

Stine-Mari Hovind

Sympathy for Barbarians

The Jacobite Uprising in Walter Scott's Waverley
and Robert L. Stevenson's Kidnapped

Bachelor's project in Engelsk Bachelor

Supervisor: Dr. Yuri Cowan

December 2018

Stine-Mari Hovind

Sympathy for Barbarians

The Jacobite Uprising in Walter Scott's *Waverley*
and Robert L. Stevenson's *Kidnapped*

Bachelor's project in Engelsk Bachelor
Supervisor: Dr. Yuri Cowan
December 2018

Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Language and Literature



Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

The Jacobite uprising of the 1700s has been an inspiration to many Scottish writers, especially in describing the events leading up to, and the aftermath, of the final battle of Culloden in April 1746. Moreover, the events of this period have been described by some as a fight between the advanced and civilized British army, and the primitive, Scottish Jacobites. Two examples of this are Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped* and Walter Scott's *Waverley*, both of which portray the Scottish highlanders, especially the Jacobites, as a primitive people with almost barbaric tendencies. Meanwhile, the novels show Scottish lowlanders and the English as a more modern and civilized people. Nonetheless, they still provide a sympathetic view of the Scottish highlanders and the Jacobites – despite their simplistic lifestyles and uncivilized demeanour, they are portrayed as loyal, brave and strong, as well as more connected to nature than their English counterparts. This essay will focus on how the highlanders are presented as primitive underdogs in comparison to the modern lowlanders and Englishmen in the novels *Waverley* and *Kidnapped*, and how the Jacobites, despite their primitive portrayal, are treated in a sympathetic manner as a rebellion against modernism.

The novel *Kidnapped* tells the adventurous tale of the young lowlander David Balfour, and provides a glimpse into the Scottish Highlands in the unstable times following the Jacobite Uprising of 1745-1746. In his novel, Stevenson presents the figure of Alan Breck Stuart - a proud highlander and Jacobite rebel on the run from the British army. Alan serves the role as David Balfour's introduction to the highland way of life, and provides both him and the reader with insight in the world of a wanted Jacobite rebel, as well as the impact the aftermath of the rebellion had on the Highlanders. Alan and David are opposites on many accounts, and as suggested by Stella Moretti in "Under Lowland Eyes: David Balfour in the land of the Jacobites" (308), David represents the civilized lowlands, while Alan is a personification of the wild highlands – he is an impulsive and hardened warrior, as opposed to the sheltered and morally responsible David. This difference in their character becomes clear early on during the siege of the round-house aboard the *Covenant*, as Alan becomes overjoyed by their victory, and it positively radiates him with pride and joy: "But there was Alan, standing as before; only now his sword was running blood up the hilt, and himself so swelled with triumph and fallen into so fine an attitude, that he looked to be invincible" (Stevenson 60). Yet David, who has never before been in any kind of battle or taken a life, falls to the ground and sobs upon realizing he has now killed two men. "There was a tightness in my chest that I could hardly breathe; the thought of the two men I shot sat upon me like a nightmare" (Stevenson 64). While this clear difference in character could be chalked up to a

difference in age or upbringing, it becomes obvious later in the novel that many of Alan's traits, for example his unshakable pride and wild bravery, is shared by many other highlanders and rebels, and appear as almost barbaric to the sheltered David. This generalization of the Highlanders being a prouder and wilder people than those of the lowlands is also apparent in *Waverly*, where the stark comparisons between the strict, British military, the civilized lowlanders, and the wild Jacobites plays a major role.

In a similar fashion to Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, *Waverly* begins with the same, basic concept: a young man is sent away, and experiences the Scottish Highlands as a complete outsider. However, where Alan and David each represent their own aspects of the conflict between Highland and Lowland, Edward Waverly functions as a bridge between England, the Lowlands and the Highlands. He was raised by his English uncle with a position in the British government, stationed in the lowlands in the army of King George, and then fought as a soldier under Charles Stuart on the Jacobites side during the battle of Prestonpans. It also differs from *Kidnapped* as it takes place during the conflict between the Hanoverian Army and the Jacobites, rather than after, meaning the Jacobites are a powerful movement in the making, rather than the defeated flock of rebels we encounter in *Kidnapped*. As suggested by Frank Palmeri, Edward joins the Jacobite cause not due to his own moral judgement and strong political attachment to the cause, but because of his romantic enthusiasm, combined with a degree of "youthful misjudgement" (4). Additionally, Palmeri argues that his love for Flora is a crucial part of Waverly's eventual switch to the Jacobite side, which is heavily implied due to his infatuation with her, and his own, romantic nature. However, it is Edwards meeting with Charles Stuart, the young pretender, that finally solidifies his newfound loyalty to the cause, as Edward excitedly pronounces him "a prince to live and die under" (Scott 247). Charles Stuart, as portrayed by Scott, appears severely generous and kind towards Waverly, despite the latter's past as a redcoat. This generosity is immediately apparent when Charles presents Waverly with his own, valuable broadsword, proclaiming "I am convinced I put it into better hands than my own" (Scott 246). Palmeri additionally touches on the clans' charm on young Waverly, in which Charles Stuart could be said to be included, as he is the frontman to all clans during the uprising. Nonetheless, Charles undeniably makes an important impression on the romantic Waverly, and factors greatly into his enthusiasm for the Jacobite cause.

As both novels make their first moves further into Scotland, the characterization of highlanders and savage Scotsmen make their appearance. For Edward Waverly, who is of

minor nobility and heir to Waverly honour, the introduction to Scottish primitivity makes its first appearance in the village of Tully-Veloean. His observations in Tully-Veloean, for example that “The houses seemed miserable in the extreme, especially to an eye accustomed to the smiling greatness of English cottages” (Scott 56) and “Children, almost in a primitive state of nakedness, lay sprawling, as if to be crushed by the hoofs of the first passing horse” (56) are Waverley’s immediate impressions. Thereby, as his first, real introduction to Scotland, these sights truly make for a sharp contrast to the grandeur Waverly is surely used to in England, as he even goes to point out the unpaved streets and rowdy houses, deeming them “depressing” (Scott 56). As Waverly ventures further into Scotland, to the house of Bradwardines and eventually the Highlanders, the simplistic lifestyle is still prominent; The mansion in Tully-Veloean, despite being well-kept, has a mark of the primitiveness and wildness, as even the stables are described by Waverly as “rather a prison for murderers and larceners, and such like as are tried at sizes, than a place for any Christian cattle” (Scott 59). The master of the house himself, upon inviting Waverly to his banquet, warns him “We cannot rival the luxuries of your English table” (Scott 68). As a laird of the land, Bradwardine would be the richest man in the area, yet he himself admits to the limitation of his fortune by comparing himself to his English counterparts, admitting he cannot provide the same luxuries. In *Waverley*, Scott depicts a primitive life, where even the higher-ups in society are worse off than their likes would be in England. Scarce clothing, unpaved streets, and bland meals are all part of the feudalistic lifestyle of the Highlanders, and make for a big change from the English way of life Waverly is used to.

As opposed to *Waverly*, Stevenson’s *Kidnapped* delves deeper into the highlands, as David leaves his peaceful home in the Lowland countryside. While in the Highlands, David encounters poverty, outlaws, criminals, and beggars, all while struggling to communicate with highlanders who scarcely speak a word of English. For a lowlander like David, the feudalistic and unfamiliar society in the Scottish Highlands are vastly different from the life he is used to in the lowlands, and he struggles to make his way through the wild landscape. As the first Highlander David meets, Alan immediately strikes him as “both engaging and alarming” (Stevenson 52). He is a wild man, with a very different set of morals than David, and has no apparent hesitation about taking life, as seen in the siege of the roundhouse. David also condemns Alan’s actions upon believing he killed Colin Campbell, known as the Red Fox, saying “Your ways are not mine, and they’re not God’s” (108), wanting to part ways with him. Alan and David are in many ways complete opposites; David, the lowlander, is

responsible with money and cares deeply about moral, while Alan, the Jacobite rebel, is careless, gambles away David's money as well as his own, and has a far more fleeting sense of morality. Additionally, David had a sheltered upbringing in the peaceful Lowlands during the years of the rebellion, while Alan took active part in the uprising and saw the battles first-hand. As literary representatives of Lowland and Highland, they each personify aspects associated with their homelands – David is a modern Lowland boy, who enjoys the business of cities, and Alan is a wild Highlander who thrives in rough landscapes and primitive conditions. An important difference between *Waverley* and *Kidnapped* is the origin of the protagonists. Edward Waverley is an Englishman of minor nobility, and heir to a wealthy estate. David Balfour, on the other hand, is a Scottish Lowlander who grew up poor, and despite being the true heir of the House of Shaws, his inheritance is little more than a house in ruin. These are two very different bases for how they each experiences the highlands, as David is used to some amount of poverty and is a Scot himself. For Edwards, even the gap between Waverley Honour and the House of Bradwardines is a sizable downgrade. This difference has its impact on how they get used to the Highlands in different ways: David through hardships, Alan's wits, and the worst nature has to offer, and Waverley through Gaelic poetry, romantic ideas of chivalry, and the young pretender.

Peter Garside argue in "Popular Fiction and National Tale: Hidden Origins of Scott's Waverley", that "Scott would have been aware that the attention of a broad band of English readers needed to be engaged if extensive sales were to be achieved", implying that Scott would have to be somewhat careful in his descriptions of the English in Waverley as not to hurt his sales – not an easy task, when describing the Jacobite Uprising partly from the Jacobites point of view. However, the Englishmen as a whole carry an important role in both *Waverley* and *Kidnapped*; they are the representation of modernity. The English are mostly present as a military force, with the exception of Edward Waverley's family; yet even they are tied to the military through tradition. The personality traits that eventually leads to Edward joining the rebellion, like his love of chivalry and romantic nature, is precisely what his English family worries about; his uncle is worried, as "He himself had thought with pain on the boy's inactivity, at an age when all his ancestors had born arms; at an age when his grandfather was already bleeding for his king in the great civil war" (Scott 41). Fighting for king and country had been a tradition, as well as an expectation, in Edwards family; "Every representative of their house had visited foreign parts, or served his country in the army-" (41). Edward eventually does join King George's army to befall his family's wishes, however

he fails to excel in his training, and joins the Jacobites after being arrested by Hanoverians for desertion on false terms. Similarly, in *Kidnapped*, the only notable appearance of Englishmen are in the form of red-Coats. They appear as the enemy, a threat the protagonist and his companion are constantly on the run from during their escape through the Scottish wilderness, as well as being the reason for much of the misery David observes in the Highlands, where strict rulings befell after the uprising in order to punish the Highlanders. In comparison to the Jacobite Army, the British Army is a lot more prevalent, and intimidating, in both novels. A major difference between the novels is that *Kidnapped* shows the aftermath of the rebellion, meaning that the British are already established as the victorious part in the conflict and now only patrol the Highlands to catch the remaining rebels and ensure that their rules are being followed. In *Waverley* however, the battles are still going on, and the Jacobites have captured Edinburgh, making the capital and the luxurious Holyrood Palace their base. Thereby, the Jacobite Army does not necessarily appear as the poverty-stricken underdogs we encounter in *Kidnapped*. However, their underdog-status comes from their simplicity, and does not extrude purely from a military perspective. Rather, it is the fight between modernity and primitivity, where the British Army represents the modern advancements, and the Jacobites fight for Scottish tradition, as well as a way of life that is far more connected to nature than the modern city-based lifestyle of the English, and to some extent, the Lowlanders.

Modernism and romanticism as concepts must have been different for Scott and Stevenson. As Walter Scott wrote *Waverley* in 1814, almost 60 years had passed since the battle of Culloden, meaning there would still be people alive who had witnessed the rebellion. Stevenson, on the other hand, wrote *Kidnapped* more than a hundred years after the final battle ended. During the 1800s, British society underwent great changes as a result of the industrial revolution, and the ban that prevented the Scottish Highlanders from wearing tartan or carrying weapons, as portrayed in *Kidnapped*, had long since been repealed. For Stevenson, the rebellion of 1745-1746 had gone from being something people alive could remember, to being just another event in history. Thereby, the element of realism we see in Scott's *Waverley* is gone, and is replaced by a romantic call back to an important tale of the Scottish heritage, a time where the clans stood together under Charles Stuart to fight for a Scottish king on the throne, only to lose the final battle and be punished harshly by the British army and government. This romantic way of viewing the past had not yet been established as Scott published *Waverley*, as it had not been as long since the events took place, and therefore the novel is less of an idealisation of Scottish history, and more of a nuanced view of the

events. While none of the authors are completely without a bias, Stevenson is generally more sympathetic in his portrayal than Scott.

After his encounters with the highlanders, David Balfour declares to himself “«If these are wild Highlanders, I could wish my own folk wilder» (Stevenson 91). Despite the negative portrayals, primitive demeanour, and barbarian tendencies, the highlanders, and by extension the Jacobites, are still made likeable and treated with some degree of sympathy by both Scott and Stevenson. For example, despite Alan Breck Stuarts apparent love for violence and lack of respect for the law, he becomes a dear friend of the morally sound David, and the two of them trust each other completely. He is redeemed throughout their journey, as his survival-skills earned from the hardships of living in the Highlands prove to be highly useful in saving both himself and David. He moves through the rough landscape with ease, crossing rivers and climbing mountains with no hesitation, while David struggles greatly to keep up. The Highlanders as a people are shown as far more connected to nature than the Lowlanders. As part of their primitive lifestyles they live in small villages, separated by dramatic landscapes and wilderness, with no big cities like they have in the lowlands. As an opposition to the modernity of the big cities, the Scottish highlanders are a step back to a simpler time that is far more connected to nature. The Highlanders are considered a wilder people, where the English are portrayed as civilized and modern. Yet, this distinction between past and present are not purely a case of positive versus negative. Instead it appears as a grey-area, differing between Stevenson, which is more in favour of the romantic view of the past, and Scott, which appear to be appreciative of the past, but ultimately gives way to the present.

The sympathetic aspect in *Kidnapped* is quite prominent in the portrayal of how the Highlanders were made to suffer after the uprising, through heavy regulations and new laws from the British government. Much of the poverty and ill fortune David encounters is a direct result of these laws, with the highlanders' rugged clothing being one example. “The highland dress being forbidden by law since the rebellion, condemned to the lowland habit, which they much disliked, it was strange to see the variety of array” (Stevenson 91), and “All those makeshifts were condemned and punished, for the laws were harshly applied, in hopes to break up the clan spirit-“ (91) are observations made by David, as he bears witness to how the British government are punishing the Highlanders through repressive measures. With these observations, the English appear as a destructive and oppressive force against brave underdogs, namely the highlanders, as they attempt to hinder and suppress the clan spirit, which at this point had served as an integral part of Highland-life for hundreds of years.

Additionally, the Highlanders appear in several instances as an honourable and loyal people, with no second thoughts about helping Alan or David, despite their reputation of barbarian behaviour. In a similar vein, Edward Waverley experiences this generosity first hand, as the Jacobite “prince” (Scott 244) himself, Charles Stuart, gifts him his own broadsword. Similarly to Alan’s gift of one of his silver buttons to David, these gifts provide more than their own, practical value: they each symbolize the trust that comes with it. Alan trusts that David will not turn him in to the British Army, and Charles trusts Edward with his own sword to be used against the army Edward himself recently was a part of. The virtue of trust and loyalty stands strong among the Highlanders, and their role of brave underdogs are supported by their willingness to give a lowlander, and even an Englishman, a place amongst their ranks in good faith. This rather romantic view of the Highlanders is also of great importance to Edward Waverley’s affection for them - as a young man of a highly romantic nature himself, the closer-to-nature way of life, paired with the chivalric bravery the Highlanders practise, falls right in line with the ideals Waverley had crafted in his mind as a result of his obsession with romantic and idealistic literature.

Stella Moretti names the difference between the Lowland and Highlands a “Civilisation gap” (307), explaining how, from an English point of view, “The lowlands were opening to the present and were already on track to progress and modernity, while the highlands were stuck in the past” (307). This gap is prevalent in both novels, in which there is a three-step scale of modernization, with a modern England at the top and the primitive Highlands at the bottom, with the Lowlands as a bridge in between, similar to Edward’s role in *Waverley*. The development can be seen in stages, as David’s journey takes him from his peaceful Lowland home, to the bustling city of Edinburgh, and then far into the Highlands, where the civilization he experienced in the city is far gone. For Edward Waverley, the road leads from a grand, English estate, through the Scottish Lowlands and Bradwardines’ simplistic and shabby mansion in Tully-Velohan, to the wild home of clan Mac-Ivor. Although most would argue that progression is good, *Kidnapped* and *Waverley* seem to disagree to a certain extent whether this is actually true. As far as progress goes, part of the modernization process in the Highlands includes getting rid of the clans, which are a great part of the Highland-identity and Scottish heritage. As Andrew Lincoln wrote, “as Scott acknowledges, modernising entails the erosion of cultural difference and distinctive identities, the displacement of one kind of culture by another” (51). This phenomenon of modernization through erasure of the existing culture is present in both novels, albeit in different forms.

David sees the aftermath of the rebellion, and how the Highlander-culture is slowly erased through bans on tartan and Highland-wear, while Edward experience both the English and the Jacobite- side, showing the different lifestyles they endure, and how the advancements in society are slowly moving upwards to Scotland and the Highlands.

Even when the Highlanders, and by extension the Jacobites, are portrayed in a rather negative light regarding their primitive lifestyle and barbaric tendencies (in comparison to the English and the Lowlanders), they receive a sympathetic treatment to some extent in both novels. Described as loyal and brave, the Jacobites fight with all they have to restore Charles Stuart, and thereby makes themselves an underdog against the highly organized British army. As a reader, it falls natural to root for the underdogs; especially when most of the novel revolves around their point of view, like in *Waverley* and *Kidnapped*. In one way, the Jacobites represent a call-back to an easier time; while the Lowlands and England have bustling cities, the Highlands consists of primitive villages where people rely heavily on each other and their clans to get by. It is by all means a hard and physically challenging life, but it is also a part of the Scottish heritage. During both Scott and Stevenson's time, England and Scotland were heavily industrialized, and everyday life was far different from the one we are shown as David Balfour and Edward Waverley make their way through Scotland. It appears as a journey back in time, to a way of living that is far more connected to nature - Stevenson when describing Alan's effortless movements through the brutal nature of the Highlands, and Scott when revealing Edwards affection towards the Mac-Ivor clan, and their abilities to adapt in the hard climate during their hunting-trips. As a romantic view of the past, more so in Stevenson's case, the emphasis that the Highlanders' culture and lifestyles close to nature breeds strong and wild people might appeal in a day where the cities were overcrowded, and the air tainted by factory-smoke. Regarding the Jacobites, Scott is slightly less positive than Stevenson. While Stevenson gives the Jacobites a very sympathetic treatment in describing their hardships after the rebellion, as well as the consequences it brought to the people of the Highlands, Scott gives his protagonist a view of both sides - despite fighting on the side of the Jacobites, he is pardoned by the British and returns to England. It should be noted that the gap in time between Scott's publication of *Waverley* in 1814 and Stevenson's in 1886 might have aided in the romanticising of the past, as Scott lived in a far closer proximity time-wise to the rebellion, it should come as no surprise that his portrayal might be of a more balanced and realistic portrayal, rather than Stevenson's blatant romanticism. In the article "We have never been National" by Anthony Jarrels, Jarrels suggests that Scott's particular brand of

romanticism is more rooted in the portrayal of changes than Stevenson's, which is prevalent in how *Waverly* tells the story of the Jacobites during the rebellion, and *Kidnapped* focuses on the aftermath, where the changes have already taken place. As mentioned, Scott also appear to more positive to the modernization of the Highlands than Stevenson, as his novel shows the protagonist returning to his home in England after partaking in the rebellion. Yet, both authors provide the reader with an idealistic view of the strong, Scottish Highlanders, and the Jacobites who fought until the end with the hope that they would once again see their own King back on the British throne.

ENG2302 / ENG2900
Candidate 10011
Autumn 2018

Works Consulted

Buchan, John. "The Country of Kidnapped" *The Academy*, 1869-1902, 0269- 333X.1357

(1898): 502-3. ProQuest. Web. 3 Dec. 2018.

Erskine-Hill, Howard. "Literature and the Jacobite Cause." *Modern Language Studies* 9.3

(1979): 15-28. ProQuest. 8 Oct. 2018.

Garside, Peter. "Popular Fiction and National Tale: Hidden Origins of Scott's

Waverly." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 46.1 (1991): 30-53. ProQuest. 8 Oct. 2018.

Jarrells, Anthony. "We have Never been National: Regionalism, Romance, and the Global in

Walter Scott's Waverly Novels." *Global Romanticism: Origins, Orientations, and Engagements, 1760-1820*. Ed. Evan Gottlieb and Katie Trumpener. Bucknell UP-- Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. 109-126. ProQuest. 9 Oct. 2018 .

Lee, Yoon Sun. "A Divided Inheritance: Scott's Antiquarian Novel and the British Nation."

ELH, vol. 64, no. 2, 1997, pp. 537-67.

Lincoln, Andrew. "Towards the Modern Nation." *Walter Scott and Modernity*, 2007, pp. 30-

63.

McCracken-Flesher, Caroline. "Cross-Channel Stevenson: David Balfour and the Problem of

Scottish Return." *International Journal of Scottish Literature* 2 (2007) ProQuest. 8

Oct. 2018.

ENG2302 / ENG2900
Candidate 10011
Autumn 2018

Moretti, Stella. "Under Lowland Eyes: David Balfour in the Land of the Jacobites: Robert Louis Stevenson's Mapping of 18th-Century Scotland in *Kidnapped*." *Annali di Ca' Foscari: Serie Occidentale* 50 (2016): 305-22. ProQuest. 8 Oct. 2018 .

Palmeri, Frank. "The Capacity of Narrative: Scott and Macaulay on Scottish Highlanders." *CLIO: A Journal of Literature, History, and the Philosophy of History* 22.1 (1992): 37-52. ProQuest. Web. 3 Dec. 2018.

Scott, Walter. *Waverly* (1814). Wildside Press.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Kidnapped* (1886). Oxford University press, 2014.

Wilt, Judith. "Reviews -- Power and Punishment in Scott's Novels by Bruce Beiderwell / the Achievement of Literary Authority: Gender, History, and the Waverly Novels by Ina Ferris." *Nineteenth - Century Literature* 48.1 (1993): 101. ProQuest. Web. 3 Dec. 2018.

