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Richard W. Bailey

## Scots and Scotticisms: Language and Ideology

According to the story in Genesis, Adam and Eve recognized their nakedness only when they had eaten the fruit of forbidden knowledge. Like them, the Scots can only have been distressed linguistically when they discovered in the "domestic scottis language"<sup>1</sup> a cause for shame. The history of this "image" of Scots and Scots English has received attention,<sup>2</sup> but it needs to be considered once again, particularly since Scots is the first regional variety of our language to undergo successful defamation in the arrogation of the name *English* to the dialect of southeastern Britain and the concession that Anglo-English is normative.

Thanks to James and Leslie Milroy, scholars are once again beginning to distinguish the facts of language change from the "ideology of standardiza-

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<sup>1</sup>James A. H. Murray, ed. *The Complaynt of Scotlande*, EETS, Extra Series, 17 (London, 1872), 16.

<sup>2</sup>E.g., A. J. Aitken, "Scottish Speech: A Historical View with Special Reference to the Standard English of Scotland," in *Languages of Scotland*, ed. A. J. Aitken and Tom McArthur (Edinburgh, 1979), pp. 85-118; and "The Lexicography of Scots Two Hundred Years Since: Ruddiman and his Successors," in *Other Words: Transcultural Studies in Philology, Translation, and Lexicography Presented to Hans Heinrich Meier on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. J. Lachlan Mackenzie (Dordrecht, 1989), pp. 235-45; J. D. McClure, "English in Scotland," in *The Cambridge History of the English Language* (forthcoming). I am grateful to A. J. Aitken for his critical reading of an earlier version of this essay.

tion." Of course this distinction is more a change of emphasis than a new paradigm of analysis, and all who study language are well aware that the facts of language difference are quite distinct from beliefs about them. Stereotyping the varieties of English has a long literary history from Chaucer's "northern scholars" forward, and what counts as one language variety or several arises from a complex interaction of behavior and ideology. This notion was well known, for instance, to James Murray whose opening chapter of *The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland* contains the germ of the idea: "It is the old phenomenon with which ethnology has continually to deal, of a community of name concealing an actual difference, a diversity of names disguising an identity of fact."<sup>3</sup>

Beginning a century before the union of the crowns, Scots became distinctly "anglicized."<sup>4</sup> While Scots became anglicized, the ideology of anglicization did not follow concurrently. Only in the eighteenth century did the lag between fact and ideology begin to close, and it is the Augustans to whom we owe the evaluative remarks that "explain" those linguistic facts. That's the conventional wisdom. To begin with, we might well question the bias of calling the evolution of Scots *anglicization* at all.

Along these lines, it is worth recalling Murray's allegation that the Scots were innovators and modernizers from the earliest times, and his suggestion that Barbour and the *Cursor Mundi* were more "anglicized" than contemporary texts produced in the southeast of Britain.<sup>5</sup> Pushing that hypothesis further, we might argue that the process of language change in the Older Scots and Middle English period should be seen as the "scotification" of the English. The well-known importation of northern pronouns and -s verb inflection into "English" suggests that Scots and northerners provided a prestige model that eventually prevailed. By discussing language change in terms of *anglicization*, we unconsciously marginalize the northern contribution to the "standard."

The scarcity of overt comments about language varieties in Britain before 1500 has not restrained observers from aggressive interpretation of scraps of evidence, and I only allude here to the well-known statements on or

<sup>3</sup>James A. H. Murray, *The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland* (London, 1873), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Amy J. Devitt, *Standardizing Written English: Diffusion in the Case of Scotland, 1520-1659* (Cambridge, 1989); see also Lillian E. C. MacQueen, "The Last Stages of the Older Literary Language of Scotland: A Study of the Surviving Scottish Elements in Scottish Prose, 1700-1750." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1957; and "English Was to Them a Foreign Tongue," *Scottish Language*, 2 (1983), 49-51.

<sup>5</sup>Murray, *The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland*, p. 24.

expressions of north-south differences found in the *Cursor Mundi*, *The Second Shepherd's Play*, Ranulf Higden, and John Trevisa. I will, however, describe briefly a new piece of evidence that sheds light on the evaluation of dialect differences in the mid-fourteenth century.

At York in 1364, a woman was tried for bigamy. A Scot, she had left her first husband amid the turmoil of the border wars and the plague; twelve years later she took a second husband in the north of England, but was reunited with her first husband when he arrived in York in 1363 accompanying the King on a visit to the south. From a linguistic perspective, the most interesting character in this cause was Thomas Scott (otherwise known as Thomas de Thorpearche), a native of Peebles but since 1346 a resident of Yorkshire. Called upon to give evidence, he struck the court as untrustworthy because of his English:

This witness in his deposition often changed his way of speaking, forming himself sometimes in Southern English, sometimes pure Northern, and sometimes Scottish, sounding the words of the English in the manner of the Scots, and therefore it seems to the examiners that less trust is to be placed in him.<sup>6</sup>

This statement makes clear that dialect differences were clearly recognized and that each variety had a distinct character and a precise evaluation. (This story invites reappraisal of the disagreement between Craigie and Murray about the relation of Scots to northern English: for the former, they were as distinct as this story implies;<sup>7</sup> for the latter, there was but "one language" in the anglophone areas from York to Aberdeen.<sup>8</sup>) What is new in the story of this trial is that dialect shift (or "bidialectalism") was regarded with suspicion.

As I have reviewed the work of others who have addressed the "image" of Scots, I am struck by the tendency—perhaps inevitable—to project present assumptions about dialect and social structure into the past. Let me offer two examples that seem especially clear attempts to map what is commonplace in the present onto the more mysterious past. The first comes from Charles Neaves's "Remarks on the Scottish Language" from the 1860s:

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<sup>6</sup>Cecily Clark, "Another Late-Fourteenth-Century Case of Dialect Awareness," *English Studies*, 62 (1981), 504-5; see also Dorothy M. Owen, "White Annays and Others," in *Medieval Women*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford, 1978), pp. 331-46.

<sup>7</sup>William A. Craigie, "The Present State of the Scottish Tongue," *The Scottish Tongue* (London, 1924), pp. 3-46.

<sup>8</sup>Murray, *The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland*, p. 5.

I ought here to add, what seems to be certain, that beneath the more polished diction of these educated men [Barbour and Wyntoun], there must have lain a ruder form of speech in use among the multitude, and of which we see traces in some of the more homely or ludicrous compositions of a later period.<sup>9</sup>

Hedging an assertion with "what seems to be certain" is a proper instance of the oblique historical style, but can we be so confident that the social structure of the nineteenth century with its distinction between the language of "educated men" and "a ruder form of speech" provides a useful model for fourteenth-century Scotland?

A second specimen arises from the notion that there is an intimate connection between language and people. These are the words of David Craig in addressing

that side of language, its organic connection with the life of the speaker or writer, which is ignored by absolute standards of what language is "best" for a people. Speech has its being in the mass of individuals who use it, with the run and stress, the direction, depth, and force of feeling at work as they live out their kind of life. The sounds and content of the language in which a speaker is brought up will affect his psyche, will to some extent select which elements in it become dominant. Similarly, a change in his experience which begins as the imitation of sounds and idioms not originally present in the speech familiar to him will work back to affect the sources of his feelings.<sup>10</sup>

This idea repeats the conventional wisdom that Walter Scott (among others) was incapacitated in writing "standard English" because the "linguistic division" between English and Scots compelled him to "feel in one language and think in another."<sup>11</sup> Craig's academic hedge, "to some extent," echoes the "seems to be certain" of his predecessor. Yet this notion of a special connection between language and race, creativity and expression, hardly bears close examination—at least if we suspect that Walter Scott and Jane Austen commanded the same fundamental language separated into dialects by superficial features of difference.

In thinking about these matters I have been enormously assisted by two papers given at earlier sessions of this conference. The first, by Dietrich Strauss, offers the concept of "apperceptual languages" to describe the situ-

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<sup>9</sup>Charles Neaves, "Remarks on the Scottish Language," *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 5 (1862-4), 65-78.

<sup>10</sup>David Craig, *Scottish Literature and the Scottish People, 1680-1830* (London, 1961), p. 240.

<sup>11</sup>Edwin Muir, *Selected Prose*, ed. George Mackay Brown (London, 1987), p. 210.

ation in Scotland and England. Strauss defines *apperceptional language* as "an idiom that is considered by many speakers of an area as a separate language without owning the objective characteristics indispensable for that status."<sup>12</sup> Just what these *objective characteristics* might be he does not specify, and resemblance must be defined in terms of a relative rather than an absolute number of shared features. All of the following are descendants of Old English: Boontling, Jamaican Patois, Krio, Anglo-Romani, Tok Pisin. Yet they are far from mutually intelligible and must count as different languages. American Black English, Broad Australian, and the Glaswegian "patter" are much more intelligible, and the communities that use them embrace a strong internal language loyalty. These may count as "apperceptional" languages. At various times, Scots and southern English have been treated as different languages superficially the same or as the same language superficially differentiated. Which view to choose depends, naturally enough, on the ideology associated with language variety, and hence evidence of "perception" becomes crucial in determining the full picture of linguistic history.

The second influential paper is that by Derek McClure, "Scottis, Inglis, Suddroun." McClure assists readers of that *locus classicus* of the dispute in the Renaissance—Ninian Winzet's savaging of John Knox in 1563 for forgetting "our auld plane Scottis quhilk zour mother lerit you."<sup>13</sup> Winzet, McClure explains, was merely ladling on yet more irony in questioning why Knox had not answered the doctrinal questions Winzet had earlier posed: perhaps you are unable to read my handwriting; perhaps you have forgotten your mother tongue. For the purpose of his argument, Winzet could allege a difference in language between his own "plane Scottis" and the variety of English Knox had adopted as part of an excessive "curiositie of nouatiounis." Partisans of the argument, McClure instructs us, may not be the best sources of objective evidence of actual, as opposed to "apperceptional," differences.

All the evidence, therefore, needs to be treated with considerable scepticism since it is possible that "apperceptional" differences conceal fundamental similarity (and vice versa). Consider, for instance, the case of Gavin Douglas's friend, Polydore Vergil (the Italian-born historian of Britain). Describing southern Scotland, Vergil wrote in 1513 that the inhabitants use "the English language":

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<sup>12</sup>Dietrich Strauss, "Scots is not Alone: Further Comparative Consideration," in *Actes du 2<sup>e</sup> Colloque de Langue et de Littérature Ecossaises (Moyen Age et Renaissance)*, ed. Jean-Jacques Blanchot and Claude Graf (Strasbourg, 1979), pp. 80-97.

<sup>13</sup>James King Hewison, ed., *Certain tractatis. . . by Ninian Winzet*, STS, 15 (1888), 138.

In some things there is no difference or dissimilitude [between Scots and English]: for there tongues are all one, the features and attire of bodies like, like hautness and corage in battayle, and equall desire of huntinge to the nobilitie, even from their childhode.<sup>14</sup>

All this seems comfortably familiar until we read a few pages farther in Vergil's history this characterization of the English:

Englishe menn are highe and taule in stature, of welfavored and faire face, for the more parte greye eied; and as thei resemble the Italian in their tongue, soe doe they almost nothinge differ in the lineaments of their bodies . . . (p. 24).

Surely it stretches the idea of "apperceptional" similarities too far if we treat English and Italian as the same language (though Sapir subsumed them in his "Standard Average European"). For Vergil, the similarity arises because both languages employ names for fish derived from Latin (though applied to different species). In short, one can see differences where one seeks for them and similarities where they are scarcely to be found.

All this preamble, then, invites reconsideration of evaluative statements about the varieties of *Anglian*—to select a neutral term that puts "RP" on the same footing with other kinds of English. Arrogating to one variety of English the normative virtues implicit in the term *standard* renders impossible a balanced and impartial picture of the whole. As I argue at length in *Images of English*,<sup>15</sup> most statements about English are proximate rather than ultimate. If I express the idea that one kind of English is virtuous and another vicious, I am expressing a judgment about the people who use those kinds of English, a judgment which in turn mirrors my preferences and prejudices far more clearly than it does the communities so characterized or the qualities of the English they employ.

Explicit remarks about the English of Scots begin sparingly in the seventeenth century and swell to a flood in the second half of the eighteenth when the anglicization of Scotland—at least in writing—had been completed for a century. Seventeenth century comments on Scots and English are exceedingly rare—suspiciously so since the Stuart monarchs had a language policy and worked aggressively to exterminate Gaelic in Scotland and Ireland. This policy apparently did not specify the kind of English to be im-

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<sup>14</sup>Henry Ellis, ed., *Polydore Vergil's English History*. Camden Society, Series 1, 36 (1946); rpt (New York, 1968), 11.

<sup>15</sup>Richard W. Bailey, *Images of English: A Cultural History of the Language* (Ann Arbor and Cambridge, 1991).

posed by draconian measures they adopted to impose the language on their unwilling subjects.<sup>16</sup>

Three Englishmen visited Scotland in 1629, and their journal provides an early translation list giving Scots forms and English equivalents (*lumant* [*sic*] and *chimney*, for instance).<sup>17</sup> These are presented with no particular evaluation, however, and not until after the Restoration do explicit evaluations begin to be expressed. One datum for the alleged seventeenth-century self-consciousness of Scots by Scots has been unearthed by Aitken<sup>18</sup> from a pamphlet of 1678, *Ravillac Redivivus*:

You know I came to *England* the last time upon no other *account*, but to *learn* the Language, and promised to keep *Correspondence* with you upon this *Condition*, that you would make *Remarks* upon my *Letters*, and faithfully *Admonish* me of all the *Scotticisms*, or the *Words* and *Phrases* that are not current *English* therein. I confess that I have a great *Veneration* for our own and the Northern *English* Language, upon the account of the *Anglo-Saxon*, to which they are nearly *Ally'd*; but yet I think it prudence to observe the Rule in *Macrobios*, *Loquere cum præsentibus verbu, præteritis moribus vive*. And therefore am as *ambitious* to write Modern *English*, as any *Gascon*, or *Provençal* can be to write in the Modern *French*.<sup>19</sup>

What makes this quotation useless for Aitken's purpose—as evidence that "the horror of lexical and idiomatic Scotticisms which was to haunt the Scottish intelligentsia through much of the eighteenth century was already part of the linguistic consciousness of educated Scots by the end of the seventeenth"<sup>20</sup>—is that the author was not a Scot but an Anglo-Catholic Englishman, George Hickes (1642-1715), pretending to be a Scot in this anonymous pamphlet written for an English audience. The concluding observation about the relation of Scots and northern English to "Saxon" reflects Hickes's intense interest in earlier forms of the language which culminated in his *Insti-*

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<sup>16</sup>See Richard W. Bailey, "The Conquests of English," in *The English Language Today*, ed. Sidney Greenbaum (Oxford, 1985), pp. 9-19.

<sup>17</sup>C. Lowther, *et al.* *Our Journall into Scotland, A.D. 1629* (Edinburgh, 1894), pp. 41-2.

<sup>18</sup>Aitken, "Scottish Speech," pp. 94-5.

<sup>19</sup>[George Hickes], *Ravillac Redivivus*. 2nd edn. (London, 1682), p. 45. This use of *scotticism* is the earliest so far identified; cf. Fred R. Shapiro, "Scotticism," *Notes and Queries*, 230 (1985), 210.

<sup>20</sup>Aitken, "Scottish Speech," p. 94.



*tiones Grammaticae Anglo-Saxonicae et Mæso-Gothicae* (1689). This quotation testifies to his idea that Scots ought to accept the authority of the metropolitan south in linguistic matters; it is not evidence that they thought they ought to do so. Linguistic anglicization, in short, was not necessarily matched by ideological anglicization.

Aitken's second exemplary passage in support of his view is drawn from *An Answer to the Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* (1693) in which the author apologizes for Scots usage in a published collection of letters written "in a homely Stile."<sup>21</sup> George Ridpath, the author of the *Answer*, was a strenuous protestant who had abandoned his plans to seek ordination in the Church of Scotland in consequence of imprisonment for having attempted to burn down the Lord Provost's house. Making his way as a London journalist and pamphleteer, Ridpath was a Scots patriot (later an articulate opponent of the union of parliaments), but his apology provides little evidence for seventeenth-century Scots linguistic anxiety.

The pamphlet to which Ridpath replied, *The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* (1692) by Gilbert Crokatt, gives a much more useful picture of the Scottish linguistic scene. Crokatt's attack on the Church of Scotland shows that Scots ministers used the vernacular unashamedly both in writing and in speech, not only in Samuel Rutherford's *Letters* (1664) that Ridpath had rather meekly defended but also in many other theological works "written in their own Dialect."<sup>22</sup> Crokatt even provides transcripts of oral sermons of which the following is a specimen:

One who is now a Head of a Colledge, and is look't upon by the party as their great Advocate and Oracle, in a publick Congregation at *Edinburgh*, 1690, in his Prayer had these words, which one that heard them, and immediately committed them to Writing, shewed to me. . . . "It's true, good Lord, you have done gelly well for *Scotland* now at last, and we hope that thou hast begun, and will carry ony [*sic*] thy work in *England*, that stands muckle in mister of a Reformation; but what you have done for *Ireland*, Lord, ah poor *Ireland*"; (then pointing with his Finger to his Nose he said) "I true, I have nickt you there, Lord" (p. 114).

Such evidence makes clear that Scots was used unashamedly and on solemn public occasions by eminent people, and, while the Authorized Version may have influenced public prayers (cf. "thou hast begun"), the presence of Scots in them was also kenspeckle.

It is not until the middle of the eighteenth century (a hundred years after written Scots had become in most respects linguistically *anglicized*) that eval-

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<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>[Gilbert Crokatt], *The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence* (London, 1692), p. 89.

uations at length begin to appear—and then, of course, they are very numerous. Implicit evaluations, of course, may be surmised from the composition and reception of the poems of Grisell Baillie and Allan Ramsay early in the century, and however much these verses may have contributed to the image of Scots as folk speech, they did not evoke censorious stereotypes. Only as linguistic gentility emerged as a governing idea did such poetic experiments become limited to "rustic" sentiments.

Credit for the first of the ever-increasing lists of reprobate Scotticisms is given to David Hume whose compilation appeared in 1752, but it is another of the geniuses of the Scottish Enlightenment who provided the rationale for Hume's effort. William Robertson, in his *History of Scotland* (1753-9), laid the intellectual foundations for the evaluation of Scots, and, though none of the surviving letters from Hume to Robertson deals with this issue, they must certainly have shared their understanding of the evolution of Scots and English and the effect on language of the union of the crown: "the genius of the nation," wrote Robertson, "its taste and spirit, things of a nature still more delicate, were sensibly affected by that event."<sup>23</sup> Robertson's views merit detailed attention:

. . . when learning revived in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, all the modern languages were in a state extremely barbarous, devoid of elegance, of vigour, and even of perspicuity. No author thought of writing in language so ill adapted to express and embellish his sentiments, or of erecting a work for immortality with such rude and perishable material (pp. 389-90).

By the time prose writers had ceased to compose in Latin, the political center of Scottish life had shifted southwards:

The transports of joy, which the accession at first occasioned, were soon over: and the Scots, being at once deprived of all the objects that refine or animate a people; of the presence of their Prince, of the concourse of nobles, of the splendour and elegance of a court, a universal dejection of spirit seems to have seized the nation. The court being withdrawn, no domestic standard of propriety and correctness of speech remained; the few compositions the Scotland produced were tried by the English standard, and every word or phrase that varied in the least from that was condemned as barbarous; whereas, if the two nations had continued distinct, each might have retained idioms and forms of speech peculiar to itself; and these rendered fashionable by the example of a court, and supported by the authority of writers of reputation, might have been viewed in the same light with the varieties occasioned by the different dialects in the Greek tongue; they even might have been considered as beauties; and in many cases might have been used promiscuously by the authors of both nations. But, by the accession, the English

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<sup>23</sup>William Robertson, *The History of Scotland* [1759] (Aberdeen, 1847), p. 389.

naturally became the sole judges and lawgivers in language, and rejected as solecisms every form of speech to which their ear was not accustomed (p. 391).

What better example could there be of projecting the values of the present into the past? The notion of a "standard of propriety and correctness of speech" is very much an eighteenth-century idea, as is the expectation that arbiters of taste reject variant usages as "solecisms."

Hume's application of Robertson's ideas was much less sweeping and lacked historical context. In fact his "Scotticisms" of 1752 seems to have been a private list incidentally set in type by his publisher and appended to the first but not to subsequent editions of his *Political Discourses*. His discussion of the Scots (and American) use of *shall* and *will* is instructive for recapturing the "apperceptual" context:

These variations seem to have proceeded from a politeness in the *English*, who, in speaking to others or of others, made use of the term *will* which implies volition, even when the event may be the subject of necessity and constraint. And in speaking of themselves, made use of the term, *shall*, which implies constraints even tho' the event may be the object of choice.<sup>24</sup>

To attribute a linguistic difference to the "politeness" of the English—however absurd that view may seem to us today—is to accept Robertson's notion that while the English were emerging from "a state extremely barbarous" the Scots lagged far behind.

Robertson and Hume thus provided the intellectual foundation for the ideology of "Scotticisms." In 1760, Hume's list, slightly amended, was republished in the *Scots Magazine* with this preamble: "As they [the usages] may, however, be useful to such of our countrymen as would avoid Scotticisms in speaking or writing, we presume that our republishing them will be approved of."<sup>25</sup> This interest in avoiding Scotticisms led to the momentous visit of Thomas Sheridan to Edinburgh beginning June 10, 1761. Sheridan's lectures were delivered to an enthusiastic audience prepared by Robertson and Hume to receive instruction in English:

These lectures, with considerable enlargements, concerning those points with regard to which Scotsmen are most ignorant, and the dialect of this country most imperfect, he delivered in St. Paul's chapel, Edinburgh.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>David Hume, *Political Discourses* (Edinburgh, 1752), p. 1.

<sup>25</sup>"Scotticisms," *Scots Magazine*, 22 (1760), 686.

<sup>26</sup>*Scots Magazine*, 23 (1761), 389.

Sheridan's visit led immediately to the founding of the "Select Society for Promoting the Reading and Speaking of the English Language in Scotland" with the promise that "even persons well advanced in life may be taught, by skilful instructors, to avoid many gross improprieties, in quantity, accent, the manner of sounding the vowels, &c. which, at present, render the Scotch dialect so offensive."<sup>27</sup> The founding members of the Society included Robertson, Adam Ferguson (Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University), Hugh Blair (the Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres), and prominent members of the legal profession.

There is no space here to elaborate fully the consequences of these events. Suffice it to say that a series of writers continued to expand the short list of "faults" or "improper expressions" that Hume had compiled: James Adams, William Angus, James Beattie, James Elphinston, Hugh Mitchell, and John Sinclair amassed successively larger collections before the end of the century. Although the ideology that derogated Scots expressions had been articulated at last, it did not win immediate allegiance at all levels of society or throughout the country. In 1778, James Beattie (the Aberdonian philosopher and later an enthusiastic anglicizer) objected to the Edinburgh "compromise" in language choice:

I am convinced the great part of Scottish authors hurt their style by admiring and imitating one another. At Edinburgh it is currently said by your critical people, that Hume, Robertson, &c. write English better than the English themselves; than which, in my judgment, there cannot be a greater absurdity.<sup>28</sup>

In 1802, John Ramsay of Ochtertyre (a Perthshire laird) described a visit from an Edinburgh intellectual: "his anglicisms and my scotticisms would never piece together";<sup>29</sup> in 1809, he complained of "the *tonish* Edinburgh misses who are perhaps some steps *above* the standards" (p. 263); in 1810, his cousin was troubled about her son's prolonged stay in England and "the danger of spoiling his language" there (p. 272).

The third quarter of the eighteenth century was the seminal period in the evolution of Scots. Those who looked to London for standards of conduct and opinion were the first to be influenced. James Boswell's *Account of*

<sup>27</sup>*Scots Magazine*, 23 (1761), 440.

<sup>28</sup>Quoted by David Hewitt, "James Beattie and the Languages of Scotland," in *Aberdeen and the Enlightenment*, ed. Jennifer J. Carter and Joan H. Pittock (Aberdeen, 1987), p. 256.

<sup>29</sup>Barbara L. H. Horn, ed., *Letters of John Ramsay of Ochtertyre 1799-1812*, Scottish History Society, Series 4, 3 (Edinburgh, 1966), 86.

*Corsica* (1768) was savaged by an English reviewer on the grounds of "scarce a page of his work being free from Scottish peculiarities,"<sup>30</sup> and Boswell resolved ever thereafter to invite English friends to scour his writings to eliminate Scotticisms. Scots have long memories, and that ephemeral review was recalled nearly fifty years later as a source for a comprehensive treatment of the subject.<sup>31</sup>

Of course there were exceptions to the relentless criticism of Scottish usage: John Adams's declaration, in 1799, that cultivated Scots "is entitled (not exclusively) to all the vindication, personal and local congruity can in-force, by the principles of reason, national honour, and native dignity."<sup>32</sup> Or Alexander Geddes in 1812:

Yet I cannot help sometimes thinking, that the neglect of cultivating the Scoto-Saxon tongue has been attended with some detriment to the English language; that many words and phrases of great energy and beauty are still preserved in the former which the latter wants, and which all its borrowed treasure but imperfectly supplies; and that, if the Scots, remaining a separate nation, with a King and court residing among them, had continued to improve and embellish their own dialect, instead of servilely aping the English, they would at present be possessed of a language in many points superior to English.<sup>33</sup>

But these attempts to temporize the prevailing mode of criticism are merely nostalgic variations on Robertson's theme. If Scotland had emerged from "barbarism," it did so only briefly at the time of Henryson, Dunbar, Douglas and Lindsay. In the view of the Enlightenment, by 1603, all had been lost or was soon to be so.

In the mid-eighteenth century, most Scots who expressed themselves about language extinguished two centuries of Scottish history and with it any claim of English in Scotland to refinement and elegance. Having determined by contemporary norms that Scots was defective, they projected that evaluation on the past and attributed their own preferences to their precursors. The notion of Scots as an "aperceptual" language was replaced by the idea that

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<sup>30</sup>[Ralph Griffiths], Review of Boswell's *Account of Corsica*, in *Monthly Review*, 39 (1768), 149.

<sup>31</sup>"Scotticisms," *Edinburgh Annual Register for 1811*, 4 pt. 2 (1813), 1xx.

<sup>32</sup>James Adams, *The Pronunciation of the English Language Vindicated from Imputed Anomaly and Caprice . . . with an . . . Analytical Discussion and Vindication of the Dialects of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1799), p. 157.

<sup>33</sup>Alexander Geddes, "Three Scottish Poems, with a Previous Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect," *Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 1 (1812), 404.

it was a debased variety of English. Anglicization was long completed as a linguistic process; anglicization of the ideology of language had just begun.

*The University of Michigan*