O Flower of Scotland

Scottishness in *Outlander*

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Supervisor: Fredrik Gustafsson

Author: Tora Greiff Bergström
Abstract

The aim of this essay is to examine Scottishness in the television series *Outlander*, to see if it has the potential to contribute with national identities, despite being a large-scale American production which tends to present stereotypical representations. The depiction is of the Scottish Highlands in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century when the Highland culture was diminished. Using a semiotic approach, I analyse visual signs and find key elements which are used to represent the Highland culture. The series is based on a romantic plot and has stereotypical elements in representing Scotland and its culture. However, I argue that despite the stereotypical representations, the ethnic group in question still can gain national emotion from the depiction. This, because of Scotland’s already romanticized history and heritage culture today. The study comes to the conclusion that a popular media representation, like *Outlander*, can have an impact on a nation’s identity and even politics, by reconstructing historical legends in a modern world and bringing forth a sense of belonging-ness in excess of the stereotypes accompanied.

Key words: culture, national identity, nation, Scotland, England, Outlander, myth, legend, historical, representation, stereotype, Scottishness.
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1. Introduction

Scotland’s history is heavily romanticized. If you go to Scotland today you will find hundreds of museums, monuments and historical places that proudly displays heartfelt causes, war heroes and princes as well as their endeavours in the mythical hilled country. All these factors give a feeling of the ‘national’, and can be connected to what national identity is for the Scottish people. The Battle of Culloden is one of those historical woeful moments that played a big part in Scotland’s history; it was fought on Culloden Moor in Scotland in 1746, between the Jacobite Highland Army and the British Army. The battle’s aftermath marks the end of the Highland culture that was part of Scotland for many years. To this day, people in Scotland still go to the clan graves on Culloden Moor to lay flowers in front of the stones and there are countless poems and songs written about these Scottish heroes of old; they tell stories of the Highlanders who fought bravely for their country and beliefs, who’s culture and way of life was destroyed on the British king’s order after the battle. This Highland culture has been depicted on screen many times in films such as Rob Roy (1995), Braveheart (1995) and most recently in the television series Outlander (2014). Often American (Hollywood) representations like these bring forth hearty stereotypes and are therefore overlooked when it comes to representing ‘the national’. Tim Edensor suggests that, in excess of the stereotypical representations, national identity can be drawn from these types of representations as well. His study is based on the assertion that national identity today derives from much more than tradition, history and political economy. (Edensor 2002, vi)

Outlander is a historical drama that takes place in the 1740s in the years leading up to The Battle of Culloden and depicts the Scottish Highlanders’ constant conflicts with the English soldiers who occupy their lands. The story includes representations of the Jacobite rebellion and the Highlanders’ relationship to the British Army and their mutual king. The research problem discussed in this essay is concerned with the representation of Scottishness in the series and how that may lead to an outcome where national identity can derive.

In 2014, 44% (of the voters) in Scotland wanted sovereignty, that percentage can be bigger today with Brexit coming, since the majority of Scotland wants to remain in the EU (www.parliament.scot) (www.bbc.com). Braveheart was used as a political tool back in the 1990’s devolution referendum in Scotland and had a positive impact on the polls (Edensor 2002, 151). The Hollywood representation clearly evoked a sense of national identity with the Scots and made a connection to their heritage. This is why I chose to write about the representation
of Scottishness in Outlander. I will do so with Edensor’s perspective but also including Stuart Hall’s theory on representation and some interjection from Benedict Anderson’s Imagined Communities. I am doing a semiotic film analysis to see what signifies Scottishness and uses Roland Barthes’ explanation on what that concept is with his thoughts on myth.

I want to see whether this television show has the potential to be just as awakening as Braveheart was in the 1990s. Braveheart evoke a national emotion among some Scots, despite its Hollywood descent. In captivating Outlander’s representation of Scotland in relation to the theory on how popular culture can be seen as a reinvention of ‘the national’, I hope to broaden the knowledge and further demonstrate how popular culture can have an impact on our modern society.

1.1 Background
Tim Edensor wrote in his book National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life from 2002, a chapter about Braveheart (1995) regarding how it was received in Scotland when it came to the big screen. His book focus on the increasing centrality of popular culture and everyday life, when it comes to representation of national identity. Braveheart gives a clear representation of how Hollywood saw the Scottish people and it was both celebrated and widely criticized throughout Scotland (and outside of) (Edensor 2002, 150, 153). The national party of Scotland (SNP) used it in their campaign for the devolution referendum and loved the Hollywood version of the hero (Edensor 2002, 151). But criticism hailed over it as well, mainly because of its historically incorrectness and lack of moral for the national identity of Scotland; critics blamed Hollywood for the romanticized version of the nation. Braveheart is a popular version of a nation’s myth (legend) and history, as are Outlander (Edensor 2002, 153-155).

‘National emotion’ is a term used much in this essay; it stands for the feeling, held by the Scottish audience, that possibly derives from the representation in question. A connection they can make from the filmic depiction to their known historical legend and by that identify themselves with the representation.

The Braveheart story ended in independence and, like Outlander, represents a historical event that has enormous meaning in Scotland’s history. The film shows the Scots fighting against the superior, occupying English army and they are represented as opposites. Outlander has the exact same pattern, with the English as oppressors fighting Highlanders represented as underdogs who want political freedom. Outlander was released in the US on August 9th, 2014,
40 days before the independence referendum took place in Scotland. In April 2015, WikiLeaks released emails from executive vice president Keith Weaver of Sony Pictures (owns Outlander), confirming a meeting with former British Prime Minister David Cameron regarding the release of Outlander in the UK. The emails were sent in June 2014, thus before the release of the show. Their contents state the ‘importance’ of the series and its connection to the ‘political issues’ in the UK at the time. ‘Particularly vis-à-vis the political issues in the U.K. as Scotland contemplates detachment this Fall’ is a quote that quite clearly refers to the referendum. Speculation about the meaning behind the emails went viral, everyone involved denied commenting on the matter. The Herald writes that the common word in the speculations was that ‘the show’s depiction of heroic, Gaelic-speaking Highlanders fighting red-jacketed British soldiers would lead to a boost of the Yes vote at the referendum’. The Herald also presents comments from an ‘Outlander insider’, who says that the show was set for BBC but then was pulled back. (www.heraldscotland.com, www.wikileaks.org)

This peaked my interest as the series was not released in the UK until the end of March 2015, and even then only limitedly on a pre-paid internet service (www.imdb.com). If the speculated information is true, then the Prime Minister of Britain did not want Outlander to be released before the referendum and therefore stopped it. If a Prime Minister goes to this length of censor because he is afraid of how the Scots will react to it, then the Scots feelings towards their Highland’s history must be greater than I thought. This arise the question whether the popular media representation of the Highland culture in Outlander awakes national identity the way Braveheart did.

Scotland and England relationship

In Outlander we are presented to parts of the Jacobite cause and especially to the relationship between England and Scotland in the 1740s. In order to grasp the situation, one must understand the course of history between these two nations.

Throughout Scotland’s history there have been many wars with the English. The wars of Scottish Independence in the 13th and 14th century are one of the most storied one in its history (Braveheart), as well as the Jacobite uprisings in the 17th and 18th century, where the aforementioned Battle of Culloden being the most famous one. In both wars, Scotland was fighting for freedom and independence from the English. However, the Jacobite royalty, the Stuarts, wanted not only Scotland’s throne, but to rule all of Great Britain (www.nms.ac.uk).
The reformation reached Scotland in the 16th century and there had been many feuds regarding faith in the years leading up to it. While England and Scotland were substantially split in their populations’ beliefs, the Scottish Stuart king, James VI inherited the English throne in 1603 and united the nations (including Ireland) under his rule in a personal union and a protestant monarchy (www.ne.se). There were still many Catholics in both England and Scotland who wanted Roman Catholicism back but they were forced to keep quiet (Krugler 2005, 20-24).

When James VI united the countries, the parliament was moved to London and the Scots were under-prioritized, due to England having monopoly on trade and refusing to share their colony trades with Scotland (Åberg 1963, 13). In the middle of the 17th century there was a civil war in England where the monarchy was overthrown by parliamentarians but was restored again after 10 years (www.ne.se). The united countries were torn and the Stuart family came back to the throne, but when James VII reigned he was suspected of going back to Roman Catholicism, and as a result was overthrown by his son-in-law in 1688. The Stuart dynasty had been on the throne of Scotland for over 300 years but lost it twice in the 17th century (www.ne.se). The Scots wanted equal trade possibilities and in 1707 the Act of Union created Great Britain (www.ne.se). The English was not particularly happy about sharing their trading market but saw this as a way to avoid any Stuarts to restore a Catholic monarchy (Åberg 1963, 15).

Between 1644 and 1746, the Highlanders were a constant threat to the government in London; many of them were supporters of the Stuarts, and the Jacobite cause was founded after James VII was forced to exile in 1688 (Åberg 1963, 25). After that the Jacobites rebelled against the government many times until the last battle in 1746 at Culloden. James VII’s grandson, Charles Edward Stuart, was the head figure of the uprising in 1745 and is now known as the Scottish war hero ‘Bonnie’ Prince Charlie (www.ne.se).

There are many different views on the Jacobite cause; Outlander is concerned with the last uprising of 1745 and the Battle of Culloden, therefore I have researched that particular time period more profoundly. I went to Scotland to find museums that told the Jacobite story and went to as many Jacobite locations I could to see how Scotland presents the story herself. I found there is much said and mistaken on that particular uprising, including the Battle of Culloden itself; the most common mistake is to think it was a religious war between Catholics and Protestants, where everything was about getting a Catholic back on the throne; another mistake is to believe it was a war between nations, with the clans of Scotland on one side and the British government on the other. After walking through the museums and visitor centres of Scotland and talking to the experts on location, one finds that the Jacobites were not only Scots
and clansmen, but were Englishmen and Frenchmen, Catholics and protestants, worshippers of the Stuarts and those indifferent to them (www.ne.se). On the government side there were Catholics as well and even Scottish clans fighting for the British Army; the Jacobite uprising in 1745 was a war fought between brothers (www.nms.ac.uk).

The Battle of Culloden was fought on the 16th of April, 1746, after ‘Bonnie’ Prince Charlie had won several victories against the British Army. It was a battle doomed from the start; the Jacobite army was tired and without food. Furthermore, they were outnumbered by thousands and were to fight on a flat field, not exceptional for the Highland charge; the way the Highlanders fought had scared the English for years and at Culloden they managed to stop the Scottish warriors with several lines of gunfire. The Duke of Cumberland, son of king George II who reigned at the time, led the government troops. The battle is known as one of the shortest and bloodiest in Scotland’s history. (www.nhs.org.uk)

After Culloden became what is known in history as ‘the Highland clearances’; the Highland way of life was exterminated and Highlanders were hunted for several weeks afterwards. The Duke wanted revenge for the Prince’s victories before Culloden and sent his army out to kill every possible Jacobite follower they could find (many innocents were killed in the process). The elimination of the Highlanders began and the government dismantled the Highland society structures; bagpipes and wearing of the tartan was banned. In addition, it was forbidden to speak Gaelic and the Clans were deprived of their power and weapons.

In Outlander we see the time before Bonnie Prince Charlie lands in Scotland. The Scots are covering the fact that they are Jacobites and collect money for an army whilst waiting for the ‘true king’ to return. The English are ‘keeping the peace’ in the Highlands by supressing the Scots and trying to hush the constant outbreaks.

1.2 Aim

Tim Edensor, in his exploration of the relationship between national identity and popular culture, claims that with the new media society a different approach to national identity reappears. He states that previous research on national cultures are concerned with either ‘high culture’, invented traditions or folklore; in the past a culture elite had determined what was to be the expression of a culture, and then they indoctrinated the masses with it. Edensor means that these days, with globalization and popular culture flowing, national identity is contested and multiple, with that diversity comes a sea full of cultural expressions. Instead of the ‘high
culture’ ideas, being what clothed the nation and its identity, he means that the everyday life (television in my case) can be what sustains and reinvents the emotional feeling of the nation. (Edensor 2002, vi)

Because Outlander depicts an important historical event in Scotland’s history, it is an object for representing Scottish heritage and consequently could trigger national emotion. The Battle of Culloden marked the end of the Highland culture and the extermination of a culture in this brutal way is of course considered to be a sad part of Scotland’s history. On that account, Outlander fits the bill for national sentiment perfectly. However, a representation of an ethnic group can have opposite effect if the depiction fails; it can be too historically incorrect, give the culture a bad mark (especially if it is much romanticized in the first place), or ridicule it and become insulting.

Outlander is about detachment from another nation or at least liberation from being occupied. This study is important because the concept of a free country is so contemporary, not only with Brexit, and Scotland’s possible wish for sovereignty, but throughout the world where people are constantly supressed and treated ill because of their ethnicity or beliefs.

There are some writings on gender and genre in Outlander but there is a bit of a knowledge gap when it comes to writings about representing the national. I believe that the former British Prime Minister’s possible interfering with the contingent political outcome in the referendum because of this popular media representation, makes this essay important. Whether that specifically is true or not, I suggest that popular culture which may consist of stereotypical elements still can have a positive impact on the people which are being stereotyped. Especially when it comes to a historical event that may still hold a place in the nation’s heart. This is but a small part of the great question that is nationality and I present a version of how to take popular culture and see beyond the normalized characteristics that usually are part of the conventional stories made by big television networks.

This essay will provide knowledge on the national, represented in Outlander’s first season; the aim is to see how the concept of Scottishness is represented through the Highland culture and how that in turn can function as a manifestation of national identity. Edensor’s study of Braveheart paints a picture of how a film can have immense impact on a nation. Braveheart also depicts the Highland culture, although 450 years earlier than Outlander and this has me intrigued as to what Scottishness in certain popular culture has become now that it is the 2010s. A few specified research questions follow below:
• How is Scotland and Scottishness represented and defined in *Outlander*, in forms of characterization, scenery, clothing, music and language?
• How is the historical line of argument presented and can that be connected to the national emotion that *Braveheart* created in the 1990s?

1.3 Delimitations

I have had to limit my analysis, especially in this type of study, where national identity is considered through everyday life could include more material; *Outlander* is a franchise, outside of the television series, it involves books, merchandise, music, action figures etc. These all have the power to express national identity according to Tim Edensor’s theory and I limit myself by only analysing the television series. The limitation is however necessary due to time issues.

Also I have chosen not to include season 2 in my analysis; I considered it for a long while and in the end decided on letting it be due to time constraints. I explain this matter further on in the material selection. There are problems in both leaving season 2 out and including it; including it would have been too much for this essay, but with exclusion I leave out the actual event that the history revolves around, The Battle of Culloden. The event as such is not crucial to the aim of this essay. Still, it would have been a great addition, historical wise.

1.4 Design/disposition

Because my analysis involves 16 episodes, each 1 hour long, the result is quite extensive. To be able to understand the national expression, one needs to understand the story and what lies behind, which is why the analysis is spacious and detailed in story. The analysis is divided into Characters (5.1), Key Elements (5.2) and Scots vs. English (5.3). The first two are organized into categories where four major characters are sub-heading under 5.1 and eight key elements that I found were representative for the Highland culture work as sub-heading under 5.2. Scots vs. English is a breakdown of the distinctiveness found in the series and has its own heading because the whole series is built upon that distinctiveness in its representation.

I also chose to have a short background about the clan system which is important knowledge come the discussion. It is written before the analysis is disposed instead of with the other Background (1.1) material because it is beneficial to have it read close to that.
2. Theoretical Perspective/ Previous Research

When analysing visual signs, such as a television series, one can say that these are representing something bigger than simply being signs. I am looking for the Highland Scottishness in *Outlander*, which is a culture that belongs to a certain people represented in the series. Several terms need definition in regard to my analysis, particularly ‘culture’. One theorist who has written much about culture and its place in society, is Stuart Hall. He gives thoughts on representation and how that is a central practise for producing culture (Hall 2013, xvii). Benedict Anderson defines the term ‘nation’ and gives a perspective on how one can look at what a nation is, as well as how it works in connection to culture. Meanwhile, Tim Edensor is the inspiration behind this essay, and his previous work on *Braveheart* and national identity is closely connected to representation and culture.

2.1 Stuart Hall

According to Hall, representation is a key process in the making of culture and therefore an important topic in cultural studies (Hall 2013, 1). Representation is to ‘stand in the place of’ or ‘stand for’ something, a depiction that is understandable to us because of a shared language (Hall 2013, 2, 4); language in this sense does not refer just to the one we speak, read or write, but also to images, gestures, or anything that involves communicating something; this is also referred to as ‘signs’ in semiotics. Hall’s work on representation is closely connected to the semioticians that I will be presenting later on in my choice of methodology. We understand these languages because the representation gives meaning and in turn we understand the meanings in roughly the same way (Hall 2013, 10).

In order to make sense of how representation works, Hall gives us a few terms to organize the explanation. ‘Conceptual map’ is one of them and with that he refers to the concept we think of when we see something, such as an object, or a word. We can refer to that ‘something’ because of a shared language. People with similar conceptual maps, understand the world in similar ways and that is how a culture is made. (Hall 2013, 4)

Hall makes a point that the definition of a culture differs; the traditional definition is that a culture is thought to be the ‘high culture’ of an age. A more modern definition is that it is the
everyday lives of ‘ordinary people’ and the mixture of popular media which makes a culture (Hall 2013, xvii). The latter definition is what Edensor mentions as well, but with regard to national identity instead of culture (even though they are connected) and its connection to culture in society (Edensor 2002, vi). There is also the ‘anthropological definition’ which defines culture as anything that refers to a certain ‘way of life’ (Hall 2013, xviii). Hall simply refers to a culture as ‘shared meanings’ but clarifies that it does not mean that a culture is unified on everything; there is usually different meanings on topics within the culture. In other words, ‘shared meanings’ do not only refer to ideas and concepts but to emotions and feelings as well (Hall 2013, xix).

Regarding Outlander and the culture expressed there, it seems to be a mixture of the traditional, popular, and anthropological culture. The series is a historical drama and represents a culture that was alive 250 years ago but viewed in a modern popular culture world. Therefore, my concerns will be about the representation of something traditional and how that fits in to the representation coming from a popular culture medium today. In the discussion, I will connect the national identity ideas from Edensor with the culture definitions of Hall and see if Outlander fits the bill.

The ‘shared meanings’ which build the culture are shared through different types of language, which in turn is maneuvered through a ‘representational system’ of symbols and signs (Hall 2013, 7). We will elaborate more on this system in the methodology section of this essay.

According to Hall, there are different theories about how language is used in representing the world; the reflective theory, where an already existing meaning is mirrored and reflects the ‘true’ meaning. The problem here is that signs (visual for example) do not reflect reality, simply a representation of a likeness (Hall 2013, 10); the intentional theory is about what the creator wants to say and his or hers personal meaning is imposed on the sign. In my case this would be if Ronald D. Moore when he created Outlander intended for a specific meaning with that meaning being the only one the language expresses (Hall 2013, 10-11); the constructionist theory acknowledges that meaning is not fixed in language by users or the things themselves. Things do not mean typical things, but rather we ‘construct’ them to mean things and they can change over time (Hall 2013, 11). The last theory is where Hall’s focus is at, where language is central to meaning and how we understand each other. It is not the real world that gives meaning, it is the different types of language we use. A visual perception of something is that way because of a concept that already exists in our head, and even though we don’t see it we
know what it looks like. When we put words to it, we create a meaning, a representation for the concept in our mind (Hall 2013, 11).

Scottishness is one of those concepts that film media has a way of showing preconceptions with stereotypes and myths. I will use this theory to deconstruct *Outlander’s* representation of Scottishness in the Highland culture presented and draw parallels to belonging-ness in that culture, as well as the national identity that might come with it.

### 2.2 Tim Edensor

As mentioned earlier, Tim Edensor’s previous research on national identity stands as inspiration for my own study. One chapter in the book contains discussions on representation of the national on film and television. *Braveheart* is used as a case study because Edensor means to show that the national, always being an entity connected to identity, still is so because of its base in popular culture. This previous research is applicable on the *Outlander* series as well.

As I touched upon earlier, about the multiplicity of national expressions today, Edensor not only writes about representation on film and television in relation to national identity but space, performance and material culture as well. To explain further, he means that these are complexly connected to each other like a ‘matrix’ in the ongoing evolving cultural identity and national identity. To illustrate, one can take the franchises of today; *Outlander* is not only a television series but behind it is a book series and with it the material world explodes with merchandise; *Outlander* clothes (their very own tartan pattern), keychains, mugs, jewellery, soundtracks, Behind the Scenes books, action figures, collectibles; the list goes on and on. This matrix is, according to Edensor, a resource for where the cultural identities come from today; the web of expressions in popular culture. With this, he means to say that the old ways of defining national identity are not enough. They are of course still relevant, just not solely. He claims that the dominant theorists within this area are over-emphasizing on both the historical and traditional when it comes to national identity, and are neglecting the contemporary everyday life. (Edensor 2002, 17)

#### 2.2.1 Braveheart

The chapter about *Braveheart* is a discussion on how nations are represented on film and television, as well as how these, in turn, can serve to impact the nation itself (Edensor 2002, 140). He uses the film to argue against those who claim national stereotypes being the only
thing coming out of that kind of cultural representation. He views how the film was received in Scotland when it launched and how the film changed or reopened the national emotions with the people. He stages that *Braveheart*’s reinterpretation of the historical legend of the Scottish hero William Wallace verifies both new and old meanings about history and national identity (Edensor 2002, 142). He also contemplates strategies how *Braveheart* manages to distinguish the English from the Scots, which is very representative in *Outlander* as well (Edensor 2002, 39). This I will discuss in regards to national identification.

Edensor refers to Stuart Hall in his book when he writes about representation of the national. He claims that national identity is partly sustained because of the everyday life representations that circulate in our world. The representations contain meanings that are imbedded in, for example, a television show. We, the viewers, in turn decode the representations and through our shared conceptual maps (Hall) national meaning occurs. Edensor further explains the acceptance by viewers of the ‘us’ and ‘them’, as well as how the representation of a certain national identity becomes more remarked when put up against each other. (Edensor 2002, 139-140)

*Outlander* is also a popular version of the same nation’s myth and history as *Braveheart*. It is about an emotional nationalism as much as *Braveheart* is and it has an American brand in its development, just like the Hollywood blockbuster. Because of these similarities I can levy Edensor’s perspectives on the connection between popular culture and national identity on to my own analysis. Instead of only looking for stereotypes, I will use Edensor’s thoughts to connect *Outlander* to a level of national identity by examining the historical event and myths engaged in the story. In contrast with Edensor, I am not doing a reception study but a study to see how the national identity is represented through the Highland culture and the concept Scottishness, and if they perhaps could spark the same emotion that *Braveheart* did.

### 2.3 Benedict Anderson

My study is concerned with nationality, or as Anderson puts it ‘nation-ness’; a detachment to a person’s identity, a belonging to a culture and through that partition a national emotion develops.

Anderson believes that the nation is an invention; his book *Imagined Communities* explains that a nation is imaginary because the people belonging to it never actually meet each other but their
communion is still visible in their minds (2006, 6). He states nationalism as something to be connected to ‘belonging’, ‘kinship’, and ‘religion’ (Anderson 2006, 5). In his opening chapter about cultural roots, Anderson’s main argument is that the invention of the nation came via the printing press, which exceeded into print media; newspapers which easily spread the idea of the nation to the world (2006, 32-35). With that came a language comprehension because it was easier to print in one language instead of a hundred different ones, from the many small communities. Through the newspapers, people became consciously aware of each other and the readers who connected through the print media and found likeness in each other made up the start of the imagined national communities (2006, 44).

Anderson does not bring up contemporary media in his book, such as television or film. He does however mention mass-produced visual representations of paintings as a more popular form of print media. With this, nation-ness was spread throughout school systems with paintings of the country’s history to remind the children of their inheritance and thus the image of the nation was sustained (2006, 183).

My understanding of Anderson’s theory is that through social and cultural contexts the nation is invented. Despite him neglecting popular media such as film and television, his original thoughts can be applied to a more contemporary analysis.

3. Material och Method
3.1 Empirical Material

Regarding the selection of material, I had some trouble at first in knowing how much I should include in the analysis. So far, two seasons of Outlander have been released with a third and fourth in the making. When I decided on the topic of Scottishness I immediately figured I would do both seasons. My reasoning was that even though there are more representation of that particular topic in the first season, with the second being set in France, the second season contained the actual historical figures from the Jacobite uprisings. I had watched both seasons beforehand without much thought and gathered that Bonnie Prince Charlie, who is the essence of Scotland, would of course be important in the representation of Scottishness. However, when I watched it more closely, I found that including the second season in the analysis would not only be too time consuming, but it would need a different approach and preferably its own
essay. My aim is to find how a specific culture is represented and how that is connected to national identity. In season two, characters do not stand for the same Scottishness that is represented in season one; the Highland culture is merely a part of a Scottish cultural mix in season two with noblemen and royalty representing the national identity; a complexity that I felt too grand to add to discussion in this particular essay. There is however much to reflect over in season two’s representation as well and could be a case for further research.

3.1.1 Outlander Television Series

*Outlander* is a book series created by American author Diana Gabaldon. The first one came out in 1991 and it was not until Ronald D. Moore came to her with a script that she agreed to translate it to the big screens (many had tried before him). There are eight books out so far, with a ninth on the way and they have sold over 28 million copies worldwide (www.dianagabaldon.com). The first season was released on the television network Starz, now a Lionsgate company (www.imdb.com). Because it was not released in the UK until the next year, many fans were angry because its rights did not go to a satellite broadcaster as one would think, but to Amazon Prime. This limited the audience reach for it vastly because of bad internet connection in many places in Britain (www.scotlandnow.dailyrecord.co.uk). The show has had good reception and has become a big franchise with all kinds of merchandise to buy. For example, they have their own tartan pattern which is very similar to the real clan Fraser’s (and probably would have asked their permission to do so). Primarily it has pushed Scotland’s tourist industry to the skies. There are guided tours all over the country, for both the filming and historical locations presented in the series (www.visitscotland.com).

The episodes are usually a little over an hour long and the first season contains of 16 episodes. In Sweden the first season is available on Netflix whereas the first and second is available on Viaplay. I have used both streaming services to work with the episodes.

We follow Claire Randall, a World War II ex-combat nurse in Scotland with her husband Frank Randall on a second honeymoon after the war has ended. They have been apart for six years and are looking to re-connect with one another. Frank is a historian, soon to be a professor at Oxford University. His profession helps save Claire many times throughout the story because she uses historical facts to survive. Over all, a great deal of the series is centred around precisely history and knowledge. One day when Frank is researching his own genealogy, Claire takes a walk by herself and comes upon a circle of standing stones near Inverness. She travels
mysteriously through the stones back to 1743 and ends up in the middle of the Jacobite uprisings. Almost at once, Claire stumbles across the main villain of the story, a redcoat captain by the name of Jack Randall who turns out to be Frank’s six-times-great-grandfather and who also happen to look just like him. He tries to rape her but she is saved by a Scottish Highlander gang with whom she stays with to escape Randall’s claws. The story continues with Claire having to survive in the 1740s with perils coming her way from everywhere and Captain Randall taking a special interest in her. She has to lie because no one would believe her going through the stones, which in turn makes everybody suspicious towards her. At first, all she wants is to get back to the stones but as time goes by she gets comfortable with the Scots and is forced to marry one of them to avoid being handed over to Captain Randall. The story then turns in to a dramatic love story when Claire and the man she was forced to marry, Jamie Fraser, fall deeply in love. They struggle to settle their marriage because of very dissimilar backgrounds and cultures, but their love seems to overshadow all differences. Jamie is also hunted by Captain Randall and has been flogged brutally by him in the past when he was held prisoner on false charges. Randall has a personal interest in Jamie as well and his agenda with the couple follows them throughout the series.

The English and the Scots are fighting each other constantly and Claire eventually realizes the political war going on; she figures, since she knows her history, it all leads to The Battle of Culloden. She tries to tell her Scottish friends that they are doomed but they seem to live for the Jacobite cause and dismiss her warning.

The first season is concerned with letting the viewers know who the Scots were back in the 1740s and what the Jacobite cause meant to them. It especially gives us a representation of the relationship between the English and the Scottish, which gives fuel to the coming battle as to who’s side one should be on. We know from the beginning that the English wins the battle, and the season ends with Jamie and Claire deciding that they should do everything they can to stop the battle from happening and consequently change history.

The television series is called *Outlander*, which shares its title with the first book. The word translates in to outsider, it is used to describe Claire as ‘English’. She is an outlander and is thrown in to a completely different way of living than the one she is used to, not only because of the time difference, but because she is English. Her character evolves throughout the series and you could say she has several national identities, or at least changes it.
3.2 Method

Regarding my choice of method, I wanted a method with a structured system of how things give meaning since I am trying to find things that generate a meaning of the typical Scottish Highland culture. As to the understanding of what a culture is, I wield Stuart Hall’s definition on the matter (simplified here) as ‘shared meanings’, with my choice of method being a semiotic analysis. Semiotics is the study of signs and how they work in society as a communicative mean, ergo how things give meaning. Since a culture arises out of shared meanings, a semiotic approach comes natural in explaining how these meanings come to be. I also considered a hermeneutic approach and to do a qualitative analysis of the series, but felt it would be a too subjectively intended method. Below follows a description of the semiotic systems I will exercise.

3.2.1 Semiotics Background

The French literary critic Roland Barthes did not come up with semiotics himself, but his continued ideas about usage of the semiotic system are most important in my analysis (Bignell 2002, 16). Barthes’ ideas are associated with contemporary media which is why I chose to involve his research (Bignell 2002, 16). His ideas rest on previous notions about how signs work. Therefore, I will specify my explanation of how I will be using semiotics involving semiotician Ferdinand Saussure’s work as well.

Barthes spoke of ‘myths’, which, simplified, are the concepts derived from connotations and those concepts are partially what I will be looking for in Outlander. (Barthes 1973, 123-124). To understand Barthes, we must further explain Saussure’s ideas: He was a linguist who contributed to semiotics especially within the linguistic sign system; he came up with the terms for how signs are constructed and correlate with each other to give meaning (Bignell 2002, 8).

According to Saussure, there are two components which make up the sign; the signifier which can be, for example, the shapes and colours that an image on television use to represent a person or an object; the signified, which is what we think of when we see (or hear) the signifier. In this case an image of a man with kilt on Outlander could signify a Scotsman (Bignell 2002, 12).


### 3.2.2 Connotation and Myth

Connotations are associations made from a sign or signs, such as an image of a man striking another man can connote violence, which in turn is a ‘signified’ in the linguistic system (Bignell 2002, 16). According to Barthes, these connotations form mythical concepts, they create myth; myths are therefore specific ways of thinking about life, people, objects, things and structured ideas which have specified meanings (Bignell 2002, 16). I am looking for representations of Scottishness in *Outlander*. Scottishness is then, according to Barthes’ system, a ‘mythical concept’: the equivalent to Saussure’s ‘signified’ (Barthes 1973, 126). The mythical system’s equivalent to ‘signifier’ is the term ‘mythical meaning’. The myth is made up of two semiotic systems; one is Saussure’s linguistic system (which Barthes names *language-object*), explained above, whereas the other one is the mythical system which only works because of the linguistic one. Barthes calls the mythical system *metalanguage* because it is a language where one speaks about what the linguistic system has already arrived at. ‘When he reflects on a metalanguage, the semiologist no longer needs to ask himself questions about the composition of the language-object…This is why the semiologist is entitled to treat in the same way writing and pictures…’ (Barthes 1973, 124). This quote is important in my analysis for I will be looking for mythical concepts, which already has allocated signs, thus, I will be ‘speaking’ the metalanguage when I examine the series.

Barthes report that one mythical concept can have limitless signifiers and the same goes for the initial linguistic ‘signified’ (Barthes 1973, 129). He also mentions that the mythical concept can spread over a vast area of the signifier, or vice versa, one quick gesture or phrase can be a signifier for a full-bodied concept (Barthes 1973, 130). These signifiers (meanings) are what I will be looking for in my analysis for they are what represent the mythical concept of Scottishness. It is also important to know that mythical concepts are not constant; they change and can even disappear as history moves forward and societies shift course (Barthes 1973, 130).

With the semiotic system clarified I will sum up my intentions with the method; I will be analysing *Outlander* to find signifiers that connote ideas that form in to a myth, which in turn connects to a culture. Namely, the Scottish Highland culture, through this comes the representation of the national. Stuart Hall brings about Barthes’ thoughts in his book as well where he uses Barthes’ *Mythologies* to explain how the cultural level of representation works. This is due to the fact that, after all, signs are representations of the concepts (Hall 2013, 24).
3.3 Methodology Problems

The main difficulty with analysing anything is, among other things, is trying to stay as objective as you can. This goes for film analysis too. Because we, as analysts, have our own backgrounds along with our own culture with its own discourses and norms, an analysis cannot be completely objective. Also, I am female and will review masculinity and femininity in my character analysis; this poses a problem, because of my own gender. It is possible that some behavioural signs from the female characterization might slip through my eyes.

Also, in my specific area of cultural studies, I must take in to consideration that I am Swedish, I have connection to what my study will be about other than what I have seen and read in already made representations. I am not looking with the background and experience of a Scot, trying to define my own national identity in the series, Instead, I am an outsider who will define Scottishness from and outsider’s point of view. This might be both a blessing and a curse since a Scot possibly could be more subjective to the matter of his or her own nationality.

4. Results/Analysis

Background – The Clan Society

Scotland has for many hundreds of years been divided into Highlands and Lowlands; the Highlands being in the North and the Lowlands in the South. The formal English culture permeated into the Lowlands, whereas the Highlanders had their own culture and stayed with the old Celtic traditions (Haeger 1982, 138-139, Åberg 1963, 16). The merchants, who resided in the Lowlands and the middle of Scotland (and thereby were English influenced), saw themselves as superior to the Highlanders; for example, in the cities, the kilt (the Highlander’s standard wear) was thought of as something for the poor and was not allowed in the business houses (Åberg 1963, 11). From an English perspective Scotland was seen as an underdeveloped, barbaric country (Åberg 1963, 9-10).

It is important to acknowledge the clan system of Scotland which was mainly associated with the Highland culture. Even though this system was not connected to the Lowlands as much, some small clans did exist there as well (www.electricscotland.com). As we come into contact with the clan system in Outlander, the following two paragraphs hold a short compilation of what it was like, as well as how it worked in real life.
There is a distinction from the clan system to other tribal systems, such as the ones found within the indigenous people from Australasia, Africa and the US, with one example being the feudal system, developed in the 14th century (Squire 1994, 13-14). In this particular clan system, individual communities consisted of members who all claimed relation to a collective ancestor. The different clans were known by a unique surname shared by its members and each clan had its own chief. There were several branches within the clan with lairds or chieftains being at the top. The system was built on the idea that every member had blood relation to the chief and usually this was the case, but there were many adopted members as well. It was not an equal system, as there were both poor people and aristocrats within the clan. It was a feudal society with land tenancy and rent collection. The members paid to their laird and in turn received protection and great hospitality. In addition, it was the laird’s responsibility to provide for the old tenants and to help widows find new husbands to support them (Åberg 1963, 26, 33).

The clans often fought with each other and livestock raids were very common (Åberg 1963, 35-36). Ranching was the main way to make a living in the Highlands and it usually involved cattle, sheep or goats (Åberg 1963, 29). The clan system is associated with absolute obedience, with every member having to obey their clan leader, whether it concerned going to war or collecting random rent (Åberg 1963, 31).

4.1 Characters

The two main nationalities in Outlander are Scottish and English. They are piled against each other as a dichotomy as something the other is not. My task is to find the Scottish representation, but since that is sometimes defined jointly but opposite to the English representation, I found it important to analyse both nationalities. I have decided on a few prominent characters which I feel give strong representations of the nations and then demonstrate key elements which are representative for the Highlanders. Last, I combine the nationalities to see what separates them.

4.1.1 Jamie Fraser

Jamie is the male lead character and the essence in representing Scottishness in Outlander. He is one part of the love duo Claire & Jamie, where he represents Scotland and Claire England. He is the nephew of Colum and Dougal MacKenzie, Colum being the laird of the clan MacKenzie and Dougal being its war chief. His mother was a MacKenzie and his father a
Fraser. His father is dead which makes Jamie the next in line for the Fraser estate. However, he can also make a claim to the MacKenzie laird position if he were to make it official by pledging his loyalty to Colum. Jamie fled from the prison he was being held and has a bounty on his head, which is why he cannot leave the safe MacKenzie grounds to take care of his own house.

**Stout-hearted**

Throughout the series Jamie gets hurt several times but he maintains a tough and brave behaviour when it comes to injuries and his own pain. He never makes big deal out of it and his standard phrase is ‘Dinna fash’, which means ‘Don’t be troubled/Don’t worry’. This phrase is very representative of his character, as is the concept of ‘tough-ness’ which is presented in several scenes; in episode 6 we see flashbacks to when Jamie is to be flogged the second time in one week, he is standing against a pole with his back slit open and bloody. Randall pushes the flogger carefully onto his back and the viewer understand that it hurts tremendously from Jamie’s expression. He is shaking and Randall asks bigheadedly if he is scared. Jamie replies with little energy but his head held high: ‘I’m just afraid I’ll freeze stiff afore yer done talking’. The scene continues with Randall brutally flogging Jamie in hopes that he will scream in agony, which he does not. Eventually he cannot stand upright anymore and hangs of the pole but still refuses to say a word. That one scene sums up Jamie’s character as well as the concept of Scottishness; the use of irony and ridicule are central to the Scots in *Outlander* and even when they are half dead, they do not beg (not to the English anyway). In episode 2, Jamie volunteers to take the punishment meant for a girl who has disobeyed her father. This is also a sign which connects to Jamie’s identity, both his sturdiness and kindness; he takes the beating without a word, the gestures and silence signify many things. These include togetherness and valour which we connect to a meaning that we understand by using our conventional classifications, and creates the concept of consideration (Hall 2013, 23).

Jamie differs from the other clansmen and Scots that we are acquainted with; for one thing he does not examine Claire from head to toe and objectifies her from the start. He never shows any sexual interest in her in the beginning and his way of caring is to protect her from the other men who do show interest, a purely carnal one. He is presented as the great protector; in episode 3 he offers to lead Claire back to her room when she is a bit intoxicated and he does this because he ‘knows how some of the men are’. In episode 4 he risks his own life just to help her back from the stables and into the castle; Claire has tried to run away and met some drunken clansmen in the corridor who tried to rape her. Claire and Jamie do not really know each other yet at this
moment, but when she mentions she ran into the clansmen Jamie gets dead serious and asks in a strained manner if they touched her. In episode 5 he sleeps on the floor outside her door when the MacKenzie party is on the road, to once again protect her from drunken clansmen. All these scenes connote the idea of chivalry, making sure Jamie is the gentleman that we are supposed to love, adore and want to be like (Hall 2013, 23).

**Kindness**

Another side of him which stands out from the other representations of Scottish people are his kindness towards the ones that do not have the same strength as himself. In episode 5 a boy has been nailed by the ear to a pillar with a thick iron nail. This is explained as a common punishment for thieves and when the boy has done his time, he needs to pull himself of the pillar and thus basically rip his ear off. Claire finds this barbaric and asks Jamie to help her; if she would have asked someone else in the MacKenzie party they probably would have laughed at her and moved on, but Jamie walks up to the pillar and while Claire creates a diversion he pulls the nail out of the wood and no one can blame the boy for being a coward. These small gestures which the creators have staged have no other value than to present characteristics and once again Jamie’s kindness and thoughtfulness are centred.

The first time we see Jamie is when Claire has to put his shoulder back in place and he makes no sound even though he would be in great pain. The scene signifies his qualities of persistence and strength and within a few minutes, kindness is represented as well; after his shoulder is set and they are to ride away, he tries to put his kilt around Claire so she would not freeze and later on he wants to protect her from Dougal because he knows he will kill her if she tries to run. At this time Claire has no affectionate value to Jamie whatsoever but he still does not want a woman to die unnecessarily; he catches Claire in her flight and gets his sword out to show that he will not let her get away. He is confident and tells her he does not wish Dougal to kill her and makes clear he can easily lift her over his shoulders and carry her back to the rest of the party. This signifies kindness in that he does not want to see her dead, he actually cares about her wellness; it also signifies masculinity and superiority with the ‘I am stronger than you and will take you with me against your will’-speech. When Claire agrees to go with him he is standing close to her and looking down with half a smile and a very smouldering look, which signifies sexual tendencies between them.
Jamie is the representation of sex himself; we see much of him without his shirt on and his muscles are often defined in dim light by a fire or such. Masculinity is a mythical concept decided by society and a concept which contain meaning about how men should be and what qualities they should have (Barthes 1973, 126). In episode 7 when Claire and him are to have their wedding night, Jamie who is a virgin which plays down his masculinity, still manages to be dominant and represent a strong man who needs no guidance. Sex is a big story line and something that defines Claire and Jamie’s relationship to some extent. Jamie’s body signifies strength which is a connotation for masculinity and sexiness. However, in episode 16 he is violated by Randall and his sexiness and masculinity, which is part of the Scottish representation, is broken and shows that his connotation changes over time (Hall 2013, 131); Randall finally breaks him with extreme torture and Jamie gives in to Randall’s sexual pleasure to save Claire. Suddenly Jamie’s body and strength is not enough to stand against Randall and instead connotes insignificance, it does so because Jamie’s strength and masculinity in that context, means nothing.

4.1.2. Claire Beachum/Randall/Fraser

Claire is the central character of the show, she is the narrator (apart from one episode) and the one who’s life we follow. She is intelligent, sophisticated and has much dignity. In the first episode we see a representation of a strong and tough World War II nurse who signifies someone who is accustomed to war; a flashback shows a working Claire, wiping off blood from her face with her sleeve and continuing to work as if it was nothing.

She is kind and wants to help everyone around her, a representative quality for a nurse whose job is to mend people. She is quite modern for a 40s woman when it comes to equality, placed in an extreme patriarchy in the 1740s is not the easiest merger for her. A daily struggle in the 18th century is being among all the men and their sexist remarks and glances, from both English and Scottish sides, but in different varieties; some of the English soldiers are gentlemen and treat her as a ‘woman of fine breeding’, which also means they give her no right to an opinion and undermine her in all sorts of polite ways; the Scots are blunter and coarser, it is mostly their expressions and sexual references that degrades her. However, some of the English soldiers try to rape her and some of the Scots are very gallant towards her. Both sides show how the patriarchy takes place in different cultures.
Sexuality

When Claire and Frank go to visit an old ruin (which turns out to be the old MacKenzie castle), Claire sits on a dusty table in the old castle and pushes her husband’s head down between her legs. The signifiers in these shots, connote dominance and sexuality; it depicts Claire as who she was in the 20th century and scenes in the 18th century assures the same characteristic. Mrs Graham, the Reverend’s housekeeper, reads Claire’s hand and states that she is a strong-minded woman, who also likes having sex. There are several sex scenes in the 1st episode and together with Mrs Graham’s prediction, we are certain that sex is to be signified with Claire’s character.

Cultural Differences

Claire and Jamie’s relationship struggles in the beginning because they come from different cultures. When Jamie spanks Claire in episode 9 to punish her for putting everyone in danger, she is furious and yells that she will never forgive him. The scene gives an example of a Highland tradition, which is connected to the ‘shared meanings’ of the culture (Hall 2013, 1). When Jamie finally understands that he sometimes must discard the Highland customs and evolve together with Claire, she forgives him. Their reunification turns into a scene with many signs to explain Claire’s character as well as the couple’s relationship as a whole; they have sex on the floor with Claire on the top and in the middle of it all she puts a dagger against Jamie’s throat. She says whilst continuing the love-making: ‘If you ever raise a hand to me again James Fraser, I will cut your heart out and eat it for breakfast’. Claire on top signifies power and dominance. The dagger to Jamie’s throat signifies threat but the continuing of the lovemaking in turn signifies that the threat is not for real; she would never actually cut his throat right there and then. Because Jamie, who is stronger, lets her do all that, they declare their relationship co-equal. ‘I am your master, and you are mine’ is the line which also sums up the meaning derived from that scene.

The Scots are quick to say that Claire is different from any woman they have ever met; she swears a lot and orders them about when she is trying to help the wounded. By the expressions on the men’s faces, this was clearly not a womanly thing to do; they say they have never heard ‘such language’ come from a woman’s mouth before. The mythical concept of how a woman should behave is made abundantly clear with how the Scottish 18th century men and women react towards Claire’s behaviour (Barthes 1973, 126). She calls them idiots because they do not let her know when they are hurt, which in turn signifies sturdiness and solidity. She has an
authority which shocks them and even intimidates them to some extent. Claire is the one who is thrown into the highland culture and the cultural clash between her and everyone around her helps with the distinctiveness in the representation of Scottishness. One would think that the Scottish women, who are presented as blunt and rough, would be swearing and talking freely as well. However, this reaction from the men states differently which only emphasizes Claire’s behaviour (as a woman).

The story is built on the viewer’s identification with Claire; for example, when the Scots speak Gaelic there are never any subtitles. This puts the viewer in the same position as Claire. The creators clearly wanted us to feel what Claire is feeling and she is easy to identify with as well as care about. When Dougal’s party has gone to collect rent in episode 5, they are all sitting around the fire telling stories in Gaelic with Claire sitting on a rock away from everyone. The position of the characters signifies the concept of exclusion. Claire tells us as narrator that she feels like an outsider because of the language barrier, a language which has a strong connection to the Highland culture. Language, which, according to Hall, is a key element in the ‘circuit of culture’, represents a clear crack between the cultures in this scene (Hall 2013, 5).

**Identification With the Scots**

Because Claire is our main character, her feelings towards the Scots are representative as to how we perceive them. In the beginning she is kept with the MacKenzies against her will and develops a hostile relationship to Dougal especially, since he is the one who dragged her with them in the first place. In episode 6, when Dougal and herself are brought by some redcoats to a Scottish village used as camp for the British Army, Claire is delighted because she is around her own people again. She narrates about how the redcoats are in the same British Army that she belonged to in WWII, hence the feeling of belonging-ness that Benedict Anderson (2006, 44) speaks of regarding the construction of nation-ness. In the beginning she identifies with the redcoats and plays her 18th century English role very well. She is brought to a room with high-ranked military, where Brigadier General Lord Thomas seats her very welcomingly. Dougal stands next to her, on his guard, in a room full of Englishmen. This signifies otherness, as suddenly he is an outlander himself. The English offer her arrangements to take her back to Inverness, consequently away from Dougal and the rest of the Scots. Here, the representation of Claire’s national identity changes; when the English are rude towards Dougal, she defends him and the scene escalates into Claire saying that the English are the ones occupying Scotland and taking the Scots’ lands. When Claire defends Scotland and the Highlanders in this way, in
front of the English themselves, she basically declares herself Scottish. This scene, too, is a representation of Scottishness; even though Claire has encountered mean Scots, she has been taken care of by lovely ones as well and feels loyal towards them. Representative for the Scottish Highlander culture is righteousness, as in this depicted scene it is obvious that the English are in the wrong; after taking lands and harassing villagers. When Claire stands up for them she represents that same Scottish righteousness that a Scot would have, and can therefore function as a representative for the Scottish culture.

### 4.1.3 Jack Randall

‘Black’ Jack Randall is the second character after Claire who represents the English the most in the series. He is referred to in the series as Randall, therefore I will adapt that routine as well. He is the villain of the show and even though his personal qualities should not be connected to Englishness specifically, he is the English character we get to know most profoundly. Randall is portrayed as a dark and depraved sadist who takes an interest in Jamie, both physically and psychologically; he makes it his mission in life to break Jamie’s soul by abusing him in horrific ways. Once again, the series defines one thing as what the other is not, English versus Scots (Bignell 2002, 8-9).

Our first impression of Randall is that he is a gentleman; in episode 1 when Claire stumbles across him, he calls her madam and presents himself as ‘Jonathan Randall Esquire, Captain of His Majesty’s eighth dragoons, at your service’. ‘At your service’ is a standard phrase from the redcoats presented in *Outlander* and a signifier of the concept civility (Hall 2013, 24). After that line he tries to rape her and we are immediately given a reason not to like the redcoats. As Captain of the dragoons, Randall has a lot of power to abuse. He is protected by the Duke of Sandringham who himself is loyal to no one but the frontrunner at the time.

Randall is always word spitting the Scots and in episode 6 he states that England does not have any Scottish friends; this statement connotes that all Scots are enemies in Randall’s eyes. The Scots let Claire in even though she was English, but Randall would slaughter every Highlander if possible. In the same scene he describes the Scots as savages, which is ironic as he fits the description himself in full measure, and claims that Claire has been befouled with their horrible culture. The goodness of the Highlander culture is strengthened by Randall’s hatefulness towards it as well as the viewer’s hatefulness towards him. Therefore, the concept of goodness is consequentially represented through and against his character.
Morbidity

In episode 2, a flashback shows Randall and his company harassing Jamie’s family’s farm. Jamie is fighting off two redcoats when Randall emerges with Jamie’s sister, Jenny. He violently rips her dress to expose her bare breasts, which signifies sexual abuse, and tells his soldiers to keep Jamie’s head up to force him to watch. Then he licks his fingers and strokes them across her lips which signifies a soft caress. These two actions, a violent one followed by a gentle and peaceful one, both sexual, recall the connoted idea of morbidness.

Randall’s sexual orientation is puzzling and I have come to this conclusion: Randall is not homosexual (as one might think watching the show), nor heterosexual or specifically bisexual; he is a pervert who does not choose his victims depending on gender but on personality. He tries to rape Claire in both the 1st and 9th episode, and he expresses verbally in episode 15 that he ‘enjoys’ women as well as men. Nevertheless, what one might believe at first glance is that Randall’s central sexual interest in the show is Jamie which would make him more homosexual than heterosexual. What I have found is that his interest is not with Jamie because he is a man, it is because of how Jamie behaved at the flogging; he never let Randall get full control over him and control is what excites him. The flashback scene in episode 12 depicts Jenny, who is to be raped by Randall when she starts laughing. He keeps turning her around (indicating a homosexual man’s position), throwing her forcefully back on the bed and in the end he cannot perform; this can easily be mistaken for lack of excitement because Jenny is a woman, when in fact it is because she is laughing at him and not being the submissive he needs to be aroused. Randall’s sexual interest is essential to his character, hence the vast explanation.

4.1.4 Dougal MacKenzie

Dougal MacKenzie is war chief of the MacKenzie clan and brother of its laird, Colum. Dougal is a Jacobite and he is the one who leads the collection of Jacobite gold to support an army. Dougal and his brother disagree on many things; for one Colum is not supportive of the Jacobite cause. Another is that Dougal wants the position of laird himself and so has difficulty taking orders from his superior brother. In episode 5 at the Oath taking, Dougal is the first one to pledge his loyalty to his brother and it seems he does it without effort, but when it is done he goes straight to the back of the room and gulps a bottle of what looks like strong liquor. The bottle signifies alcohol, which put in the context of someone inhaling it at speed signifies someone wanting to get drunk fast. This connotes that pledging his loyalty to his brother was
not an easy thing for Dougal at all. The representation states the recurring fact that Dougal wants the power for himself, thus drawing on concepts of self-involvement and greediness.

Dougal is tall and muscular with a look of authority. He is a serious man and a very good fighter with a sturdy appearance; that signifies that he is the leader. He is a tough leader who teaches his men to be just as tough but also cares about them for they are family and friends; he shows empathy for Jamie when his shoulder is dislocated, but at the same time makes clear that he has to ride straight away without any rest or time to heal. He threatens to cut Claire’s throat if she tries to run away and every time she tries to argue for something he undermines her and talks over her head; his character is often signified by disrespect towards women.

**Highlander Family**

When Dougal and his men are out in the villages collecting rent he talks and laughs with the villagers. He knows every single one of them and asks personal questions. These scenes indicate a personal relationship to every tenant and are probably more representative for the MacKenzie clan than with Dougal himself. However, it is he alone who does the act in the scene. When one man has nothing to give because the redcoats have robbed him, Dougal lets him go without paying and gives him two bags of grain so that his family will not suffer that night (that was apparently very generous in a feudal-like society). But in another town when a man gives away a goat which means the baby cannot have milk and Claire protests, Dougal says it is only fair. He then weakens Claire by telling everyone she is a drunken Sassenach and should not be taken seriously. This scene’s signifiers state that Dougal feels the need to protect the reputation of the MacKenzie clan, which in turn is representative for the culture itself. The Highlanders are a proud people with a clear feudal system which only works if the tenants are obedient, just like history tells us (Åberg 1963, 31).

Dougal has honour in some ways and in some ways not at all; he asks Claire to go to bed with him in the middle of her wedding night when she goes to get some food, and he speaks about women as if they have no more worth than to warm his bed or cook him a meal. Those are not honourable qualities, but when it comes to his fellow clansmen including their welfare and death, he does what he can to ease their suffering; in episode 4, there is a traditional bore hunt and one of the MacKenzie men gets hurt badly. Dougal sits with the man’s head in his lap, softly caressing his forehead while Claire examines the wound. It is a very warm and tender gesture and the picture of the big sturdy war chief cradling his fellow kinsman is emotional. When
Claire gives Dougal a meaningful look that says that the man will not live, Dougal releases the bandage Claire made so that he would bleed out faster and have a quick death. Dougal calms him and talks about their memories together through sobs and tears while the man falls asleep under the clean sky. This Dougal is very different from the tough one that everyone is afraid of; the brutal and sexist Dougal who always has a stern face and will not be embarrassed by anyone. You would think a man like that would not want anyone to see him cry, but a scene like this makes it clear that the Scottish people do not believe that crying makes you look weak, which is a male mythical concept directed at men showing their feelings (Barthes 1973, 124-125). Many of Dougal’s men stood around him in the forest, but crying was not frowned upon at all. It was natural and represents Scots expressing their feelings easy. They are presented as a people full of expression, admittedly mostly agitating ones associated with fights, but also that of happiness and sadness. Being able to express sadness like that when someone has died connotes humanity, which is a word fitting for the Scots depicted in Outlander in general.

4.2 Key Elements
4.2.1 Beliefs
The first encounter with a Scottish character is in the 1st episode when Claire and Frank are checking in at a Bed & Breakfast in Inverness; the hostess, Mrs Baird, is a cheerful and warm woman who happily explains the Samhain rituals to the couple. We know she is Scottish because of her widely Scottish accent and she even gives us a taste of Gaelic when she recites an old saying from St Odhran, a saint celebrated in the fall. We do not know how much she believes but we understand that the Scots of Inverness in the 1940s are traditional. Later in the episode we meet the Reverend whom Frank seems to know from before, and his housekeeper Mrs Graham, who believes in the stories about travelling through the stones. In episode 8, we understand that the Reverend does not believe in the stories; this occurs when Mrs Graham tries to offer an alternative explanation to Claire’s disappearance and he brushes it aside as nonsense and superstition.

Beliefs, or superstition as one would call it today, is one of the most important topics of Outlander’s representation of the Highland Scottishness. This acknowledgement of the belief system poses a problem when telling a story about the past; because it is set in a time before the ideas of enlightenment had conquered society, what we call superstition today was the general truth back then. However, despite the fact that the beliefs of folklore to be truthful were much
more common in the 18th century, we are presented with the same ancient traditions in the 1940s as well. Therefore, I figure that the meaning constructed by the representations here must be connected to the people and the place more so than the time (Hall 2013, 11).

In episode 6, Dougal takes Claire to a water spring so they can have a drink on their travels; after Claire has tasted the water he asks her if she is an English spy. She denies it and Dougal looks suspiciously at her but then let it go and we find out it is because the spring is known to be magic; it is called St Ninian’s spring, or the Liar’s Spring and is said to reveal the truth if someone drinks from it. This is also a typical example of the beliefs of the 1740s Highlanders.

Even though Jamie seems to be one of a kind among his kinsmen, being respectful towards women and simply kinder in general, he has the Highlander beliefs deeply rooted inside him. The highlander ways are signified by family, religion, belief, husbandly duties and loyalty. Jamie’s religious side is signified in a scene from episode 3, when he takes Claire to The Black Kirk, an old church ruin and graveyard. Claire wants to go to find out why some of the boys who come back from there fall ill and dies. The locals believe the graveyard is filled with demons and that they possess the boys who go there. Claire, who is not a believer asks Jamie if he believes in the tales of demons; he explains that he is well educated and hints that would mean he does not believe. He walks around the sunny graveyard and jokes about fairies as if his own culture’s belief system was not real, but then stops, looks gravely at Claire and says with a stressful voice: ‘But, I am also a Highlander, born and bred, and I do not believe in tempting faith by making fun of old nick in his own kirkyard!’ He makes a cross over his chest and keeps walking. This change in voice and mood, together with the specification of ‘I am a Highlander’, indicates that those ‘stories’ are a serious matter for their culture identity.

4.2.2 Closeness To Nature

It is very clear when watching Outlander that the Scots are related and connected to nature. This is one of the most important characteristics in their representation. Jamie is portrayed as a horseman; we see him take care of the horses in several scenes and train them with care. In one scene, he is working with a mare when Claire comes to change his bandage and bring him lunch. He is speaking Gaelic to the horse to calm her, which shows what kind of approach he has in training the animal; the words give a meaning of sensitivity. He is kind towards someone who is inferior to him in the sense that horses are domesticated, and he treats them with respect. They eat sitting on the hay in the stables with the horse eating in the background. It is a very
nature-like scene, with the horse and Jamie chewing at the same time; it is as if they share a meal, which indicates a certain level of equality between the man and the animal.

In the 2nd episode there is a whole scene about caring for horses and their hooves. Had the Scots connection to nature and animals not been of importance that scene could have been skipped. In episode 3, Angus, one of Dougal’s men, is ordered to follow Claire. When she meets up with another woman in the gardens and the focus is turned onto their conversation, we see B-rolls of Angus smelling a flower and examining a plant. That picture signifies an interest in nature, and because he has no other job other than to stand around and wait for Claire to be ready, the picture is a connotation of the interests of the highlanders; Angus has a sort of macho exterior and does not have the look of someone who is interested in flowers, which in turn is connected to the myth about man and flowers. That shot give us a different view of him as a person who cares for living things.

4.2.3 Family

The scenes at Castle Leoch, home of the clan MacKenzie, are very representative of Scottishness and the highland culture. ‘Clan’ means ‘family’, which is self-explanatory, and the notion of family is of great importance to the Highlanders in Outlander (www.dictionary.cambridge.org). The clan comes first; the loyalty the clansmen pledge to the clan laird is sworn on their life and therefore deadly serious. We see such a pledge in episode 4, when all MacKenzie gather at Castle Leoch to meet their kinsmen and celebrate the clan. It is a big feast and in the evening everyone gathers in the great hall to swear their loyalty to Colum and the MacKenzie clan. Colum begins by holding a speech in Gaelic (Murtagh translates for Claire and viewers), saying how proud he is to be their laird and how he hopes they never have to go to war, but if they did he could not wish for better people to defend the clan’s honour. The crowd watches him solemnly, and Colum speaks gravely signifying that this is a deeply rooted system that lies close to their hearts. When Colum has finished, everyone cheers and shove to get first in line for the pledging. There are both men and women in the crowd but only the men take the pledge. This signifies women not belonging to themselves but to a man; they will automatically be loyal if their father, brother or husband takes the pledge.

In the same episode there is a scene where Jamie has to choose which clan he belongs to and that scene indicates what the clan means in the Scottish culture. Belonging, which according to Anderson is a definition of nation-ness (2006, 6, 44), could perhaps be levied on belonging to
a clan as well. Since this clan system is specific to Scotland it even reaches for the belonging to a nation’s specifics and consequently is representative for the national identity. Jamie is a Fraser, but he has MacKenzie blood since his mother is the sister of Colum and Dougal. If he were to take the pledge to Colum, he could claim the position as laird when Colum passed if enough clansmen wanted him. If he does not take the pledge he shows disloyalty to the laird and has to die under Colum’s hand or else be banished from Castle Leoch. This mean certain death since he has a price on his head. However, if he were to take the pledge, Dougal would probably kill him because he wants the position for himself and cannot risk Jamie getting support. Jamie hid during the gathering and both Dougal and Colum looked passed it because he is their nephew. That action signifies another connotation of family; that even though the clan’s system is hard, they ignore it because they care for him. When Claire stumbles across Jamie in the stables where he hides she tells him of the drunken clansmen who attacked her in the corridor, Jamie wants to see her safely back to the castle. He is busted by some MacKenzies, who then bring him in to take the pledge. Inside he dresses properly in the MacKenzie clothes and is given the clan brooch; all clans have a motto and it is written on the brooch. He looks at it, whispering, so the clansmen will not hear, that he is not a MacKenzie. He drops it carelessly while stating his own clan’s motto ‘Je suis prais’. It means, ‘I am ready’; even though it is a life and death matter, Jamie will not run and he will not take the pledge. This connotes the qualities related to the highlanders; loyal to their hearts and to their families; brave, ready to put their life on the line for custom and loyalty.

4.2.4 Customs

I stated earlier that nature was one of the most important connections to make to the Highlander Scots in Outlander; another important parallel is the notion of family. Family seems to be what the Highlanders live and breathe for, which also include Jamie’s views; in episode 5, Jamie’s back is being used carelessly by Dougal to collect gold for the Jacobite cause and Jamie hates it but let Dougal do it anyway. Claire asks him why and his only response is that Dougal is his uncle, which indicates the importance of family and loyalty.

In episode 9, several important scenes tell us about the Highlander culture; they are travelling with Dougal and his party to collect rents. Claire and Jamie have been wed and Claire decides to run away. She then got herself captured by the redcoats, which put all the men of the rent party in danger. Jamie explains that if one of the men of the party had done what Claire did, he
probably would have had his ears cut off or even killed. When Claire tries to thank the men for the rescue they just ignore her and that silence signifies the concept of their specific custom; when you put someone else’s life in danger you are not easily forgiven.

In the evening Jamie disciplines Claire by spanking her with his belt. During the spanking scene Jamie explains the way things are done in the Highlands; that it is always a matter of life and death. By saying that, he defines the Highlands as a hard and tough place. This scene presents a different side of Jamie’s character. He is set on doing what tradition says and the men of the clan expect it. He says it is his duty as husband, which explains how marriage works in the Highland culture; husbands discipline their wives. In the days that follow, Claire obviously feels degraded and infuriated. Jamie, who is raised with that sort of action, does not understand why she is so angry. Finally, things become clarified when Jamie explains the Highlander culture, for Claire’s benefit as much as for the viewers; he confirms that it is steeped in tradition, custom, and ritual. However, he also understands that their relationship needs to be different. Jamie sits on one knee and pledges his loyalty to Claire with a dagger in his hand, just like a ritual the clansmen did when they pledged loyalty to Colum in episode 4. Because of that ritual we know it is a strong promise. Hence, when Jamie makes the same promise to Claire, she understands the sincerity of it and forgives him. This is important because it shows the dark sides of the Highlander culture and Jamie, who is a Highlander at heart, renounces their traditions.

In episode 10 there is a scene depicting clan disentanglement between the Duke of Sandringham and Clan MacDonald. The Duke owes the MacDonalds money and they will square by duelling. Jamie is called in as the Duke’s second and is present on the Duke’s side while the MacDonald has his sons with him. The duel is very civil, with the clan leader on one side and the Duke on the other; they aim pistols at each other and shoot. Clearly they did not aim at each other or someone would have been hit, hence the duel was mostly for show. After the shots took place, they drank together and all was well again. The sons of MacDonald, however, did not feel justice was served and taunts Jamie and the Duke for being ‘mollies’ which is a reference to homosexual men (the Duke was rumoured to be homosexual) (http://rictornorton.co.uk). Jamie reciprocated with something and a brawl arises. This is a scene that signifies the relationship between the clans in the Highlands; they threw dirt at each other’s clans and then fought because someone was offended. When Colum finds out, Jamie is disciplined because it is not allowed to shed another clan’s blood without the laird’s approbation. The scene represents the Scots as hot-headed, proud, and stubborn.
The Highland culture is also represented by honour and fair play; in episode 2, Jamie is to take a beating for a girl who is to be punished because she disobeyed her father. Rupert, a friend of Jamie’s is set to do the beating. Jamie’s shoulder is hurt and when Rupert, after several punches to Jamie’s face and gut, punches his shoulder on Dougal’s order, we understand by the reaction in the hall and Rupert’s expression that it is not entirely ok. The locals, ringed around the two men, enjoy the beating at first and laugh roughly about it, as it is a custom that the Scots are used to; taking a few hits from a friend is no big deal. When the shoulder hit comes, everyone hushes and the atmosphere becomes serious. Dougal’s superiority indicates that he does not want Jamie to forget who is the leader, but he is rough in doing so by inflicting unnecessary pain for a simple justice matter.

4.2.5 Scenery
The Scottish Highlands are known for its majestic landscapes. It is being well used in the series with lots of panning shots of nature in between the talking scenes. Because of the show’s time-fixation we get to travel back and forth in time a lot, depicting different sceneries from different places in time 200 years apart. Therefore, I have divided the results in subcategories, ‘the 1740s’ and ‘the 1940s’.

The opening shot in the 1st episode gives us no indication for where we are specifically, although people from Great Britain or those with some geographical knowledge might have an educated guess. We are presented with a view of the Scottish Highlands with mountains and hills covered in green moss climbing towards the snow-filled top, indicating a cold and wet landscape. There is also no way of knowing what year it would be which mystifies the scene and the narration even more. The narration goes on for almost a minute before we see something else which gives us some information about what time period it might be. There is low saturation in the colours of the first shot and fog prickling about, this too connotes mystery, especially because the narrator talks about ‘disappearances’.

The 1940s
The scenes of Claire and Frank in the 1940s consist of their second honeymoon in Scotland and World War II flashbacks. In the beginning of the 1st episode Frank mentions that ‘there is no place on earth with more magic superstition mixed into its daily life than the Scottish
Highlands’, and since the show itself is about magic and mystery, we can see how the creators have tried to capture that mystical feeling. The show is a history drama which has to be accurate and realistic and at the same time a Science Fiction that has to be magical. There are no obvious special effects which imply the magic, for example when Claire goes through the stones you do not see anything happen, the screen goes black and she simply wakes up in the same location where we last saw her. It seems the creators have been very careful not to make it visibly unrealistic.

When Claire and Frank arrive in Inverness, which is presented as a grey little town with old buildings and few people in the streets, they find that the locals have painted their door-frames with blood. This is a sacrifice to the Saints for the Halloween celebration which in Scotland’s history is called Samhain. The ‘blood around the doors’-sign signifies protection from something; just like the stories, which most people from the west are familiar with, of when in ancient Egypt the families painted with lamb’s blood around their doors to keep God’s angel from killing their first-born son. The hostess of the Bed & Breakfast where Claire and Frank are staying explains that the blood around the door is from a black cockerel and warns them that ghosts are let loose on the Samhain night and will be wandering about. Later in the episode we get to see one of the ghosts when Frank is walking home from the Reverend; rain is pouring and the moonlight shines down on what appears to be a Scottish man (he wears a kilt and a beret) looking up at the window where Claire is brushing her hair and getting ready for bed. When Frank goes up to him he turns to walk away and disappears. The whole scene is filmed to appear very realistic, once again we don’t get to see the ghost disappear, the camera just moves to a different angle and in the next shot you can see he is gone. The blood sacrifice connotes that superstition might still be alive in the 1940s. At least it means that the Scots are a people where tradition and old customs are important.

The interior of the bed & breakfast where the couple is staying look much more modern than the exterior of the town houses. This is the first representation in season one of a Scottish town and its inhabitants. Inside the Bed & Breakfast we get to see still shots of many stuffed animals which signifies hunting and nature and gives a bit of a scary impression. The room where they are staying have a fireplace and very flowery wallpaper. Collectively for all Scottish interiors we are presented with are that they all have bookcases or shelves stacked with old books, more for décor than reading it seems; behind the desk at the Bed & Breakfast lobby the whole wall is full of books and in Claire and Frank’s room there is a bookcase visible against the wall as well as in the Reverend’s house, not just in his library but everywhere throughout the house.
The signifier of books is knowledge, which in turn can connote history. *Outlander’s* theme, apart from being a romantic love story, is history and knowledge. Claire only survives in the 18th century because of her knowledge of history, botanic and medicine. The whole series is built upon a historical event as well as Claire’s flashbacks recalling something Frank said or something she did back in the 1940s. History and knowledge plays a big part, maybe the biggest, in the series and by placing books very distinctively in all the interior scenes can be a way for the creators to remind us of that part.

The mysterious depiction of Scotland continues when Claire and Frank go up early in the morning to watch a ritual performed by a local group of women dancing for the sun to rise. They are referred to as ‘druids’ or ‘witches’ and they dance with candle lights in their hands and waltz around the giant standing stones. It too has to do with Samhain and the magic superstition connected to the Scots. The dance is similar to folkdance and among the trees and stones the girls dancing look like fairies. In the 18th century the locals refer to Craigh na Dun as ‘The Fairy Hill’. When the sun comes up it shines on the biggest of the standing stones and the girls all hold up their candles to it as if they worshipped it. We are given hints about the power of the standing stones which is a prominent location of the whole series.

**The 1740s**

Scotland in the 18th century is presented as very rural; the families we meet are farmers and live in cottages made out of round stones with straw roofs. There is definitely a connection between nature and the Scots represented in *Outlander*. Much greenery and forests are shown with bright coloured flowers, sometimes in rough terrain and sometimes very idyllic settings.

One idyllic place is ‘The Black Kirk’ that is central in episode 3 and work as a symbolic sign for the Scots’ superstition; the Black Kirk is spoken about with fear and is said to be a place where demons run free and children who visit fall ill and die. We hear people talk about it as if it is a horrible place, a haunted graveyard of where you should not set foot. When the Black Kirk is finally presented to us it is nothing of what we expect from the lines spoken about it, but an old ruin with ivy growing on it and purple flowers along its walls. Claire’s first impression of it is that it is a peaceful place and not the devil’s snare the Scots describe it as. There are bushes with red berries and the creators decided to film it with the sun shining bright on the green scenery which indicates that it is not such a scary place as superstition claims. That is the intention from the creators as well; the purpose of the scene is that Claire figures out that
the boy who has sickened after spending time at the Black Kirk, has not done so because of
demons, but of poisoning from the plant Lily of the Valley, which has been mistaken for wood
garlic. The scene at the Black Kirk is connected to the representation of the Scottish people as
religious and superstitious, a superstition Claire constantly proves wrong; this is a way for the
creators to make the show more like the real world than a fantasy world, by having Claire
patronize the superstition as silly.

Castle Leoch is the MacKenzie clan household where Column and his family, together with his
closest clansmen, live. The first time we see the building is in the 1940s when Claire and Frank
visit the ruin and go inside to find the outmoded surgery where Claire later in the show will be
working. When she arrives to the castle grounds in the 18th century there are many flashbacks
to her time there with Frank which had been just a few days earlier. The castle is plain and dirty,
not unlike the clansmen who live there. It lies upon a tiny hill and looks rough and cold; in front
of it are a few cottages and hay spread on the ground, probably to make it easier to walk on the
otherwise muddy and wet ground. Mud and dirt are recurring things in the scenery which are
to be associated with the Scottish highlanders; the highlanders are depicted as rough, sturdy,
dirty, strong and solid, therefore it makes sense that the castle where the laird of a highland clan
lives would signify the same meaning. The castle is home for the clan MacKenzie and the
gathering spot for when the whole clan comes together.

The castle setting gives a feeling of family with horses being taken care of, dogs running around
the grounds and children playing in the courtyard with background chatter of everyday life. The
interior has different levels of simplicity depending on who’s room you are in; Claire is a guest
and gets a well-furnished room with a four poster wooden bed, a big majestic rococo chair and
some small paintings on the walls; Column’s study is quite small with only one window, but
elegant with a cloth-covered desk and throne-like chair. The walls are covered in cloths painted
with trees and Scottish soldiers on horses prancing and there are books everywhere with
standing coronas lighting up the room.

The kitchen is at ground level and has a stone interior with herbs and flowers hanging from the
low ceiling. There are vegetables in big twinned hampers that probably comes from the gardens
surrounding the castle; this helps give meaning to the importance of family and the togetherness
that it represents with the rural life and everyone helping out to keep life at the castle going.
The great hall where they dine has a high ceiling and big stone pillars and wooden decoration
to make it look gallant. There are gigantic iron coronas hanging from the ceiling as well as
standing around the hall. A big hearth takes up half of the wall at one end of the hall and that is
where Column sits in his throne at a long table looking out over the room with his wife and son on the right side and Dougal on the left. Columns chair is the only one bigger than the others which puts his wife and Dougal at the same position. The other clansmen and women dine below them at clothed tables sitting in long rows on simple wooden benches. At ‘The Gathering’ in episode 4 the hall has been decorated with thistles everywhere and banners hanging from the ceiling to celebrate the clan. The thistle is Scotland’s national flower, hence a sign that signifies nationality and the celebration of Scotland as the home of clan MacKenzie.

The surroundings of Castle Leoch are decorated with trees full of autumn leaves in bright colours and sheep grazing the grounds. There are wide landscapes around and grassy hills in the background. Castle Leoch is the basis for the representation of the clan society in Outlander and explicitly express familiarity and nature orientation.

In episode 4 when all members of the clan come to Castle Leoch to celebrate there is much Scottishness represented; the MacKenzies have put up camp in the forest and are dancing and singing whilst cooking over open fire, children and adults are running around playing and chasing each other. Laughs and happiness permeate the simple scenery and craftsmen are working and getting their hands dirty. The most prominent of all signs in the scene are the bottles in everyone’s hands. This scene tells us that the Scots are drinkers, they are friends, they are family oriented and they feel much comfortable in the midst of roots and leaves.

4.2.6 Clothes
The clothes play a big part in the representation of the Scottish Highland culture in Outlander. The tartan is one of the most famous patterns in the world connected to a nation and a culture; it is worn by every Highlander seen, with a few exceptions in episode 4 at eh Oath taking were some noble women are seen in the crowd without the pattern. The tartan has been connected to Scotland for hundreds of years and are part of the Highland dress (www.ne.se). Every clan in Scotland had their own colours, this is still the case but today anyone can apply for having their own design made.

The clothes of the Highlanders are, like the people, associated with nature. They are in dark and dull colours, mostly green and brown. Colum’s wife, who is high in rank, still wears dark brown colours and simple clothing. The likeness in clothes indicates an equality within the clan, as opposed to if the laird would have adopted the French or English fashion for wealth which had bright and shiny colours.
The men wear high leather boots and kilt, one part of the kilt is thrown over the shoulder and used as a blanket if needed. Stuck to the kilt close to the shoulder is the clan’s brooch and a leather belt holds the kilt together; historically correct the kilt is a big pile of fabric which has to be held up by a belt, it was not a skirt which many people might think. When it is cold both women and men wear fur and the women’s dresses are made out of thick wool. They wear many skirts underneath the main dress with a corset and varieties of bustles and cage crinolines.

The diverseness to the English redcoat uniformity, displays itself to the variety in the Highland soldier’s uniforms. They really did not have any special uniforms in Outlander’s version, other than the same tartan on their kilts. They also seemed to be dirty all the time with mud on their clothes and especially on their knees as an effect from the kilt, but also is a sign of the Scottishness that is rough and dirty. The little boys did not wear a kilt but a beret and many of them seemed to be gingers, as is the Scottish hero of the series, Jamie. The little girls wear a headscarf while the maids wear a bonnet.

A significant scene regarding clothing and its connection to the Highland culture, is when Jamie is getting married and Murtagh gets him the Fraser colours from an old Fraser widow. In that scene we understand what the tartan means to them and the relationship to their clan. In his heart, Jamie feels like a Fraser, and therefore he should wear his own colours.

We are also presented with a scene where Jamie picks up his sporran, which is another thing typical Scottish. The sporran is a traditional part of the male Highland dress as well and has the use of pockets to the kilt (which has none). It looks like a pouch and is usually made out of leather and fur. It is used for the keeping of personal things and we see Jamie pick up his mother’s brooch from there.

In the 1740s period in episode 1 we see the redcoats for the first time and they are running through the woods shooting at the Scottish Highland soldiers. The only distinction here, which is the major visible one throughout the series, is the difference in appearance between the English and the Scots; the redcoats have bright coloured uniforms, all alike, with white pants and golden details on the red coat sitting quite firmly around the soldiers. They also have tricorn hats and they run with their rifles pointed forward and therefore not at great speed. The Scots in comparison have dark rags draping of their bodies and pistols for gunfire, their skulls are not protected by anything more than a beret and they fly through the woods jumping across stones and rivers effortlessly.
The Redcoats have their hair tied in a ponytail which is curled nicely and stays together with a white ribbon. This is a sign signified with formal posh-ness which connotes a certain culture. The Scots in, in contrast, wear their hair down mostly and it is stripy with a dirty look to it. Their hair appearance signifies a ruggedness and therefore connotes a different type of culture in this context.

In episode 11 we see shots of Claire’s wedding rings on each hand; one smooth golden ring for the English Frank and one dented and rough in iron for the Scottish Jamie. The rings are representations that stand for concepts of the nationalities presented as well (Hall 2013, 2,4).

4.2.7 Language
A shared language plays the key role in a construction of a culture. This is agreed upon by both Barthes and Hall, as well as Edensor and Anderson. Gaelic (Scottish) is the indigenous language of Scotland and a big part of Outlander. The Highlander all speak Gaelic fluently and it seems their first language in the series. They use it to exclude Claire and there are never any subtitles therefore we as an audience are excluded as well (should one not belong to the people left who actually speak Gaelic).

Sassenach is the most prominently used Gaelic word and I made clear earlier that it was used with both love and hate. Claire is called Sassenach for the first time in the 1940s, therefore it is still being used as a distinction between Scots and Englishmen in the 20th century. Laoighire, a girl who is in love with Jamie, express her feelings about Claire when she calls her ‘an English bitch’; she could have just called her a bitch but the nationality gives the sentence a different connotation. Without it Laoighire signifies resentment, but with it she signifies resentment towards the English as well. The connotation can be stretch to hatefulness towards the oppression and by that Laoighire states her nationality and belonging-ness to Scotland.

Other than the Gaelic we hear several Scottish words within their version of English being used which can be connected to Scottishness. ‘Lass’ and ‘lad’ are such words and used frequently; ‘bonnie’, ‘wee’ and ‘ye ken’ are other expressions specifically used by the Highlanders. They also have a rougher language than the English, using swearwords and joking freely about sexual intercourse with animals and such; Angus is described as ‘a shagger of wee beasties’.

In one scene Claire imitate Angus when he says ‘tis very strong’ about port wine and Claire replies ‘tis’ with emphasizing on the pronunciation and thus signifying a difference in language
and dialect. Over all, the language itself points out the Scottishness, because there is no doubt
that it belongs to a certain culture and nation.

4.2.8 Music
Scotland is recognized for a world known specific type of music, namely that of the bagpipe. The Highland bagpipe is the national instrument of Scotland and even though it may not have
derived from the country it is well connected to its culture. *Outlander* is full of Scottish music
and a great part of it is played with bagpipes. In few scenes we even see the piper or pipers play. Usually the pipe music is connected to what is in shot and is played when there are Highlanders
in view. When the English General is sitting down to dinner in episode 6 there is piano music
playing which sounds like it is coming from a cembalo.

Another important musical contribution is the intro, which specifically connects the music to a
sense of nationality and heritage; it is the famous *Skye Boat Song*, which is about the escape of
“Bonnie” Prince Charlie after the Battle of Culloden defeat. It draws upon the Scottish heritage
and is an obvious connection to the historical event. It was written in the 19th century and has
been adapted several times. In *Outlander* the lyrics has been changed so that it would fit Claire’s
character instead. The song is well known in Scotland and is part of the romantic hero-story
that keeps the Prince alive.

The music adds to the sense of Scotland every time there is a view of a Scottish landscape with
majestic hills and verges, there are drums in the music to enhance the feeling of power and
largeness. The music for the television series, including the intro song version, is written by
Los Angeles composer Bear McCreary (ww.imdb.com).

4.3 Scots vs English
The distinction is what makes the sign (word) meaningful; something is Scottish because it is
not English, and so on. (Bignell 2002, 8-9) Important to remember is that these distinctions
have meant different things to different social groups in different places and at different times
in history, which implies that the meaning of a sign not is absolute (Bignell 2002, 6). This
semiotic explanation is fundamental in the representation of Scottishness in *Outlander*, for the
concept is presented as an opposite to another concept, namely English-ness.
Claire the Outlander

Claire is English and in many ways portrayed as the opposite of Jamie; she is clean and slender opposite his brawny shape. She is also formal in many ways, which are typical English characteristics in Outlander; formal versus relaxed are key signatures for the representation of the English and the Scots.

Claire is also referred to as ‘Sassenach’ in both times and in the 1st episode in the 1940s, the Reverend clarifies the word as ‘outlander’ or ‘English’. In the 1740s she is called a Sassenach many times, sometimes in a humorous and loving way and sometimes with hate behind it. For the viewers it is because of Claire that we instantly understand the feelings the Scots have towards the English. Before we are told any information about what year it is and where in history Claire ended up, we are clear about the fact that the Scots do not like the English; they save her from the English officer but are highly suspicious of her, which indicates a strained relationship between the different people. When Claire arrives at Castle Leoch, Mrs Fitzgibbons looks at her almost frightened and definitely suspicious. The suspicion towards Claire being a ‘Sassenach’ spy goes on for several episodes and signifies how difficult it is for the Scots to trust someone who is English. Because of the time-fixed narrative we learned in the 1940s part that according to history, the redcoats harassed the Highlanders in the 1740s, which explains the hostility towards Claire. The suspicion is connected to a concept of fear.

General Differences

Jamie has a special relationship to the English. He has been flogged three times by the English Captain Randall and have extreme scarring on his back to show for it. When Claire cleans one of his wounds in episode 2, and several years have gone by since the flogging, he tells Claire that he was being held prisoner under charges of ‘obstruction’. When she asks what it means Jamie turns around and says, serious and somewhat scornful: ‘I suppose it is whatever the English say it is’. Because the series is built on the English versus the Scots, we as viewers pick a side to root for. The sentence connotes the concept of oppression; since Jamie is the Scottish lead role and we have heard the horrible things the English has done to him, we are now certain that the Scots are the ones we should feel sorry for and side with.

The English soldiers (not deserters) in general are presented in contrast to the Scots as formal, uptight and clean. That is the opposite of the Scottish soldiers and also why the English seem not to like them; they express their opinions on the Scots as uncivilized in episode 6. They also
signify superiority, not only in language but in placement of characters; for example, when Claire and Dougal are surrounded by redcoats in episode 5, the redcoats are placed on high ground looking down on them from different angles.

A signature for the redcoats are their mannerly behaviour, mostly seen directed towards women, but depicted in other scenes as well. In episode 5 when Claire is trying to take the goat back to its family and Dougal and Angus start screaming at her, an Englishman steps out from under a hut. At first we only know he is an Englishman because of his accent which differ distinctively from the screaming Scots. We also know it because of the politeness in his line: ‘Is everything alright, madam?’ He wears white clothes with a leather apron and has his long hair in a nice ponytail. At first sight one would think he is a blacksmith or a farrier (he turns out to be a redcoat) and the Scots immediately get hostile and humiliating towards him. He is standing alone in a village full of Scots staring him down and he dares to question them, this signifies bravery, which in turn can be connected to the concepts of British military discipline or an emotional nation-ness because he feels one of his own are in danger (Anderson 2006, 4). In excess of that analysis, he does it (unarmed too) because a woman is being harassed, that in turn signifies chivalry. This scene connotes a contrast between the Englishman and the Scots, where the English are kind towards women while the Scots are degrading, for we see no real difference in the Scot’s treatment of women, as we do this Englishman’s. The contrast increases with the Englishman, all dressed in white, standing out from the dark-clothed Scots.

**Brigadier General Lord Thomas and company**

The most important representation of the difference between English and Scots in all of season 1 is when Claire and Dougal are taken to Brigadier General Thomas, who has set up camp in a Scottish village.

When they ride in to the town, we see one of the redcoats spit after Dougal, he is clearly not welcome, even though they are on MacKenzie land. The redcoats we see, march upright and have much more formal military rules than the Scots; for example, none of the redcoats gets off their horse until the leader says ‘dismount’. This is put in to contrast from a scene in the 2nd episode when the Scottish party arrive back at Castle Leoch and everyone just jump right off their horses. The redcoat commander also tells the soldiers that they should make sure their horses are watered themselves: ‘I do not trust our Scottish hosts’. This whole part of the episode is a big fight over who is the better people, and who’s culture Claire feels she belongs to.
When they arrive, Claire’s narration says that she is looked upon with sympathy and respect instead of hostility and suspicion; this signifies that she feels more at home with the British Army than with the MacKenzies and once again states the belonging-ness that Anderson speaks of (2006, 6, 44). As soon as Claire enters the room where the General sits with his associates they all stand up, which is a sign of politesse once again. Lord Thomas expresses his happiness in finally gazing upon ‘a lovely English rose’, as if all the Scottish women are ugly.

When the General and his men talk about Scotland it is with despise, they called it a ‘blasted turf’ and they complain about the crudeness of the country, as well as its inhabitants. Lord Thomas asks to be introduced to ‘this Scottish nobleman’ and refers to Dougal, who in contrast to the slim and posh general, looks like a muscly giant. He is presented as a war chief and everyone around the table nods and agrees degradingly that he has the look of one. One of them even calls him a ‘fine specimen of the local inhabitants’, making it clear that Dougal is of a lower class. They keep insulting him to his face by saying that his English is offensive to hear because they do not understand it. An important representation is when the General states that the world would make more sense if everyone spoke like Londoners, whereas Dougal replies that Lord Thomas should return to London if he wanted to hear that form of English. The cheery atmosphere turns serious at once and Lord Thomas calls out the Scots on not being the ‘loyal British subject that they ought to be’. This is a very clear representation of who the English are in Outlander; they are the oppressors, the posh and snobbish bullies that make the Highlanders feel like lesser of a people. And with this representation, Outlander’s representation of the Jacobite cause becomes justified by the viewer.

Lord Thomas and his company continue to taunt Dougal and the Scots, for example by making jokes about Dougal’s kilt and call it a ‘woollen skirt’. Lord Thomas explains to his fellow redcoats that he heard that asking someone what is underneath the kilt is a grave insult. Then he goes about to ask Dougal what he wears underneath; this representation is a clear sign that the entire point of the recital was do insult Dougal, in turn connoting malignity.

Despite the mean insult, the high ranked redcoats do come across as silly and wimpish; when Randall storms in to the room, Lord Thomas throws himself over the bottle of claret and yells ‘You’re putting the claret at risk!’. These are times of war and he cares more about the claret than anything else, signifying a dense sense of priority. Randall sarcastically points this out as well, but Lord Thomas seems to take him seriously, which is another sign of silliness. Dougal shows his feelings towards the company several times by rolling his eyes, which signifies the look someone gives a fool.
The Englishness represented by Lord Thomas and his company is not flattering in any way. However, after the meeting in the dining room Claire helps a hurt soldier down below and we see another side of the English; in one shot we see one of the soldiers give Claire a handkerchief he got from his wife for good luck when he went out to war. That shot is unnecessary to the story but important to represent the English. The show never gets on a personal level with any redcoat soldiers, they are usually shown in group as insensitive. This scene indicates that this soldier, one amongst thousands, has a family back home and a wife that he misses. He gives this handkerchief up for the fellow soldier to stop the bleeding. He might not ever see his wife again and this signifies selflessness which in turn connote an idea of the individuality within the masses. This representation of the English gives the redcoat army soldiers a face. The series representation of the English over all is bad, this scene is the only one that shows a good side.

5. Discussion

By studying the first season of Outlander, I have examined the appearance and representation of the Scottish Highland culture. Now I will continue to reflect upon the connection between a television show which represent an important time in a nation’s history, and the possible upholding of national identity that could bring. I will attempt to compile the results with all the centred theories throughout the discussion instead of separately adding them, for they do intersect in some ways. Critical to inform about is usage of the word ‘myth’; Barthes’ use of the word is about a concept that is interpreted by people and Edensor uses it as a mythical saga, such as the tale of William Wallace. To avoid confusion, I will use the word ‘legend’ when I am referring to Edensor’s thoughts.

Wielding Stuart Hall’s representation theory on Outlander’s Highland culture, asserts a definite shared language in the Gaelic which is the key for a culture to evolve and sustain itself (2013, 4). Gaelic was banned after the Highland Clearances and slowly diminished into a minority language. The language is a connotation for the myth surrounding Scotland, and has been of importance in Scotland during the 21st century; in 2005 the Scottish parliament passed through an act which secured Gaelic as an official language of Scotland and commanded it equal to the English language. It was done because of the decline in people who had it as mother-tongue or spoke it fluently, and a way to keep the heritage alive. According to Anderson, comprehension
and a shared language is crucial to a nation and society (2006, 32-35). In *Outlander* there is the Gaelic language to represent a historical time and a long Celtic tradition which dates back to the origins of the country (Haeger, 1982), but there is also the English language with a Scottish accent. The Scots’ accent is often known for being difficult to understand and in the scene where Lord Thomas insults Dougal for his accent, a myth derives through language about the English depiction; the English feel alienated towards Dougal because they do not share the ‘same’ language (not London English) and thus their national consciousness separates them from the Highlanders (represented by Dougal) (Barthes 2006, 32-35). The Gaelic is sometimes performed by actors who has no previous experience with it and pronunciation may be a noticeable problem for the Gaelic speaking Scots of the world. Obviously they speak more English than Gaelic in the series to make the audience understand, even though it may not have been so in history. In *Braveheart*, which is set in medieval times, it is impossible to make it absolutely historically correct when it comes to language. However, Edensor says that it may be the emotional authenticity that satisfies the audience, rather than historical accuracy (2002, 156). This could be the way with any historical production, but in *Outlander* it seems to make perfect sense; when the stories are so romanticized in real life, the wrongly spoken Gaelic and ‘too much English’ might be accepted by the real Scots and instead of seeing the faults in the show, they would feel a national belonging.

The Highlands are known for its sparsely populated areas and the small communities that one comes upon going through the Highlands have an old-time look. There are many old buildings kept in good shape and much rural operation in the glens. All *Outlander* filming locations are situated in Scotland, therefore recognition itself can trigger national emotions. Nevertheless, the places belonging to the story exist in real life but are not filmed in the historic real place due to modernisation and such, meaning other buildings and towns ‘stand in place of’ the real location (Hall 2013, 2,4). This is another level of representation where something that is not the real thing, still can represent it. The 1940s town of Inverness is represented by a little town called Falkland. We only know it is Inverness because the characters say it is. The inhabitants of Falkland may feel proud to live there because their town is on television but so may the rest of the country. This, Edensor brings to attention when he brings places to light and states that a place which might be embedded in a local context still serves the nation as an identifier (Edensor 2002, 51). Therefore, because Falkland’s square now takes part in a television series about Scotland’s important heritage history and together with many other things represent Scottishness, it can draw upon a national belonging from all over the country.
Tradition is something that always connects to the national, as are landscapes and the country’s history; cultures are partly sustained by the representations of these things, or the reinvention of them (Edensor 2002, 139). The blood painted on the doorframes in Inverness is one example of tradition that represent Scotland; it is a connotation for Samhain, which still is a celebrated holiday in Celtic countries today. Even though people may not put blood on their houses, they can feel familiarity with the representation.

The Highland landscapes presented are beautiful and romantic; the ‘Fairy Hill’ Craigh Na Dun is a good example with its giant standing stones and view out over the glen. Usually there is fog surrounding it, making it look extra mystical. Edensor says that movies made in the US (Hollywood) depicting a different culture than their own, reconstruct the nation involved by showing tradition, landscapes and history associated with it (2002, 146). According to his references the usual argument is that the commercial strategies used by Hollywood and its equivalents in television to portray historical legends (Mulan, Robin Hood), weakens the national and national identities portrayed (2002, 145-146). Films representing Scotland have been criticized for depicting a ‘romantic dream landscape’ which means the loss of ‘authentic Scottishness’ (according to the critics) (Edensor 2002, 147). Regarding Outlander, when it comes to a romanticized scenery it does have some similarities to films like Brigadoon (1954); Claire and Jamie have picnics on the hills and they have sex on top of Craigh Na Dun, very poetic. However, Claire and Jamie’s love are constantly interrupted by the dystopian evils surrounding them; Randall, Dougal, the English and the Battle. Therefore, I would argue that the story and scenery represented in Outlander is less stereotypical then the common portrayals.

Considering the characters, the creators do use the established Hollywood plots containing sexuality, action and romance, probably to reach a global audience who are familiar with that. However, in this case the series are not based on the legend of ‘Bonnie’ Prince Charlie, even though that is a mythical concept the series draw forward, but on other characters surrounding him. Even though it circles around a love story, the national identities are portrayed by so many (not just Jamie) and some of them break the stereotypical hard Highlander down by, for example, being delicate instead of tough. The story being political as much as romantic also helps the identities and nationality not to weaken by the, perhaps obvious, plot. Edensor emphasizes on the one-sided view of the critics who claim the national is ruined in exploited ‘Americanised’ films. He believes there are more than stereotypes coming out of them. He claims this, using Braveheart as proof against the critics; the impact Braveheart had on Scotland and many of its inhabitants is enough proof that an exclusive notion of national identity does
not exist. National identity comes in different forms, from different representations, even modern ones and does not only exist in history, tradition and folklore (2002, 169). *Braveheart* actually added to the legend about William Wallace, it came as a new representation and brought with it a wave of boosts in the heritage industry and political arenas. *Outlander* has boosted the tourist industry as well which shows that at least the world outside of Scotland are keen to see the landscapes represented in the series. Even though they may be a bit stereotypical in the mystification of the Highlands, the hilly Highland landscape *is* beautiful and connects the Scots to their heritage Highland culture; it is still the same land their ancestors walked on. When *Outlander* puts it on the map the way they have in their depiction, involving it with folklore and an ancient past the Scots are well aware of, the sentiment towards a homeland and history is right there on the screen being presented to the world as a landscape to be proud of.

‘The Skye Boat Song’ is known all over Scotland and is one of many that were written about ‘Bonnie’ Prince Charlie when he fled after The Battle of Culloden. Using a song like that contributes to the national feeling expressed. It has been recorded several times before by artists like Rod Stewart and Tom Jones. Perhaps McCreary’s remake is too much for some Scots because it changes the man in the song to a woman, and therefore the whole concept of the Prince. It is a catchy song and McCreary’s version involves much bagpipes and drums that signifies Scottishness as well. The song is still recognized as a tribute to the Prince’s escape and by involving the real history in the fiction, it can help with the sense of nation-ness because it still means something in Scotland. For example, Scotland has no official national anthem of their own, God Save the Queen works as theirs’ as well as the British one; however, at football and rugby games ‘The Flower of Scotland’ is played and it is said that if Scotland ever becomes independent, that is one of the songs considered for national anthem (www.news.bbc.co.uk).

‘The Flower of Scotland’ is about Robert the Bruce’s victory over King Edward II of England in the 14th century (*Braveheart*) and thereby about Scotland’s independence from England. That song is a representation of a historical event that happened a very long time ago and because this is considered to be Scotland’s national anthem, it emphasizes on the fact that it means a lot to the Scottish people. ‘The Skye Boat Song’ is a representation of another historical event and is one of the most famous and often sung folksongs in Scotland which indicates the importance of that event as well (www.poetrybyheart.org.uk). The song stands in place of the historical event which in turn connotes the national belonging-ness.

A prominent, maybe even most important, visual Scottish sign is the tartan. It alone can evoke national feelings. Woven in to the culture and associations with family, where the patterns are
an indication of where one belongs, makes an even greater impression and impact. No doubt, this part of the series, where the tradition of the tartan plays a big role and get much commentary in the story, makes the Scots feel proud of their country. The tartan pattern has been copied all over the world and are being used as school uniforms, golf wear and in other institutions and corporations. The Scots have a different relation to the tartan and many outside of Great Britain may not even know what the pattern comes from or what it represents. With Outlander being a worldwide distribution, the world learns about Scotland’s culture by watching it and with tartanry being presented as a nice family oriented thing, it would bring pride to belonging to the culture. There are weaving mills throughout Scotland producing tartans only and it is worn by the British Royal Family as well to include Scottish culture in to the British one.

I wrote earlier that representation is to ‘stand in place of something’ and is understandable to us because of a shared language (Hall 2013, 24). Barthes said that these mythical meanings represented in media texts are linked to how natural the audience perceive it to be. The myth means the concept has been naturalized; in Outlander’s version of 18th century Scotland, several representations give us indication that we are in Scotland specifically. We know this because of associations we have with the country, concepts of representations which have been naturalized. Those associations are somewhat displayed by the characters who stands in place of the concept Scottishness. I, who am Swedish, knows that the piece of fabric that the Scot’s wear is a kilt and that leather bag with tubes sticking out of it is a bagpipe. I know this because of the shared understandings about what things are, a shared language. I associate the kilt and the bagpipe to Scotland and I do this because it has been connected to the naturalized mythical meanings about what is Scottish. Even though the Scots are past creating the Highland culture presented in Outlander, the things that once did, still keep it alive (Edensor 2002, 17). With that said, with the risk of sounding obvious, for me to have this association we can be sure that the Scots do as well.

Representations in Outlander that connotes the mythical concept of Scottishness, are shown via the Highland culture; the prominent signs displayed through the characters are connected to: shared beliefs, closeness to nature, family orientation, customs and traditions. All these go under the anthropological ‘way of life’ (Hall 2013, xviii) and is what defines the culture from its roots. Since a culture is made up of people, the characters’ representation is essential to display the culture. The Scottish appearance is, among others, dirtiness; a culture is a communion with likeminded people and returning features in different characters assure that they belong to the same culture (Hall 2013, 4). The dirtiness especially, bring the Scots together
and differentiates the Highland culture from the English one. Being dirty is usually not seen as a good thing, but in this context when it stands as representation for a people, the dirtiness can be seen as a connotation for carefreeness. It poses them as a carefree people, at least more carefree than the prudent English. Contrasted against the cleanliness of the English (which we are supposed to dislike), it is to be regarded as a good quality. The dirt is also a signification for earth and thereby nature, connoting the closeness to nature that is signifying for the myth about Scottishness. The Scots today probably would not have an objection to the connection to nature and even relish in the fact that they are presented as being more relaxed than uptight. It may however cause a rift in the ones who identify themselves as British. Over all, the distinction is problematizing for the contemporary British identity.

Another connotation is the notion of family; every Scottish character that is shown in the series one way or another indicate belonging and the importance of family relations somehow. Either it is by all the extras presented at the gathering in episode 4 and pledging their oath to Colum to belong to their clan, or it is spoken about or shown by main characters such as when Jamie allows Dougal to use his back as a symbol for hatred towards the English only because they are family. Family, we know, is the essence of the clan system. The clans are still a big part of Scotland’s heritage with much genealogy in work and even though chieftains today exist in a very modern sense, they proudly represent their centuries old clans (www.independent.co.uk). In 2009 the first Gathering in almost 200 years were held and all the clan leaders came together in celebration of their heritage (www.independent.co.uk). Other than that the clans have individual annual gatherings, hence the tradition lives still but in a very different manner. The clan society in Outlander are presented as a light version of the feudal society that it truly was. This is part of the sentimentalization and romantic perspective that the history of Scotland hides behind sometimes. It was a horrible system in many ways with extreme inequality and violence, some is shown on Outlander but not in the extent that makes us dislike the system (which we should). It may however be easier for the Scots to accept the historical difference because the stories they here about the clans may be romanticized versions in the first place; all Scots may not be well-grounded with their history but with their folklore. Consequently, a disregard towards depictions such as Outlander, who is quite historically correct in many ways but fails to include all sides, has potential to be welcomed as a legit national representation. Perhaps that is why Braveheart made such an impact as well; because the Scots cherish their sentimentalized heroes, even though they know it was different in real life.
Regarding the display of Hall’s ‘shared meanings’ and similar look at the world (2013, xix), the belief system is one of the most prominent ‘shared meanings’ represented in *Outlander*, where daemons and fairies are a common part of their religion. Even though it may be so, we get no indication of the English believing in that, or any other Scot’s than the Highlanders; therefore, with that choice of depiction, together with Frank’s statement about the Highlanders superstition in episode 1, we can assume it is part of the Highland culture. The whole story can in a way be connected to the mystical representation of the Highlands; it might be because of the predefined notion of Scotland, specifically the Highlands, as a mystical place that the ‘going through the stones’-story fitted well to the nation.

When the Highland culture is put in context of the 2010s media, the representations of it is soothed and ideal in many ways. There do not seem to be much bad about *Outlander’s* Highland culture; the patriarchal society was not specific for the Scottish Highlands; therefore, I feel ambivalent in discussing it further, but I will. One the one hand, history tells us that women were treated subordinately in many places in Europe at this time; on the other hand, in *Outlander* they separate the English patriarchal way from the Scottish way. The Scots scream and degrade Claire in front of a whole village whereas the English are very polite towards her. The English are degrading in a different way, their insults are embedded in polite conversation and the steamrollering is done with immense authority. Even though both parts are represented as bad, the English are depicted as worse. In history, the clans pillaged and harassed as well as the English but in *Outlander* there is no representation of that. The executions we see are only Scots, the redcoats we see are presented as superiors, and the almost-rapes we actually see come from Englishmen. We are constantly reminded who’s side we are to be on and in excess of the already mentioned, the Highlanders are represented as the underdogs. Because they already are the less wealthy-looking ones, because they are fighting against a greater power and represented as peaceful with nature (good quality), we cheer for them; going for the underdog is a common thing, perhaps it was because people cheered for the underdog that history was so romanticized in the first place. They wanted it to be true. After the Prince left Scotland, songs were written about his return in the dreamy future, thus people still hoped (against all odds) for his return.

In *Outlander*, the English seem to have everything and want more, or they would just get off the Highlanders’ land. This is where the depiction gets inadequate and angled; the politics of the time are presented as uncomplicated and we do not understand more than that the Highlanders want the Stuart king back. History was more complex than that and perhaps a television show could not fit that in without losing something else, but by making that choice
the series expose an anti-English perspective. In turn, that poses a problem for the British identity that exists in the world today. The Scots may identify with their ancestors’ honourable fights but the English can only identify with either atrocious or wimpish people. This representation in general may be rectified on a bigger level with critique of the British Empire. For my essay this representation assures a nationalistic perspective where the Scots are put in favour over the English, not by explanations of history (which still could put the Scots in favour), but by exclusion of it.

Claire and Jamie’s relationship is somewhat paradoxical to the rest of the series distinctiveness between Scots and Englishmen. Instead, their union merges the two nations in a way. Their love is central to the story which could be seen as in favour of the union of the crowns, at the same time Claire converts to some extent and in that time, at that place, she is a Scot. If nation-ness, like Anderson describes it, is defined by a sense of belonging and kinship, then Claire would be a Scot; at first she feels belonging to the British Army and then she feels she belongs with Jamie. Jamie becomes her family and even though it is not in a literal way it can be comparable to kinship (Anderson 2006, 5). Her part in finding the representation of Scottishness is not too big since she is from the 1940s and much of her persona and values is because she is from a modern time, not because she is English. However, if one ignores that and focuses on what qualities she represents they are more alike the Scots’ than the English’. Even though she has some qualities presented as English in the series, such as somewhat formal and classy (at first), she has more of the qualities the Scots represent: close to nature, alcohol indulgent, being sturdy, blunt and handy. She also wears the Scottish clothes with tartan patterns and she decides that the Scots are the better people, for example by defending them at Lord Thomas’ table. Therefore, Claire is one for the Scots to identify with as well and represent a national belonging-ness through her belonging-ness to Jamie and the Highlanders. Because Claire, who is the main character and a good person, chooses the Scots, we are inclined to do so as well.

Edensor argues that despite being masculinist, anti-English and historically incorrect, *Braveheart* can deliver national identities (2002, 168). Despite *Outlander* being stereotypical, anti-English and historically incorrect, it too delivers national identities. According to Edensor, William Wallace, together with other Scottish legends and events like The Battle of Culloden, are ‘complex icons of cultural, social and political belief’ and can thereby, because of their flexibility as legends, recycle and be reclaimed (2002, 168). These legends can be (re)worked into present-day concerns through, for example a television series, and convey messages about the world. The representations of the legends can also convey (national) identities which may
not be representative for one notion of what a national identity is because of the wide range of media and artefacts that represent the legend. Instead they come together as expressions of the same cultural resources but different identities and they do this by recycling the legend into a modern world (2002, 169). After Outlander, Scotland’s heritage and tourist industry got a new upturn; there are everything from special Outlander-tours going out to all the filming locations and historical places to Outlander tartans to buy in the stores. By bringing forth the legend of The Battle of Culloden, Outlander transmits a sense of national emotion (2002, 152). With its many characters and key elements representing Scottishness, contested or not, it is a (re)construction of the national legend but with an added plot and somewhat stereotypical portrayals.

Many in Scotland discredited Braveheart because it was so historically incorrect and because Outlander too is an American production with global interests that makes them disregard cultural/historical accuracy, that may be a reason for the Scots to discredit it. However, if Braveheart had that impact despite being so historically incorrect, Outlander definitely have the potential of working as a political tool and influence the Scots the same way. Maybe it was supposed to, maybe it was not. There is always the question of a good time to release a movie or a television series. The creators could have chosen a different time which was not as crucial to Great Britain as the referendum was. Because they chose that release date one can consider their intentions with the series by contrast if the series had been released at another time. It may have been a coincidence from the creators’ part; even so, that does not change the fact that the Prime Minister at the time possibly tried to stop it because of its potential political influence, meaning that the popular versions of the legends still scare the politicians and by that are taken seriously, not being overlooked.

The intention behind Outlander may be nothing more than storytellers wanting to tell a story. The anti-Englishness is conspicuous and I believe it serves a purpose. It can be seen as an exhortation to the worlds occupiers, for there are still many nations under occupation in the world today. Palestine and Syria are examples where people with one way of thinking about life or a different belief system are oppressed because of it. Outlander depicts that same oppression; the English want to change the Scots, keep them in control and look down on them, because they disagree with a different way to live life and somehow believe they are superior. Perhaps that is why the English are depicted so badly, to make the projection to real life more apparent. We watch a show that takes place in the 18th century and laugh or cry at how they
behaved back then, afterwards we realize, when it comes to acceptance of the ‘other’, greed and conservatism, the world has not changed much.

6. Conclusions

According to Edensor, film and television are possible ways of constructing national identity (2002, 33). A television show that adapts a historical event that happened over 250 years ago and represent a culture that today is proudly displayed in museums throughout Scotland, is bound to resurface national emotion. I argue this and that even popular media such as a global television show, can produce legit national identities on top of the romantic and dramatic representations.

The aim of this essay was to find out how the mythical concept Scottishness is represented in the large scale American television production Outlander and if it consists of national features which can impact the Scots. These national features existed in the depiction of another Scottish legend, William Wallace in Braveheart. That movie evokes national emotion through very stereotypical representation of the Highland culture and I wished to find similar possible features in Outlander.

The Scottishness in Outlander is represented through the storied Highland culture. I found the representation is built upon a distinctiveness between the English and the Highlanders and the tension between them. Because the series depicts a historical event that means a great deal in Scottish history, the possible emotional attachment is greater. The analysis delivered a few key elements which stand for the Highlanders such as the language spoken (Gaelic), the clothing (tartanry), the bagpipe music, nature orientation, customs, rituals and tradition.

The use of the Scottish indigenous (and now official) language Gaelic is of great importance when it comes to evoking a national feeling. According to Hall and Anderson, sharing a language is essential to the notion of culture and nation; Gaelic is very representative for the Highland culture because it was the language the Highlanders spoke at that time. Because it still exists in Scotland today it serves as a reminder of their heritage and belonging-ness to a culture that was brutally exterminated, by the English.
The English are represented as horrific oppressors and the Scots as the fighting underdog heroes. The representation also gives in to the known clichés of Highlanders as muscular, hard warriors who have dirt on their face with honour and pride that touches the ceiling. The clan system was also a major representation but it was too inadequate to give a true portrayal of what is probably the most notable to the Highland culture. However, according to Edensor the historical correctness can be less important and instead the emotional authenticity is what matters to the identifier. That way, a popular culture television show can create national identities even though it may be historically incorrect, as long as the historical event, or legend, is represented in a way that bring out the sentimental value. I find the representation quite historically correct (in what is actually included), with a few exceptions and the line of argument is the clear distinction from the representation of the English. The disengagement from Great Britain was on the agenda in the 18th century and is on the agenda today, especially because Brexit is coming up and the election said Scotland wants to stay in the EU. This representation of a Scotland who wants to be free of the English can trigger a sentimental emotion which turns into a national feeling of belonging-ness with the Scottish people which can lead to them voting YES in the next independence referendum (if there will ever be one). Even if it does not, it can still be an exhibition for the idea of national identity deriving from modern television version of a culture’s ancient legends. The series has been well received in Scotland and the next question and further research would include an ethnographic study where the people of Scotland would be questioned about the feelings regarding this popular depiction of their history and the possible political impact (www.heraldscotland.com).

If the WikiLeaks email is true, it shows the impact popular media has on politics, not to mention the power over censorship the government of the UK has. It proves that national identity (re)emerged from popular media and carrying a possible national emotion can determine the political fate of a nation.
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