenes of (livestock) farming (Figure 9). For instance, one scene depicts clan

Mackenzie going hunting for food, as a leisure activity. In contrast, such scenes involving the English are never shown, even if the character says, “I hope venison is to your liking [...] I shot the beast myself” (“The Garrison Commander” 05:51). By selecting to portray the Scottish in this manner compared to the English brings forth an image that they are much more attuned to nature. Jamie confirms this image in season two when he describes the Scots as “a people of the land, a simple people with no great love for outsiders” (“Not in Scotland Anymore” 22:42). Goodman and Mosely note that this close connection between landscape, nature and the characters is also represented through the colours of the costumes, shades that match the colour of the nature surrounding them (60-61).



Fig. 4. Still from “Sassenach” (00:14)



Fig. 5. Still from “Rent” (07:57)



Fig 6. Still from “Castle Leoch” (25:24)

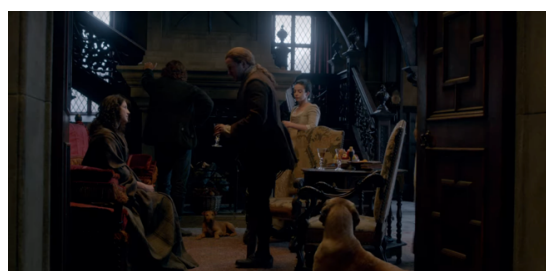


Fig. 7. Still from “Lallybroch” (09:45)



Fig 8. Still from “The Garrison Commander” (08:46)



Fig 9. Still from “Castle Leoch” (03:00)

The setting also allows for the magic realism, in line with contemporary depictions of Scotland, that is incorporated into the storyline, with the Highlands being described by Frank, Claire’s husband from the 20th century, as “no place on earth with more magic and superstition mixed into its daily life” (“Sassenach” 06:45). It not only primes the audience for a suspension of disbelief when Claire time travels through stones but, more importantly, establishes the prevalent image of the Scottish as being superstitious. This impression is featured in various scenes like when Laoghaire places an ill-wish under Jamie and Claire’s bed in a jealous attempt to bring them misfortune or death (“The Reckoning” 57:46). Additionally, there’s a scene where Rupert recounts a tale about a waterhorse persuading a builder to construct a chimney underwater for the human wife he stole (“Both Sides Now” 15:45–17:22) or another scene where Claire is asked to drink from “the liar’s spring” (“The Garrison Commander” 51:29) by Dougal to uncover if she is lying. Furthermore, the folklore surrounding fairies is also explored through a changeling. Upon leaving a human child, often sick, on the fairy hill, the fairies will steal them and “leave one of their own in its place. You know it’s a changeling because it doesn’t thrive and grow. [...] if ye leave a changeling out overnight in such a place, the wee folk will come and take it back and return the child they’ve stolen” (“By the Pricking of my Thumbs” 19:17). While nearly all of the characters believe in these superstitions, Jamie stands out as the exception. Due to his education, he does not believe in the superstitions of “childhood stories of fairies, devils, waterhorses in lochs” (“The Way Out” 44:50). He explains to Claire

that these people hold such superstitions because they are only familiar with the world as presented by their priest in church. It evokes the stereotypical image of the Kailyard as being “parochial [...] small scale [and] deeply religious” (Richards 191). The setting in the Scottish Highlands, being on the periphery of the European continent, thus becomes depicted as having a peripheral culture based on what European civilisation entails. It matches with the common representation of peripheries as “uncouth, static, passive, and backward” (Leerssen “Centre/Periphery” 280) as well as “bound up in timeless traditions” (280), which is illustrated by the primitive lifestyle of the Scottish characters and their deeply ingrained superstitious beliefs. It also reflects the cinematic depiction of Scotland as “a space in which remoteness and isolation are enhanced by its detachment from the mainland” (Petrie 35) evoking a “romantic mythicism” (35).

3.1.4 Kin, Clan and Honour

An enduring ethnotype about the Scottish revolves around their obsession with “kin, clan, and honour” (Pittack 231), with the notion of clan persisting to be part of the contemporary image of the Scottish. *Outlander* depicts this as the governing values that shape the behaviours of the Scottish characters, which forms a leeway into additionally representing modern Scottish stereotypes, such as drinking habits, being belligerent and being patriotic. The clan system is presented through four intertwining values: honour, loyalty, familial bonds and protection. Honour is often tied to loyalty to the clan by upholding and defending them as well as their family and kin. The significance that these bonds hold for the clan members is illustrated through their behaviour, as almost all of it can be traced back to honour and clan. For instance, Jamie regularly vows to Claire to protect her at all costs, especially after they are married. On their wedding night, Jamie tells her: “[y]ou have my name. my clan, my family. And, if necessary, the protection of my body as well” (“The Wedding” 09:11). This is further

demonstrated by his behaviour when he rescues Claire from Randall at Fort William, despite having a price on his head. Additionally, he submits himself and his body to Randall in exchange for Claire's freedom. Similarly, Jamie takes a flogging and is prepared to die to protect the honour of Laoghaire Mackenzie (“Castle Leoch” 44:53–50:17) and his sister Jenny (9:19–12:12). This behaviour displays his strong sense of honour in protecting his kin as both a man and a husband, aligning with the image of the stereotypical warrior.

This type of behaviour is also reflected in the other clansmen when they defend Claire’s honour after other men call her a whore. They start a fight since she is a “guest of the Mackenzie. [They] can insult [her], but God help any other man that does” (“Rent” 49:30). Protection thus not only applies to kin but also to their guests. Claire, on the other hand, suggests that their love of fighting rather than their sense of honour is driving them (“any excuse for a fight” (49:11)). Here Claire embodies the modern stereotype towards the Scots as being pugnacious. While there are other instances where the clan members are very easily provoked into violence, this instance illustrates how it is not just for fun but rather stems from their values. It is also one of many scenes that depicts the drinking culture, where they drink whiskey or ale and get drunk together. Additional instances of this stereotype include Angus being characterised as being “in his cups more than out of them” (“Castle Leoch” 38:52), or when Jenny mentions that her son will “come into the world as a true Scot” (“The Watch” 25:31) if he is born drunk. It stereotypes the Scottish for excessively drinking. The gathering at Castle Leoch also serves as an important scene that depicts this drinking culture as well as the values that govern the clan and their behaviour. In this gathering, all the Mackenzies come together for festivities and a ceremony where they formally pledge their loyalty and allegiance to their leader by saying that they “swear, by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the holy iron that I hold” (“The Gathering 19:10) to give their fealty and loyalty to “the name of clan Mackenzie. And if ever I shall raise my hand against ye in rebellion, I ask that this holy iron

shall pierce my heart” (19:10). The ritual is based upon promise, thereby highlighting that it is the most important form of agreement and commitment that stands above the law for them.

While these examples illustrate loyalty and honour concerning their familial bonds, it is not limited to this as it also extends to their country. One of the most important plot themes is the Jacobite rebellion. After Claire discovers that they are raising money for the Jacobite rebellion, she describes them as “proud, passionate men who lived and breathed for the flag of blue and white” (“Rent” 39:03). Dougal confirms to hetero-image when he says “I do love my reflection. But make no mistake, lass. I love Scotland more. And I would give everything, everything I have or ever will have, including my life to see a Stuart back on the throne” (“Je Suis Prest” 25:34) and that “to restore the rightful king to the throne [...] is a cause more important than any clan or man” (“The Reckoning” 32:32). True Scots, they believe, are willing to die and fight for their country, which stereotypically depicts them as being patriotic, especially with hatred towards the English. The plot necessitates this stereotype, evident in every interaction between the Scottish and English filled with mutual animosity. For instance, when an Englishman, unknowingly a Redcoat, inquires if Claire needs assistance, Angus responds hostilely by saying “Aye, you’ll keep your nose out of our business” (“Rent” 18:19) and to “bugger off. Or maybe your lugs need cleaning out [...] go home, laddie, and suckle on your ma’s tit, eh?” (18:27). However, framing the plot around the Battle of Culloden adds nuance to this stereotype, revealing the origin of this nationalistic perspective through the complex history between the English and Scottish.

The portrayal of the Scots through Tartanry and Kailyard as masculine warriors that excessively drink and value their clan and honour above all else is thus a combination of past and modern ethnotypes. The ethnotypes of the French will be similarly explored, occasionally in contrast to the Scottish representation, in the second part of this chapter.

3.2 France

3.2.1 Fashion, Elegance and the Superficial

Up to the 21st century, some prominent stereotypes of the French are based on perceived feminine traits, including their fashion sense, refined taste, and elegance. When portrayed negatively, these characteristics can lead to depictions of the French as frivolous, superficial and vain. *Outlander* reflects these stereotypes through the costumes, values and the setting. The importance of fashion for the French and their refined taste is reflected in their dress. Once Jamie and Claire arrive in France, they adapt their dress from the Highlands to the more luxurious fabrics such as silk and satin to blend in with the rest of the French nobility. These costumes, characterised by 18th-century fashion trends such as wide skirts and dresses adorned with embroidery, lacework, and intricate details (Figure 10), radiate opulence and luxury that reinforces the stereotype of the French as elegant and well-dressed (Florack 155). The significant increase in the costume collection for each character suggests that attire holds greater significance for these characters, contributing to their stereotypical characterisation as being deeply associated with fashion and style. However, while the main and side characters wear these luxurious costumes, a marker of their social standing and the circles that they move in, the lower classes, represented through extras, wear clothes that resemble 18th-century peasantry clothing. This contrast adds complexity to the image typically associated with the French as being synonymous with high fashion and elegance.



Fig. 10. Still from “La Dame Blanche” (42:42)

It is the appearance of the French men, who are cleanly shaven, wear tailored coats and wigs (Figure 10), that first gives grounds for the stereotype of the French as vain and superficial. It leads Murtagh to call them “a bunch of French fops” (“Not in Scotland Anymore” 35:43) based on his ethnocentric view. The stereotype is further established through the value that the French attach to their appearance as illustrated by Monsieur Duverney, the Minister of Finance for King Louis XV as well as Marie Louise de La Tour d’Auvergne. After Duverney is pushed into the water by Jamie for groping Claire thereby leaving his wig ruined, he can be seen replacing it before conversing with the King. Rather than leaving it off, he chooses to adhere to fashion etiquette even if it makes him look absurd. In the same vein, Claire describes the French women of the upper class as “tend[ing] towards the superficial and the frivolous on the surface” (“Not in Scotland Anymore” 27:34). This description is strengthened by the way these women are depicted. Marie Louise’s introduction in *Outlander* shows her getting her body waxed and telling her cousin that she should too since “her legs are hairier than Colette’s [her pet monkey] and no Frenchman will suffer to bed a monkey” (30:32). She also tells her that “[i]n Paris, a hairless mount is de rigeur and the men find it absolutely irresistible” (31:26) while cursing and slapping the aesthetician. As a result, these scenes depict the French stereotypically as overly concerned with their appearance and ridicule this attachment. The significance of beauty to the French is also underscored by Fergus who compliments Claire on her breasts upon their initial meeting because Suzette and “the ladies at Maison Elise were always very... very generous when [he gave] them compliments” (“Useful Occupations and Deception” 41:13). Conversely, Claire does not feel flattered which suggests a cultural difference in values with the French attaching value to compliments on appearance. It makes them come across as superficial and vain which reinforces the existing ethnotypes.

The way these women are portrayed whenever they spend their time together, such as during teatime, dinners or salons, also contributes to the depiction of the stereotype as being

superficial. These gatherings and conversations often involve gossip, primarily focusing on people's sexual affairs. For instance, when Claire attends a ball at Versailles the women gossip about the men present saying “[t]hat’s monsieur Tourtine, better known as L’Andouille. Because he is proven unable to keep that appendage in his britches whenever a pretty damsel within reach” (“Not in Scotland Anymore” 43:52). Other instances include gossiping about scandalous topics such as how “the Baron could not rise to the occasion. His mistress reigned entry with every thrust. With the Baroness looking like a well-groomed hippopotamus...it’s a wonder her husband comes home at all” (Best Laid Schemes” 31:36) or that “he’s sleeping with the maid. Yes, but she sleeps with the cook. The one with the big mouth and the small eyes” (33:45). These conversations portray them as shallow, focusing solely on gossip rather than engaging with intellectual topics like the treatment of the poor and underprivileged. After Claire addresses this issue, instead of actively wanting change like her, they choose ignorance by saying “Madame Fraser, you are so right. We should do something about these people. It is far too upsetting. [...] the gendarmes should remove them to the less desirable parts of the city” (34:45) and immediately revert to their previous conversation about the cook. The contrast between them and Claire highlights their superficiality as they are only concerned with gossiping about passionate affairs and sex. It also starkly contrasts with the portrayal of women in Scotland, who are often depicted working in kitchens or caring for children. Unlike French women, who frequently gather to gossip and worry about their appearance, the only gathering shown among Scottish women is when they are waulking wool together (“Rent” 13:21) and discuss topics that hold significance to them such as fairies and the challenges of balancing rent payments with providing for their families.

The stereotypical French elegance is also portrayed through the setting and language. The atmosphere at Versailles, where Jamie and Claire often find themselves attending balls and playing chess, radiates lavishness, extravagance and grandeur (Figures 11 and 12). This is

similarly reflected in Marie Louise’s and Claire and Jamie’s house. Moreover, despite only a two-year gap between season one Scotland and season two France, a sharp opposition is also seen between the simple interior and way of living in Scotland and the lavish houses and dinners in France. The juxtaposition reinforces stereotypes associated with each culture (i.e. Scotland as primitive and France as elegant and having refined taste). L’Hospital des Anges, however, offers an alternative view to this stereotype by being located in a church with a simple interior that reflects the struggles and circumstances of the lower classes. It thus shows how not all French people live such lavish lives. However, the scenes shot in this setting barely showcase the interior in comparison to the other scenes where a long shot captures the interior of the room (see Figure 13). This focus allows for more emphasis on the stereotypical image of the French.



Fig. 11. Still from “Untimely Resurrection” (27:51)



Fig. 12. Still from “La Dame Blanche” (04:02)



Fig. 13. Still from “Not in Scotland Anymore” (38:13)

3.2.2 Sexual Liberty

Outlander employs various methods to perpetuate the most prevalent stereotype about the French about romance and sexual liberty, especially in French women. It does so through French female characters, starting with their costumes. These have a more form-fitting and revealing silhouette (Figures 14 and 15) to accentuate the female form compared to those worn in the Highlands (Figures 16 and 17). This is especially evident in Claire's famous extra low-cut red dress that sparks Jamie to tell her that he "can see every inch of [her], right down to [her] third rib. [...] Christ. I can see down to your navel" ("Not in Scotland Anymore" 36:17) while Marie Louise describes it as "a dress fit for a queen" (31:05). While Jamie finds the revealing, accentuating fit inappropriate, Marie Louise's response suggests that it is appropriate for royalty to wear. The contrast in reaction shows that Jamie's attitude leans towards conservatism while Marie Louise's is more liberal, thereby stereotypically depicting the acceptability of a French woman to display "herself with the aid of fashion" (Florack 157). While Claire's dress is only slightly more revealing, French female characters show more nudity. The portrayal of nudity often leans towards sexualisation, unlike Scottish women, for whom nudity is only depicted when breastfeeding or when forcibly unclothed by Redcoats. For instance, Marie Louise's character is first introduced wearing a robe that only covers her arms but not her naked body (Figure 18) and King Louis XV's mistress wears a dress that exposes and accentuates her breasts (Figure 19). Moreover, sexual liberty is illustrated through the different attitudes towards nudity by the French and English culture. When Mary Hawkins, Marie Louise's English cousin, expresses that she is "as a good as naked" (28:51) while wearing a nightgown that fully covers her body, Marie Louise calls her an "ignorant child" (28:53) saying "must I drop my robe and show you wanted naked means" (28:54). It portrays the French female as having a more progressive attitude towards nudity by suggesting that Mary is more conservative, lacking an understanding or being naive about its implications.

Additionally, the stereotypical French sexual liberty is reflected in Mary's perception of the French regarding intercourse. She expresses her reluctance to marry a Frenchman, believing that only Frenchmen engage in sexual relations with their wives whereas “[a]n Englishman, or even a Scot... [...] [would] never dream of forcing his wife to endure something like that” (“Useful Occupations and Deception” 06:59). She believes that “men don’t do things like that where [she] comes from” (07:25), which is mocked by Marie Louise when she laughingly responds “[a]nd where is that? The moon” (07:31). This example illustrates how sex might be more openly discussed in France compared to England, thus creating a stereotypical image of the French in other cultures regarding this topic.



Fig. 14. Still from “La Dame Blanche” (15:30)



Fig. 15. Still from “Untimely Resurrection” (32:22)



Fig. 16. Still from “Rent” (13:49)



Fig. 17. Still from “Lallybroch” (15:42)



Fig. 18. Still from “Not in Scotland Anymore” (28:10)



Fig. 19. Still from “Not in Scotland Anymore” (50:04)

The setting also perpetuates the ethnotype of the French as sexually liberal. The third most used setting, following Jamie and Claire’s mansion and L’Hospital des Anges, is a Parisian brothel. It is the preferred meeting place for Charles Stuart and Jamie to discuss the politics surrounding the Battle of Culloden. While there has never been mention of a brothel or its use as a setting in Scotland, the decision to include it in France greatly enhances the stereotypical representation of the French regarding sex. The setting also shows the commonality of having affairs among the French. For instance, the first scene in the brothel opens with a theatrical performance that addresses its clients as “gentlemen of noble birth and noble distinction...tonight...for your entertainment...and edification, I present you with... your wives” (“Not in Scotland Anymore” 17:17). It leads to scared gasps by the men, followed by the actresses playing their wives calling them “naughty” (17:55) and pretending to be angry, “lonely, unhappy” (18:17) and frustrated. It can supposedly be resolved by dildos, which should be taken as “gifts...from the husbands...[that] you need never miss ever again” (18:46) hence highlighting how these men frequent brothels unbeknownst to their wives. Their absence leads their wives to miss them (18:17), an issue that the dildos can resolve, while also enabling them to continue their visits to the brothel. It openly acknowledges and jokes about infidelity and sexuality, aligning with the stereotype of French as having a more liberal attitude or even indulgence towards extramarital affairs. Charles Stuart confirms this image by admiring that the French are “so wonderfully vulgar” (18:37) as “they never allow their exquisite manners to

interfere with their bases instinct” (18:39). From a Scottish perspective, expressed by Murtagh and Jamie, it makes them seem “a sorry bunch of sodomites that cannot please their women” (19:20) who “find unique ways to enjoy themselves” (18:44). This ethnocentric view reflects the Scottish ethnotype concerning the preoccupation with their masculinity that is partially asserted through the capability to please a woman.

Most French characters also reflect the stereotype of being sexually liberal by engaging in affairs. For instance, the conversation topic between the French women and Claire always revolves around the latest gossip on anything related to sex, as demonstrated in the preceding section. It reinforces the stereotype of the French's love for passionate affairs (Florack 154) by illustrating the commonality of engaging in affairs among the French nobility, as well as their love for discussing such matters with each other. Notably, the only French characters whose love life is disclosed happen to engage in affairs themselves, namely, Master Duverney and Marie Louise. This focus insinuates that all French people engage in affairs. Duverney, for example, mistakes Claire's interest in talking to him as being “desirous of the company of monsieur Joseph Duverney” (“Not in Scotland Anymore” 46:49), thereby starting to kiss her fervently and saying things like “come to me, my little mouse. Let me hear you squeak!” (47:33). Expressions like this, combined with his behaviour, contribute to a portrayal that ridicules this stereotype of the French. After realising the truth, Duverney apologises and explains that “if [his] wife caught [him] attempting to make love to yet another woman” (48:32), he would be dead. Marie Louise, on the other hand, has an affair with Charles Stuart. As shown by Monsieur Duverney's wife and the conversation between Claire and Marie Louise about her pregnancy with Charles' child, engaging in an extramarital affair is common, but generally not approved of. To illustrate, Marie Louise tells Claire that “[i]t is one thing to enjoy affair de Coeur, but if Jules [her husband] learns of the baby he will have our marriage annulled. He could even have me arrested for adultery or even worse, banish me to a convent” (“La Dame

Blanche” 17:33). Master Raymond’s statement further strengthens this image that usually “the maid buys a preventative [birth control] for her lady so the lady can maintain the pretense of fidelity” (“Useful Occupations and Deceptions” 19:21). It indicates that women often engage in affairs and have ‘loose’ behaviour (Humbert 82).

The stereotype of the French being romantic is also touched upon through Jamie’s old friend Annalise de Marrillac’s character. After learning about Jamie and Claire’s marriage, Annalise tells Claire that she has a “strong, passionate man for a husband” (“Not in Scotland Anymore” 38:53) and inquires if he fought “many duels to win [her] affection?” (39:07). This description supports the modern stereotype of the strong masculine “claymore-wielding” (Pittock 234) Scot. It also mirrors the romantic ideals held by French women, as marrying a man who fought a dual for you is considered highly romantic by both Annelise and Marie Louise. Suzette's character contributes to the romanticised image of France and French women as “seductive” (Florack 157; Humbert 82). She consistently flirts with Murtagh, seducing him into an affair. Her remark that it is “[s]o sad. How can there be love in the marriage when love leaves the bed?” (“Useful Occupation and Deception” 36:03) suggests, that, in French romanticism, love is closely linked with sexual intimacy. This portrayal further solidifies the stereotype of the French as inclined towards affairs and sensuality.

3.2.3 Arrogance and Superiority

The setting amongst the French nobility presents an opportunity to depict prevailing stereotypes about the French, such as arrogance and haughtiness. *Outlander* does this through comments on social hierarchy expressed by Comte St. Germain. For instance, Jamie first introduces Claire to St. Germain as Lady Broch Tuarach. He ridicules this by saying that “the English give out titles of nobility like pearls before swine” (“Through a Glass, Darkly” 55:08) suggesting that they are bestowed upon individuals who cannot appreciate their worth and who

are unworthy of it. His own title predisposes him to appear haughty when he critiques the English for diminishing the prestige and value associated with such titles. This haughty demeanour is reinforced when St. Germain reminds Jamie that he is of noble blood after Jamie threatens him that “[f]alse accusations can lead to dire consequences” (“Best Laid Schemes” 38:28). He uses his lineage as a retort, implying that his social standing inherently renders him superior to Jamie’s status as Laird and his threats. Interestingly, while all the French characters speak some French or have varying degrees of a French accent, St. Germain is the only character who solely speaks in French except for a few short lines. Simultaneously, he is portrayed as the most arrogant character, consistently displaying disdain towards Claire and Jamie. Additionally, he attempts to poison Claire and orchestrates an attempt to rape her, making him the French antagonist. In contrast, Master Raymond, an ally of the protagonists by healing Claire’s infection after her miscarriage consequently saving her life, has the closest pronunciation to American English. As Lippi-Green contends “[t]he decision about which actors will try to sound French, for example, is not random, but follows logically from the dominant stereotypes” (109). The French consultant of the show confirmed in an interview that deliberate choices were made regarding which characters would have a strong accent or refrain from speaking English altogether, and who would closely resemble the pronunciation of the protagonists. By making St. Germain’s character embody a well-known modern stereotype and restricting his dialogue to French only, which can also be read as being disdainful, deepens the association between the French and the stereotype of arrogance and haughtiness. Moreover, a perceived sense of superiority is also reflected in the way the French characters talk about their language. After inquiring and hearing the English slang for male genitalia, the French women comment on “how infelicitous to the ear” (“Not in Scotland Anymore” 44:31) English sounds and it is “such an unmusical language” (44:37). It reveals an arrogance and feeling of superiority of the French language over the English language.

The aristocratic setting not only facilitates the depiction of the French stereotypical arrogance but also allows for the exploration of other French stereotypes like dishonesty. The plotline in France centres around the French politics in which Claire and especially Jamie engages. It entails spending his days ‘blethering’ over chess with Duverney (“Useful Occupations and Deception” 35:22) and in a brothel with Charles Stuart. He describes this as “wheedling and flattering a man so [he] can gain his secrets and undermine his cause” (35:22). The men are thus concerned with business, politics and networking, which is done through talking and scheming rather than taking direct action, as would be custom in Scotland. Murtagh illustrates this by saying that if “[y]ou want to kill a snake, you cut off its head. And the head of this rebellion is Charles Stuart. Kill the prince, you kill the rebellion” (14:25) showing a heads-on plan to prevent the Battle of Culloden. In reality, it is done through “logic” (15:18) and flattery. This type of French politics revolves around manipulation, deception, and hidden agendas, all serving to advance individual self-interests, inducing a strong mistrust of others. It portrays the French characters’ lying about their motives as well as other matters such as their affairs. This is expressed by Murtagh who describes French politics as “[m]asquerades and games. What’s next? A rousing game of charades?” (“Best Laid Schemes” 15:52). The juxtaposition in the way politics is approached in France and Scotland serves to highlight each culture in light of their existing ethnotypes. The indirect approach through flattery aligns with the French ethnotype as flatters, albeit not effeminate while the direct approach through physical violence characterises the Scots as fighters and belligerent, thereby conforming to the warrior stereotype.

3.3. Influence of Genre

Outlander’s genre allowed for a plot set in a time and setting that formed the basis for the long history of ethnotypes of the French and Scottish culture. For the Scots, many stereotypes come

from the Highlander culture and for the French, it all stemmed from the aristocracy (Florack 156). Not only are these historical hetero-images of the time incorporated into the perception of the characters concerning the culture in question, but various stereotypical hetero-images are also evoked by the director and author of *Outlander*, creating verisimilitude when placed alongside historical facts. Authenticity is thus established through the genre's nature of including real historical events or people. For instance, the backdrop of the Battle of Culloden is a real historical event in which Scottish Highlanders fought. Similarly, Charles Stuart did visit France to gather support for the Jacobite cause and had an affair with Marie Louise. Moreover, aspects such as Highlander clothing, fighting scenes and the importance of clothing as a social marker in French court are historically accurate aspects that are included to create authenticity. While these aspects are historically true, the depiction of them also brings forth an image of these cultures that aligns with existing stereotypes such as the patriotic, strong, fierce Scot or the vain or superficial French. In doing so, stereotypical images are placed alongside historical facts thus possibly creating the impression in the audience's mind that these images are accurate characterisations.

Due to the nature of the genre, it can take liberties with the depiction of these historical events as it is more about the audience's beliefs and understanding of the past, making it seem probable to them (Lees 202). It means that the genre "can build partial images of national pasts through forgettings and selective storytelling" (Woods 9) by adding or changing details to fit the narrative of the show. *Outlander* does this through selective representation, where the story of the Jacobite war is framed predominantly through the rivalry between the Scottish and the English, thereby disregarding the rivalry with the Lowlanders who did not have the clan structure and had an image more aligned with the English. In doing so, the stereotypical image of the Scots is strengthened. Since these stem from the Highlands, and they are the only Scottish people depicted, it disregards the variety that existed. This choice for "certain individuals or

groups to represent their nation or people as a whole” (Beller 416) and “the way they choose to portray those individuals/groups is a way of implicitly or explicitly projecting certain characteristics onto the group as a whole” (416) thereby presenting an image of the ‘Scottish’ through Highlanders. Moreover, it depicts a bigger contrast between the English and the Scots, with the Scots being presented as more ‘uncivilised’ due to their different social systems and perhaps different values. Comparably, the liaison between Charles Stuart and Marie Louise leads to pregnancy, a situation historically resolved by her resuming intercourse with her husband. In the show, however, she says “I convinced him it happened on a drunken night” (“La Dame Blanche” 47:44) to avoid upsetting her lover. This portrayal romanticises the affair, depicting her loyalty to her lover, thereby reinforcing the stereotypical image of the French as romantic (Humbert 82). Additionally, it serves as a plot device to thwart the battle from happening, even though historically, this affair occurred after the battle. Besides the emergence of new stereotypes, current cultural stereotypes frequently evolve from previous perceptions of these cultures meaning that by setting a historical drama in those times, these older stereotypes become a part of the depiction of these cultures to create an ‘authentic’ image. Simultaneously, it presents the audience with an image that could match their current understanding and image of these cultures thereby reifying current national stereotypes.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to examine the representation of Scottish and French culture in the TV show *Outlander*, and to what extent it renders this portrayal through existing ethnotypes. It demonstrates that both the Scottish and French cultures were depicted using a set of stereotypes. For the Scottish culture, these included associations with Tartanry, which also intersected with the portrayal of the honourable masculine warrior stereotype. It is reflected in the season's poster that depicts Jamie dressed in his kilt, hand on sword in the Scottish Highlands, also signalling the representation of Scotland as primitive, belligerent, and patriotic. Despite its historical setting, the show also reflected modern stereotypes, such as drinking habits and the association with ginger hair. These stereotypical images were reinforced through various visual and auditory techniques, including language, setting, costumes, physical appearance and music. They were also reflected in the intrinsic aspects of the culture, including the values that motivate these characters and the prevalent social roles of the era. The plot facilitated the portrayal of Scottish culture in juxtaposition with the English culture, thereby accentuating stereotypical elements besides firmly anchoring them within the Scottish cultural context rather than presenting them as generic traits applicable to any culture. However, the depiction of the English culture also afforded *Outlander* to create a more nuanced image of some stereotypical aspects like the kilt and their belligerent temper. It achieved this by voicing stereotypical hetero-images through the English in contrast to the intricate portrayal in the show.

The representation of French culture incorporates both existing ethnotypes and contemporary stereotypes. The most notable stereotype is about sexual liberty and aspects that are associated with it like affairs and romance. It also includes the portrayal of a love for fashion and an elegancy, as is radiated from the season's poster. It can sometimes lead to negative characterisations as superficial and frivolous. Additionally, *Outlander* perpetuates the

stereotype of French arrogance and superiority, reflecting both contemporary perceptions and older ethnotypes. The auditory and visual techniques used in the Scottish representation, are similarly used to depict French stereotypes. However, instead of music, the French accent serves to link a negative stereotype with the culture represented by the audio. Characters embodying these traits speak with thicker accents than those closely aligned with the main characters. It is noteworthy that while efforts are made to develop a nuanced portrayal of Scottish stereotypes, this is much less evident in the depiction of French characters, possibly due to the distinction between side characters and main characters.

Moreover, I considered how genre impacts the portrayal of French and Scottish culture. *Outlander's* genre situates the narrative within a historical context (i.e. Scottish Highlands and French aristocracy) that has long shaped stereotypes of French and Scottish culture. It thus easily lends itself to the perpetuation of stereotypes. These ethnotypes are integrated into the characters' perceptions and behaviours, crafting an 'authentic' image that aligns with contemporary understandings of these cultures due to the accumulative relationship between old and modern stereotypes. So, while real historical events situate the plot within this time frame, stereotypical images are also evoked. The genre also permits liberties in depicting historical events to fit the narrative, providing an opportunity to frame the material in a way that reinforces stereotypes. The choice of genre and setting has meant that *Outlander* could incorporate older stereotypes into the plot to make it 'authentic', simultaneously shaping the viewer's perception of these cultures and reinforcing ethnotypes.

Despite efforts to minimise my bias by noting the cultural representation before researching ethnotypes and relying on academic sources, imagological research remains inherently subjective. The interpretations that I present are thus possibly influenced by my preconceptions. Investigating how Scottish and French audiences perceive stereotypes in *Outlander* would be one way to test my findings. Differences in screening time between both

cultures with more opportunity to explore Scottish culture compared to French may have also influenced their representation and thus the results. Moreover, this thesis does not consider the significant time gap between the novel's publication in 1991 and the TV adaptation in 2014 thereby limiting my understanding of the influence of the societal and historical context in which the material was produced. Further research could be done to assess the influence of time on the representation of these cultures by looking at differences between the novel and adaptation. Finally, a lack of research by academics on the interplay between genre, history, and national stereotypes left unanswered questions that could have impacted the representation and following interpretation. Exploring this relationship between genre and historical drama in the future would be highly beneficial. It would enhance our understanding of their interconnection and aid future researchers in studying cultural representation in similar shows or films.

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