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Genre and the Female Audience*
(edited by Valerie Estelle Frankel, 2016)

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Outlander's Sassenachs

*Essays on Gender, Race,
Orientation and the Other
in the Novels and
Television Series*

Edited by VALERIE ESTELLE FRANKEL



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disciplined when they did so. When those who did not die at the school attempted to return to their tribal communities they often could not communicate with them—not speaking the language—and often had nothing in common with those they returned to, now being outsiders within their own family/tribe.

21. With the signing of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868—which the Sioux tribes involved in refused to sign—the U.S. continued its history of Indian land theft. As of 1980 the money in an interest bearing account was valued at over 700 million dollars. It continues to sit in the bank because the Sioux nations do not want the money—they want their land back. They believe the Black Hills are the source of all life and as such are a sacred place.

22. As an example of the commitment of the government to insure Indian access to religious sites, etc., in 1993 I attended a Sun Dance in a Midwestern state way off in the middle of nowhere on a tract of Federal land, invited by a respected Elder. This event was not advertised and there were no non-Indians or “wannabes” present. An army contingent would show up on the outskirts daily for an hour or so bringing in the motorized “water buffalos” to supply the encampment. The men danced, blew on their Eagle bone whistles, pulled away from the sacred tree and bled, the women blessed and sacrificed, the drummers sang and the Medicine Men passed the Pipe and kept us focused for the four days. There was much weeping as we welcomed the ways of our Ancestors back from the shadows.

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Claire Kens Well

Appropriation and Itinerant Performance in Outlander Onscreen

ELIZABETH ELAINE TAVARES

Temporally, generically, and culturally, *Outlander* as a television series foregrounds the porousness of borders. The initial pitch to the premium cable distributor Starz stressed the multiple audience demographics the show would draw by capitalizing on conventions of science fiction, the romantic drama of Claire and Jamie, and the history of colonialism in eighteenth-century Scotland. Ten years on from his groundbreaking sci-fi series *Battlestar Galactica*, director Ronald D. Moore had demonstrated the market strength of a series that explored the emotional and psychological complexities of time travel beyond the spectacle of the magical flying box. Based on the novels by behavioral ecologist Diana Gabaldon, the first season of *Outlander* was additionally exigent in light of the 2014 referendum vote for Scottish independence, envisioning a Scotland with material political borders after more than three centuries of English rule. The source, distribution, politics, and plot of the television series all challenge the lines that demarcate identity, that separate the Gaelic and the Saxon.

While the conditions of the show’s production depend on crossing borders, so too do the singing stones and the physical movement of its protagonists suggest that time itself is permeable. She was an archaeologist’s niece turned war nurse, while he was a soldier abroad now living on the lam; Claire and Jamie are itinerants both in and out of time. They and other figures appropriate performer routes used for generations and traditional information networks to exchange and collect covert knowledge. In an examination of the metatheatricality of the series alongside scholarship regarding theatrical

travel and artistic networks, I argue that the television incarnation of the series envisions the geographical precariousness of eighteenth-century Scotland as a source of political agency. It is the song "The Woman of Balnain," performed by Gwyllyn the Bard, through which Claire understands the function of Craigh na Dun. Forced to join the rent collection party, Claire perceives the Jacobite politics in which she is unwittingly enmeshed through the circus-like display of Jamie's marred back. And in a stark departure from the novels, Claire's appropriation of the Andrews Sisters' "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" as an itinerant singer in the Northern Highlands (along with Murtagh's unsuccessful sword dancing) attempts to draw Jamie out of hiding. Their efforts put them in conflict with two additional itinerant groups: gypsies and redcoats. The porousness of national borders—borders which the Scots and English attempt to rigidify so desperately in Gabaldon's series—comment on competing visions of and limits to Anglo-centric nationalism incarnated today as the sovereign state known as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Bard and the Woman of Balnain: Speculative Futures

In film, the stereotype of the Scot as storyteller is an oft-used commonplace; it is too tempting to ignore for the metatheatric opportunities it makes available. The time-travel element of *Outlander* highlights this aspect through frequent use of voice-over narration by Claire and featuring storytelling set pieces as an organizational cornerstone to several episodes. Episode three, "The Way Out," written by Anne Kenney, directed by Brian Kelly, and first aired August 23, 2014, directly links the circulation of communal memory with the Scottish storyteller to organize the action of its plot. Two performances by Laird Colum MacKenzie's personal b ard baile (township or village poet), Gwyllyn the Bard, bookend Claire's successful healing of a poisoned young boy. Having "performed what was being called a miracle," Claire realizes that while the feat has won her some acceptance, it also has tightened her bonds to Castle Leoch and the eighteenth century. A frightening new thought occurs to Claire:

Even if I did get away, get back to the stones, I had no guarantee it would work again, whatever it was. And if it did work, there was no guarantee I would get back home. Couldn't I just as easily be hurtled back in time again to the middle ages or even the Roman occupation?

Finding herself in despair by episode's end, Claire wanders up to the great hall to be soothed not by the music of Gwyllyn, but by the Rhenish wine on offer.

Gillebride MacMillan, an award-winning Gaelic musician, faculty member at the University of Glasgow, and twenty-first century b ard baile in his own right, plays the role of Gwyllyn. (The actor's background additionally troubles the distinctions between the timeline of contemporary viewers and eighteenth-century spectators.) As indicated by David Martin-Jones in a 2010 essay, "Islands at the Edge of History: Landscape and the Past in Recent Scottish-Gaelic Films," Gwyllyn fits into a film tradition of the Gaelic singer who "embodies a physical memory of the oral past, and accordingly it resides with [him] to inform us of events that took place in the past which are now a part of the landscape" (165). The stones of Craigh na Dun, about which Gwyllyn sings, are features of the Highlands landscape that, like Gwyllyn himself are "a repository of time" (Martin-Jones 165). The stones literalize what in other films is merely a metaphor, figured as "a giant, shifting memory in which past, present, and future collide, and where the past has the ability to inform the present, to be recycled, or revived" (Martin-Jones 165). So while the role of Gwyllyn and his relationship to the stones tracks with pre-existing, banal markers of Scottish identity and history, his performance of the song "The Woman of Balnain" and the stones' actual time-traveling properties together concretize the sense that the past has purchase on the future, and vice versa.

At the level of plot, Gwyllyn's performance of "The Woman of Balnain" provides crucial information for Claire and for viewers, filling out the world of *Outlander* by elaborating on their function. The song itself is bookended by Claire's voice-over dialogue, and during the performance Jamie translates the Gaelic over the music, again helping Claire traverse the border of language:

Ah! This one is about a man who laid on a fairy hill on the eve of Samhain. He hears the sound of a woman singing sad and plaintive from the very rocks of the hill. "I am a woman of Balnain, the folk have stolen me over again," the stones seem to say. "I stood upon the hill and the wind did rise and the sound of thunder rolled across the land. I placed my hands upon the tallest stone and fell into a far distant land, where I lived for a time among strangers who became lovers and friends. One day the moon came out and the wind rose once more so I touched the stones and travelled back to my own land and took up again with a man I had left behind."

It is an exact match with at least half of Claire's experience with the stones. Furthermore, in this moment there are actually four acts of storytelling happening simultaneously: the song by Gwyllyn, Jamie's translation, the speaker of the Balnain woman within the song itself, and the televised medium. Three different timelines are also made co-present by the song of the time-traveling woman—the ancient past, 1740s Scotland, and 1940s Scotland—suggesting a universal experience had by many women, not just Claire and later we find for Geillis as well. The multiple acts of storytelling and timelines collapsing

together blur the presumed hard line between past and present, and the subjectivity of past and future.

Gwyllyn's performance and Jamie's concomitant translation are accompanied by a complex visual sequence to depict Claire's epiphany. The sequence is organized into two halves of coordinated, alternating shots. The first begins with an extreme close-up on Gwyllyn's fingers playing the harp, then a two-shot of Claire and Jamie, establishing the figures upon which the music is working. The shot cross-fades to a flashback of Claire and Frank circling the stones for the first time from bird's-eye view, reinforcing the epic presence and timelessness of the landscape that surrounds and dwarfs them. There is then a quick cut to a one-shot close-up of Claire's face in the eighteenth century, followed by a quick flashback to Claire picking flowers alone at the base of the stones in the twentieth century, and then back to the close-up of Claire again. The close-ups suggest that we as viewers have access to her interiority at this moment when Claire remembers her recent time travelling experience while it maps onto the song's narrative. There is another flashback to Claire touching the tallest stones, and then a cut to the close-up of her again before the camera cuts to linger on a medium shot of Gwyllyn playing. The editorial pause on Gwyllyn after this quick set of flashbacks ends the sequence representing Claire's memory and begins a sequence of Claire recycling images to project future hopes as she learns of what the stones are capable.

After this brief pause in the present, we get another one-shot of Claire followed by an image of her walking up to the stones in the same outfit in which she came through them. It is not, however, an image audiences have seen before. As the music rises in intensity and volume, another one-shot close-up of Claire is quickly followed by her waking up again on the same shawl as before, but a reverse-shot reveals her husband Frank Randall approaching her rather than Claire being chased by redcoats and encountering his doppelgänger and distant relative, Captain Jack Randall. Another flashback is inserted in the sequence of recycled past images towards possible future events, that of Geillis from earlier in the day saying, "As I told you, there's many things in this world we can't explain." A few more one-shot close-ups of Claire smiling with new-found hope are interspersed by the rousing applause of the members of Clan MacKenzie filling the hall around her. The night before the feudal oath-taking referred to in the show as "the Gathering," she is ostensibly surrounded by representatives from all over the Highlands. Yet Claire, lost in memory and visions of a possible escape from the eighteenth century and back to Frank, doesn't look to the crowd around her to consider which of these strangers, as the song foretells, will become lovers and friends before she manages to make it back to Craigh na Dun.

The brief sequence of Claire's flash-forwards and -backs that overlay Gwyllyn's performance suggest that the myth of the Woman of Balnain has

direct relevance to her present moment. The performance is more than a clever device to recap what Claire remembers has happened. It enables her to envision a possible future reunion with Frank. As in many Scottish-Gaelic films, the deployment of myths, metaphors, and proverbs by storytellers and bards, again according to Martin-Jones, work to "confront ideology and engage with discussions of national significance" (161). By season's end, Claire will reject an opportunity to go back to her own time in order to stay with Jamie, her new husband, but also to help him rewrite the past, to avoid the massacre at the Battle of Culloden, and do more than merely speculate on a different possible future in and for the Scottish Highlands.

Scars and a Stuart Army: Spectacular Nation

For much of the first half of the first season of *Outlander*, the violence of warfare exists through Jamie's storytelling of Jack Randall's violence and a few skirmishes from which the Scots emerge whole and victorious. Culture critic Elaine Scarry defines citizenship as a physical presence bounded by state lines—"a relation between body and state that can be overlooked by being too obvious" (III)—and uses this definition to interweave the material body and the nation-state. As soldiers, parts of the body are loaned or sacrificed to the nation-state in acts of war, demonstrating the "soldier's individual act of consent over his own body" (Scarry III). An individual's daily experience of war's aftermath is continuous by the lingering wounds or the loss of parts of the body, thus presenting a continuous historical record to the individual and, depending on how visible the injury is, to the community. Jamie, the "strapping red-head," seems whole and strong, a clever and effective soldier. His value to Dougal, the war chief of Clan MacKenzie, lies not in these attributes however, but in the record of war that lies under his shirt.

Following "the Gathering" is episode five, "Rent," written by Toni Graphia and also directed by Brian Kelley, which aired September 6, 2014. Claire goes on tour with Dougal and his men, traveling from village to village collecting the laird's rent. Her gender and language wall her out of company on the road and increase her desire to re-attempt an escape for Craigh na Dun. Two instances of gendered communal work songs early in the episode allay her loneliness briefly: first, listening to the men sing on the road to keep formation, and second, singing along with the women of one town as they waulk new-spun wool to waterproof it. Any empathy she might have cultivated with these eighteenth-century Scots quickly dissolves, however, when Claire discovers the men are lining their own pockets at the local taverns in the evening for unknown and, she presumes, self-serving ends.

The episode is divided into three segments structured around the display

of the massive knot of scars covering Jamie's back. At a pub in the first village, Dougal acts as a kind of master of ceremonies, commenting on a good harvest as he circles the small, dark room handing out cups of ale to those seated around him. Jamie leans on the mantle of a fireplace at the far end of the room with his back to Dougal. American audiences of the Starz broadcast, like Claire, aren't privy to the gripping Gaelic speech being made by Dougal, since the show unusually foregoes the subtitles. All the more is the surprise when he hustles up to Jamie and rips his shirt down the middle to expose the scars made by Captain Randall's two successive floggings. The camera quickly cuts to a close-up of Claire's shocked face, and then pans to the shocked expressions of the townspeople we recognize from earlier in the day, before cutting to Jamie's own face filled with fury. He does not turn or flinch, but remains with his back to the room listening as coins leave pockets for the purse held by Ned Gowan, the clan lawyer.

A brief crossfade suggests some time has passed; Ned and Dougal count the gold collected in the now-empty pub. Jamie, in the foreground of the shot, is still shirtless and in the same position—a brutalized object on display. To Ned, Dougal summarizes: "It's not a great deal but we cannot expect much from a small place like this. It's a respectable sum. And with young Jamie's back to show, there's money in the bank guaranteed." Like a dancing bear, Jamie's body is forcibly made to perform for coin. After a brief back-and-forth between Claire and Dougal about who will mend the torn shirt, Jamie finally stirs to grab it himself and exit in a huff. Earlier in the season, a brief discussion between Claire and Jamie at the stables reveals that he considers the scars to be personal and private, not wanting to even let his fellow horse-trainer see them, because he's afraid that it might change the way his fellow men think of him. This scene suggests that this soldier has not given his consent over his body to be displayed in this way for the sake, we find later, of a would-be Scottish nation.

The second segment clarifies exactly for what Dougal is raising additional cash. In a montage of travel and villages, Jamie continues to be unwillingly put on display in two more shots of torn shirts and shocked pub-goers. Over the montage sequence Claire narrates: "Events followed a familiar pattern. But for my sympathies for Jamie, I had little interest in Dougal's self-serving performance. The language as alien as ever, but the sentiment clear: give us your money and we'll protect you from the English, from the sassenachs." The third time Dougal attempts to destroy the shirt, Jamie stops him only to remove it on his own, clearly still unhappy at the task. It is also at this moment that Claire catches a bit of Gaelic she does recognize, and the troupe's motivations fall into place: "He was using the shocking display of Jamie's scars not to frighten his audience, but to stir outrage against the British. Dougal was raising money for a Jacobite army."

A one-shot, close-up up of Claire contemplating the fire suggests she is grappling with these new stakes before overhearing a muffled argument coming from outside. Claire sneaks behind a tree in the dark to catch its end.

DOUGAL: But we have something in common. We want our king back where he belongs. Don't you? You have more to gain from a Stuart throne than I do. If you don't want to save your own silly neck—

JAMIE: My neck is my own concern. And so is my back.

DOUGAL: Not while you're travelling with me, sweet lad.

While on the road and as a member of a fighting force, Jamie is not allowed individual agency or rights over how his body is used to perform. As a fighter for his clan and to clear his name from the warrant hanging over him, Jamie seems more than willing and capable. He gives his consent when he draws his dirk for the fray. As a fighter, the ability to guard oneself from attack and injure assailants provides a veneer of autonomy despite being driven to achieve the same end as the larger force. However, when his scars are put on display by Dougal, there is no signal or consent like that of the dirk.

The appropriation of the history of British violence legible on Jamie's back complicates issues of embodied consent threaded throughout the season. As Claire observes later of Dougal, "He'll do it again ... use you like that"; Jamie's only response, problematically, is, "Aye, it gets him what he wants.... A man has to choose what's worth fighting for, as you ken well." On the day that they met, Claire's first contact with the eighteenth century was the threat of rape by Jack Randall himself. The troupe of Dougal's men who save her then consider testing whether or not she's a whore by raping her themselves. Claire and Jamie as protagonists both have to constantly reassert their right to consent and agency over their own bodies, and more specifically, the permeation and display of their bodies against their will. Jamie's response in the firelight suggests that being a man means to give up the right to one's body. One might make the same argument of female identity in the eighteenth century as part of the marriage contract. Jamie and Claire's later marriage and sex life continue to complicate questions of identity, embodiment, and consent up through the finale.

The third segment and closing moments of the episode consider a fifth performance of Jamie's back and the marks of colonial violence it bears. The next day, as Claire strokes her horse, watching the men tease each other and pack up the camp, she reflects:

I saw the men in a different light, not criminals but rebels. I wished I could tell them that they were on the losing side of history, that it was all a pipe dream. The Stuarts would never unseat the Protestant King George II. But how could I tell them that, these proud, passionate men who lived and breathed for a flag of blue and white.

The condescension in Claire's observation—from a World War II nurse's perspective, these men couldn't possibly understand the risks of raising a Jacobite

army—is checked almost immediately. They are all only a few minutes on the road when they encounter two Scots crucified by the British and branded with the word “traitor” on their chests. Enraged, the men solemnly cut the bodies down to bury them properly. At the next village, Dougal’s usual pub speech has a new tenor to it, a different kind of rage and passion. He marches around the small room and raises his hands in the posture of martyrdom, seemingly retelling their discovery on the road in Gaelic. He never reaches for Jamie’s shirt. It would seem there is no need to shock his audience with the visual spectacle of the violence of nation-building. The shared experiences and imagination of this community is enough.

Murtagh and Montage: Gypsy Shtick

While Claire and Jamie are arguably itinerants, relatively homeless geographically and temporally, it is not until they are separated on the march towards the end of the first season that this lack of material belonging is explicitly meditated upon. In one of the few stark departures from the novels, episode fourteen, “The Search,” written by Matthew B. Roberts and directed by Metin Hüseyin, focuses on Claire and Murtagh’s hunt for Jamie, now in hiding in the Northern Highlands after having escaped a convoy bound for Wentworth Prison. Claire and Murtagh stop at every village andcroft they come upon in the guise of a fortune-telling healer and a dancing Fraser clansman. They hope word of their performances will travel by ear to Jamie so that he might come find them. In her study of early modern player traveling patterns, Barbara D. Palmer observes that entertainers of all stripes relied on “a rich inheritance of tested routes, circuits, and communication networks, which they no doubt altered to their own needs but which they most surely did not invent” (263). Unfortunately, despite their appropriation of these routes, Claire and Murtagh aren’t exactly drawing crowds.

By using these traditional performer routes, Claire and Murtagh make contact with the vast panorama of entertainments that were available to early modern Highlanders. Some are culturally distinct to the region, such as sword dances and traditional songs, while others, such as fire-eaters, palm readers, and puppeteers, are not. In fact, in a quick pan to Murtagh’s dismal sword-dancing, we catch a glimpse of a Punch-and-Judy show where the female puppeteer enacts Gwyllyn’s “The Woman of Balnain.” Her dark-haired doll looks no small amount like Claire. It is a much richer and more competitive marketplace than the two would-be performers, as well as most current criticism on itinerant performance in early modern Scotland, assume. Trevor Griffiths, in his monograph *The Cinema and Cinema-Going in Scotland, 1896–1950*, clarifies the willfully backward-looking representation of the Scottish

nation in film that “primarily draw[s] on the mythic symbolism of tartanry and the comforting domestic tropes of the kailyard”—a tradition that *Outlander* does not necessarily eschew (7). If we did not know that season two will take place primarily in France, it could be argued that even with its entertainment panorama, *Outlander* likewise offers a “selective and distorted picture of film production in and about Scotland” (Griffiths 7). That Claire and Murtagh capitalize upon these itinerant performer routes is additionally important considering the widespread popularity of moving picture shows of the early twentieth century from which Claire hails. Both Griffiths and Ian Goode in his book chapter, “The Place of Rural Exhibition: Makeshift Cinema-Going and the Highlands and Islands Film Guild” (2014), observe that itinerant film exhibitors took their mobile kits to the most remote and thinly populated districts of Scotland, reaching every corner of a nation where over sixty percent lived in rural areas. Representations of Scotland typically juxtapose the rural against the modern, while Claire’s background and the panorama of their travel instead yokes the rural with the modern, upsetting conventions of representing Scotland on film.

Capitalizing on these routes, Claire and Murtagh encounter a number of performers and a great deal of competition. They must improve their game if they are to draw enough of an audience to get the word to Jamie. Claire suggests to Murtagh that he “jazz up” his sword dance by adding a song. (When he’s confused by the modern diction, Claire elaborates for Murtagh: “To spice up, enliven.”) Walking down an alley, munching on an apple with her back to a successful fire-eater, Claire sings the Andrew Sisters’ “toe-tapping” and chart-topping World War II tune, “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.”

The camera cuts to passersby, who are equal parts engaged by the tune and confused by the lyrics. Murtagh smiles, followed by a shot-reverse-shot to follow his line of sight back towards the fire-eater and the large crowd surrounding him: “It is a bonny tune. But you need a Scottish song and a new look,” he says to Claire. Later in a local pub, Murtagh has dressed Claire in the fire-eater’s colorful male garb he has supposedly purchased. Replacing the lyrics about a musician drafted into war with a dirty tune about whores Dougal used to sing to Jamie as a boy—“Jamie kens the song you’re singing well.... You singing it is like lighting a beacon on a black night”—Murtagh shoves Claire on stage in front of a full house. The song is a surprise hit, and the scene is followed by a montage of travel to new villages and subsequent success with their prescient tune.

What is interesting about this sequence, one unique to the television series, is its negotiation of the past and future to “embody the anti-modern ‘other’ in order to confront “the values and expectations of the contemporary world” (Griffiths 7). In terms of costuming, this is the first time Claire has worn trousers in the eighteenth century. The only time we see her with pant-legs

at all is in her army uniform and on the way to the front. When performing the role of wife and in domestic spaces, whether it is in the eighteenth or twentieth centuries, Claire is otherwise always in a skirt. In man's dress and with the accent of a sassenach, her unconventional crossing of gender expectations endemic to Claire's personality is thus underscored materially. The war-time draft song reminds us additionally of the cornerstone experience of Claire's adult life thus far—World War II—and a kind of universalism to the soldier experience that the Scots as a nation are soon to encounter. That the song is changed to one of whoring nods to questions of sexuality and consent like that of the co-opting of Jamie's scars. Using an English tune from the future with words from the past, like Gwyllyn's performance of "The Woman of Balnain," allows these co-opters, these conscriptionists one might even say, to get purchase on their present moment.

The success of Claire and Murtagh's borrowing of these performance routes and itinerant performer identities is measured in the space of two montage sequences. Designed to condense space, time, and information, the first sequence of quick cross-fade shots shows Claire singing to large crowds in numerous towns across the Highlands while Murtagh collects coin and inquires about the missing redhead, Jamie. Their success and the feeling that they are doing something productive comes to a halt when they discover that a "gypsy" troupe has stolen their shtick, as advertised on a broadside with accompanying woodcut: "By particular desire The Sassenach shalt sing to thy on this very evening and thereafter will be the art of sword play." All the worse, the gypsy rendition is perceptibly better. When they confront their competitors, it would seem the gypsies have figured out Claire's game all too easily; their leader inquires, "a respectable English lady travelling through the Scottish countryside posing as an itinerant performer. You do this for either politics or love." Claire's response, "It's not politics," is not altogether honest. One could argue that saving her husband, part of the Highland elite, from King George II's redcoats is a both/and situation. In an age before copyright as we know it—where pride of place was given to the clever adaptation of familiar material rather than to the novelty of something wholly new—Claire negotiates and pays for the unheard-of exclusive right to perform her song until she finds Jamie, promising "never set foot on stage again" once she has completed her mission. Murtagh chastises Claire for trusting the gypsies, confused by the exclusivity that she imagines.

The scene is followed by a second montage of their traveling and performances, but the demeanors of both Murtagh and Claire are less inspired, less hopeful that their efforts are doing any good to get Jamie's attention. The sequence ends with the two on horseback looking out across the sea towards the Americas. The black feather in Claire's cap looks especially worn. The montage suggests a great deal of time has passed with little gain. That is, until

the two reconnect with the gypsies and discover they have ignored the bargain and have continued performing their song. Back in woman's weeds (possibly as a ploy to curry sympathy from the gypsy leader), Claire confronts their competitors again only to discover they have received a message from Jamie with a rendezvous location. Claire abruptly leans in to kiss the gypsy, saying, "Thank you! From one gypsy to another!" Ultimately, we might say that in fact Claire and Murtagh fail to successfully appropriate itinerant performer networks to achieve their goal. With the help of the gypsy troupe, the episode suggests this may in fact be because both Murtagh and Claire are still wed to an idea of a nation-state that relies on the excluding function national borders imply. Referred to as "gypsies" in the episode, these figures represent the traditionally itinerant ethnic group called the Romani, shunned from northern India and Turkey all the way to Spain and southern France during the early modern period. However, it is only through the help from people whose national identity is predicated on itinerancy and diaspora rather than on geographical boundaries that Claire and Murtagh locate Jamie, contesting the very idea of nation as one demarcated by borders in the process.

Claire Kens Well: Knowing the Nation

At their most basic level, each of the three episodes discussed here provide Claire with an epiphany about Scotland and Scottish identity by way of a performance event. Gwyllyn's song reveals the function of the standing stones and the seriousness with which eighteenth-century Scots approach magic. Jamie's back uncovers Dougal's personal desire for as well as the growing sympathies throughout the Highlands towards a Jacobite rebellion. Claire's song and its appropriation by other itinerants betrays her own narrow vision of the ways in which nation is inscribed. Over and over again these metatheatrical sequences point back to the geographical precarity of eighteenth-century Scotland as a cultural and national marker while at the same time suggesting that political agency is possible from that precarious vantage.

The uncertainty of Scotland's future—and for Claire, the eventual uncertainty about whether or not she can change it—is tied up with conventions of what film critic Andrew Higson calls "culturally English filmmaking" from the 1990s onwards. Demonstrating that "one of the most entrenched English brands is a particular image of the nation itself, as 'a country steeped in history'" (251), Higson argues that "when transnationalism is not simply a form of economic cooperations but also enables a cultural representational practice that mixes elements from different sources, whether characters, languages, themes or settings, it thus potentially challenges traditional ideas of the national and national identity" (70). Representations of the UK in film and television

in the last two decades paradoxically have found financial success by depending on a brand of past-ness while at the same time demonstrating the globalization and multiculturalism inherently tied to England's national heritage.

Outlander as a television series taps into and troubles this ongoing representation of the multiple cultural identities that fall under the rubric of UK or English cinema as Jamie and Claire slide across a number of types of borders and back again. As a cinematic product, questions of nation are also in the weave of it. From the very start of filming in 2013, *Outlander* benefitted from the Creative Sector Tax Relief program, which itself only began in 2012 and was designed to promote high-end television productions like HBO's *Game of Thrones* to the UK. In addition, the Scottish government also agreed to help pay for the conversion of a warehouse complex on the outskirts of Cumbernauld in North Lanarkshire into a studio for filming *Outlander*—the first of its kind in the country. A 2014 industry report, entitled "Creative Scotland: Review of the Film Sector in Scotland," argued shortly thereafter that "a focus on television is the only way to develop a sustainable screen economy and that now is a good time for Scotland to encourage international TV business—building on the *Outlander* success" (52). We can say, then, that *Outlander* in its first season troubled the linguistic and geographic definitions of Scottish identity in both its incorporation of metatheatrics and its strategies for negotiating the television industry itself.

In its demonstration of Scottish identity's precarity through the porousness of borders, *Outlander* re-enacts a kind of cultural specificity while challenging the historical processes by which those banal markers of identity are made rigid (with Sir Walter Scot's glorification of tartanry being perhaps the most egregious example). Claire's first thoughts after landing in the eighteenth century become all the more prescient, thinking to herself at the first sound of gunfire: "Perhaps I had stumbled onto the set of a costume drama of some sort. But there was no reason for actors to fire live ammunition!" *Outlander*, like the druids who dance around Craig na Dun over the centuries, does not set out to rehearse history or even Gabaldon's novels, but instead suggests a new way of envisioning national identity that validates a lack of borders and demarcation. With striking exigency, midway through the season fifty-five percent of the country voted "No" to the question "Should Scotland be an independent country?" during a independence referendum. Perhaps now, more than ever, we need art objects like *Outlander* to meditate upon what a national identity outside the models sanctioned by the European Union, itself a product of World War II, might be.

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