

A Study of the Performativity of Waverley from Literary Tourism Perspective

Xueke Zhang^{1,*}, Lingwei Meng¹, Qing Wei²

¹*School of Foreign Languages, Henan University of Technology, Zhengzhou, Henan, 450000, China*

²*School of Foreign Languages, Yunnan Minzu University, Kunming, 650000, China*

*Corresponding author

Keywords: *Waverley*; Tourism; Performance

Abstract: *Waverley* is the first historical novel written by Walter Scott against the backdrop of the Jacobite Rising in Scotland in 1745. The novel focuses on the young nobleman Waverley's journey through the Highlands, making full use of Scotland's natural and cultural landscapes, vividly depicting the natural scenery of the Scottish Highlands, which at the time had not yet been fully caught up in the wave of the Industrial Revolution, and thereby turning Scotland into a Mecca-like tourist attraction. This paper starts from the perspective of tourism performance, pointing out that the Highland hosts Fergus and Flora are the representatives of Scotland's ethnic spirit and ethnic culture, and that Waverley as a tourist from England is a great recognition of Scotland's tourist resources. The aim of this paper is to explore the role of performance in creating the images of ethnic tourism to provide ideas and opinions for tourism development.

1. Introduction

Scott's poetry and novels, as Alastair J. Durie remarks, "played a very significant part. . . . The effect of his novels and poetry was in the first place general, to sell Scotland as a romantic place to discover, sufficiently different to be intriguing, distant but not dangerous, a mix of the new and the already familiar. Scotland became 'Scott-land,' and Scott's land Scotland"^[1]. As the "father of the European historical novel", Scott creatively digs into Scotland's history and culture, providing a picturesque depiction of Scotland's natural and cultural landscapes, constructing a fascinating kingdom of otherness, which inspires the enthusiasm of countless literature lovers. In *Waverley*, Scott focuses on the travels of the English tourist Waverley in the Scottish Highlands and describes the wilderness, caves, streams, waterfalls, costumes and customs of Scotland, emphasizing the primitive imagery and exoticism of Scotland. Michael Mewshaw states, "Much of the pleasure of travel comes from the fulfillment of an early personal desire to escape from the family, especially the father"^[2]. He further emphasizes that "travel is considered a rebellious, even subversive act, as it is through travel that one can be liberated from the constraints and repressions of the daily life and experience a different life"^[2]. Waverley's travels in Scotland are an expression of his escape from everyday life and his liberation from himself. In this sense, Waverley was a typical romantic tourist, experiencing nature through travel and satisfying his romantic fantasy by visiting picturesque landscapes.

As Schechner, a theater director and performance theorist, defines performance broadly in his book *Performance Studies: An Introduction*: performance includes not only “ritual, theater, sports, popular entertainment, and the performing arts, but also social, occupational, gender, racial, and class roles, and even medical treatments, the media, and the Internet”^[3]. That is, all the behaviors referred to are called performances. In the field of tourism studies, the connotation of “performance” has been continuously explored and expanded, from the initial association with theatrical performances to the later emphasis on embodied practices. There is a growing realization that tourists are not passive and visually centered, but rather consume places in a multisensory, physical, and proactive way^[4]. This perspective critiques the theory of the tourist gaze proposed by John Urry, which emphasizes only visual perception, and further develops the connotations of performance. The “gaze” cannot cover the entirety of the tourist experience, while the tourist’s performance includes active bodily participation, cognitive activity, and the gaze^[5]. The tourist’s performances are thus multidimensional and all-encompassing, involving the senses, the imagination and the mind, with body and mind working together. In *Waverley*, host and tourist performances contribute to Scotland building a picturesque and culturally rich ethnic image, promoting the long-term development of Scottish tourism. Domestic research on Scott’s works has achieved some results, but is still at an immature stage and has only attracted the attention of domestic scholars in the last two decades. Among Scott’s many works, there are fewer than two hundred pieces of literature and theses on *Waverley*. In reading them, we can acknowledge that research by domestic scholars on *Waverley* is relatively limited, but nevertheless increasing. The aim of this thesis is to explore the role of performance in creating the images of ethnic tourism through the study of tourism performance in Scott’s *Waverley*. At the same time, interpreting *Waverley* in terms of tourist performance can broaden the scope of research and ideas on Scott’s works and open up new research perspectives.

2. Performances of Ethnic Spirit: Fergus

The ethnic spirit is the soul and the core of a nation. It not only embodies the vitality, creativity and cohesion of a nation, but is also a key factor in its survival and development. More specifically, the strong patriotic ethnic spirit of the Scottish people resists and greatly slows down the process of reconciliation between England and Scotland. In *Waverley*, the ethnic spirit of hospitality and patriotism of the Scottish people is fully portrayed through the performances of Fergus, the Highland chieftain. When Waverley first arrives in the Scottish Highlands, Chief Fergus gives a feast to relieve the fatigue of his distant guest. At the Highland feast, the chieftain gathers almost every member of the clan or anyone connected to the clan, regardless of rank or identity, to welcome him. Waverley is designated to sit next to the chief, which shows the chief’s respect and hospitality. The chief also prepares a variety of food and drink. For Waverley, these foods are commonplace on the tables of English nobles, but in the eyes of the people of the economically backward and impoverished Highlands, this is already the greatest gesture of goodwill they can offer. The hospitality of the banquet undoubtedly reflects the ethnic spirit of hospitality inherent in the Highlanders. It should be noted that this hospitality could be manifested in different modes, not just referring to the cordial reception of the host as defined in The Oxford English Dictionary. Kang-Yen Chiu, in his PhD thesis titled *Hospitality, Nation and Empire in Walter Scott’s Waverley Novels* expands the scope of the application of hospitality with examples including saving people’s lives^[6]. When Edward is in danger of being hit by the desperate deer in the grand hunting, “Fergus, observing the danger, sprang up and pulled him with violence to the ground just as the whole herd broke down upon them”^[7]. Fergus, regardless of danger; tries to save his guest, demonstrating the Highlander’s selfless hospitality. Though Waverley is still injured, he receives great care by an old

man under Fergus's protection. Scott further explains that the old man takes care of the injured man without considering his family background: "this good old man, whose charity and hospitality were unbounded, would have received Waverley with kindness, had he been the meanest Saxon peasant, since his situation required assistance"^[7]. Scott's explanation suggests that the Highlanders' hospitality is universal.

In 1745, Charles Edward Stuart led a rebel army to take Edinburgh. He attempted to secede Scotland from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and use it as a base for a counter-attack on England. On the eve of war, Fergus, demoralized, immediately regained his frenzied energy and fought the enemy with a death-defying attitude, regardless of his own safety. Waverley parted from Fergus in the darkness and Waverley, anxiously watching for Fergus, saw him fighting to the death with Evan Dhu and Callum against a dozen horsemen who charged them with their long swords. This description shows that Fergus was dedicated to the cause of reviving the Stuart Restoration and fought with all his might against the enemy's attack. Upon hearing the news of Fergus' public trial and execution, Waverley went to Carlisle Castle to see his friend one last time. Before the execution, Fergus, undaunted in the face of death, and told Waverley: "I hope they will set it on the Scotch gate though, that I may look, even after death, to the blue hills of my own country, which I love so dearly"^[7]. Fergus did not pray for his life, but his real concern was for the place where his head was placed. If he must die for his country, he does not begrudge it his life and wants the executioners to place his head on the gates of Scotland so that he will never miss the glory of his country. Fergus' loyalty to the Scottish nation and his great patriotic fervor are portrayed at the end of the novel. Fergus succeeds in portraying the ethnic spirit of hospitality and patriotism of the Scottish people with performative behaviors, creating a perfect image of the Scottish nation before Waverley.

3. Performances of Ethnic Culture: Flora

Ethnic culture is the sum of the material and spiritual riches that can embody the characteristics of a nation, produced and created by a particular nation in the practice of long-term common production and life. In the novel, Flora embodies the representative of Scottish ethnic culture, including the picturesque landscape and unique cultural heritage. Normally, each nation tends to idolize or poeticize the landscape of its hometown and has a similar affection for its hometown as the leaves have for their roots. The people of Scotland are no exception. They emphasize the beauty of their homeland as unique and believe that there is no more beautiful place in the world than their homeland. For the Scots, Scotland's natural landscape is the embodiment of the concept of home, the land they share and to which they are devoted. Waverley is taken by Flora to a romantic waterfall, and at this point Scott connects the sublime nature with his description of Flora:

"The sun, now stooping in the west, gave a rich and varied tinge to all the objects which surrounded Waverley, and seemed to add more than human brilliancy to the full expressive darkness of Flora's eye, exalted the richness and purity of her complexion, and enhanced the dignity and grace of her beautiful form. Edward thought he had never, even in his wildest dreams, imagined a figure of such exquisite and interesting loveliness. The wild beauty of the retreat, bursting upon him as if by magic, augmented the mingled feeling of delight and awe with which he approached her, like a fair enchantress of Boiardo or Ariosto, by whose nod the scenery around seemed to have been created an Eden in the wilderness"^[7].

In Waverley's eyes, Flora is a fairy with the cataract as the backdrop. The light of the sun and the darkness of Flora's eyes form a contrast, producing a picturesque effect, since "the picturesque depends chiefly on the principle of discrimination or contrast"^[8]. In the passage, Scott lays a stress on the primitive state of the scenery, and he even traces back to Genesis in the Bible by using "Eden in the Wilderness" to display the primitivism of the Scottish scenery. Flora has a religious

fascination for the natural landscapes of her homeland and is devoted to the land of Scotland. When Waverley proposes to Flora, she refuses, saying that her true love and greatest loyalty is not to people, but to the Scottish Highlands that her ancestors left behind. She cannot marry Waverley because he is a man of domesticity, who cannot love the barren rock more than the fertile glen, the desolate desert more than the pleasures of the hall. She believes that Waverley cannot really understand her patriotic fervor. She was firmly convinced that the beautiful wilderness she carried in her heart would always honor her ardent, generous, and noble love. The elegant, passionate and touching Flora, princess of the Scottish Highlands, had already so devoted herself to the greatness of her native land that she could not marry Waverley from England. Flora's strong character and devotion leave an unforgettable impression.

The sound of bagpipes echoed throughout the feast and the family bard, Mac-Murrough, sang many Gaelic poems, which aroused great interest in Waverley, who was keen to find out what the lyrics meant. The chieftain therefore wanted Flora to translate the Gaelic poetry for Waverley. Flora asked her servant to lead Waverley to a waterfall and said: "Captain Waverley, both because I thought the scenery would interest you, and because a Highland song would suffer still more from my imperfect translation were I to introduce it without its own wild and appropriate accompaniments"^[7]. For Flora, the god of Gaelic poetry exists in this lonely wilderness, so the performance of Gaelic poetry is inevitably linked to the picturesque, beautiful and sublime landscape of the Scottish Highlands, which represents the relationship you have me, I have you. With the harp, Flora recites Gaelic poetry amidst this romantic landscape, conveying Scotland's rich and unique ethnic heritage. It is a raw and distinctive sound, and the harmony of song and harp with the sound of the distant waterfall and evening breeze is a multi-sensory delight. Gaelic poetry and the bagpipes as Scotland's ancient ethnic heritage, were sensitively rendered by Flora in a way that left Waverley amazed and moved.

4. Performances of Tourist: Waverley

Traveling is a search for a potential home for the soul, a second home full of emotional color and privacy, and more than anything else, a spiritual outing and breakout^[9]. The first five chapters of the novel contain a detailed description of Waverley's family background, his education, his dreams and his choice of profession. The imaginative protagonist, seemingly helpless in the face of the monotony of everyday life and education, listens day in and day out to his aunt's tales of ancient Scottish Highland legends, which set the scene for future travels to the Scottish Highlands. American scholar Dennison Nash points out that "the leisure traveler, whether as an individual or as a group, can be viewed as someone who plays an important role in some of the tourist dramas"^[10]. Waverley, as a tourist from the English mainland, was no exception. Tourists reorganize their experiences and journeys by depicting the space and playing the scripts, giving them new meanings^[11]. Thus tourism activities can be seen as a kind of cultural performance of tourists, and this cultural expression makes the psychological and spiritual world of tourists more abundant. In a sense, the performance is the free release of the tourists' deep inner feelings and potentials to the outside, where the tourists' psychological world and the external world complete a sacred and pleasurable handover.

Before the travel, Waverley had fantasized daily about the legends he had heard from his aunt's lips, and his imaginings of the Scottish Highlands at home were actually a kind of armchair imagination that prepared him for the actual performance scenes on the travel. When Waverley travels, he brings with his pre-understanding, expectations, imagination and myths about the destination that are prevalent in the culture of his hometown, and these factors can have a significant impact on tourists' perceptions. During his journey, Waverley feels strongly the contrast

between a wild world in itself and the rich and modern England^[12], and is therefore eager to learn more about the ethnic traditions and customs of the Scottish Highlands, to perform in a way that satisfies his own romanticism, and to actively shape his own tourist experience. John Urry and Jonas Larsen argue that “the tourist gaze is essentially a performance”^[13]. As Waverley roams, he gazes all the places that are different from the English mainland: the sleepy, poor backwoods country, the wild dogs, the great robbers’ dens in the wilderness, the remote and ancient estates of the landowners, the squires who uphold the old customs, the lazy villagers. First, Waverley gives a performance of gazing at the ethnic spirit of Scotland. Watch as Fergus and his righteous brother stand trial. At this point, the court no longer faces a haughty and tyrannical chieftain and the rebellious officers fighting for power, but the suffering Scots who are fearless under the threat of the most barbaric death penalty, fully embodying the strong personalities of the Scottish people. Followed by a presentation of Scotland’s ethnic culture. On his way to the waterfall, Waverley sees the desolation of the castle, the projection of the rocks and the winding pathways, and all these give an impression of variety. Waverley views the Highland landscape through picturesque eyes and listens to Flora explain Gaelic poetry and traditions, learning about Scotland’s unique and profound cultural heritage. With the help of the protagonist’s gaze, the attractive ethnic image of Scotland is portrayed and Scotland’s tourist potential is exploited. Finally, I focus on the portrayal of the protagonist in order to satisfy his self-romanticism. Ian Brown maintains that the wearing of tartan is a performance, to an extent theatricalised, of versions of Scottishness^[14]. Here, the Highland dress is associated with bravery and elegance. When Waverley puts on his tartan suit for the uprising, the natural scenery, the bagpipers and the assembled soldiers form a vivid picture. Waverley feels the pride and bravery of their costumes and flags and satisfies his romanticism. Waverley’s everyday life is in stark contrast to his exciting travel experiences in Scotland and this journey is indeed an escape from his previous mundane life. After the trip, Waverley excitedly tells his compatriot Frank Stanley about the ancient customs of Scotland and his quest for adventure, which fascinates Frank Stanley and his newfound enthusiasm for Scotland identifies him as another tourist in the making. The process in which Waverley presents his travel experiences to others is not only a process of communication, but also a process of enhancing and constructing experience. At the same time, through Waverley’s sharing with others, this act has a propaganda effect that expands the influence of Scotland and promotes local tourism.

5. Conclusion

Performances play a crucial role in the construction of the image of literary destinations. Therefore, we can strengthen the positive role of performance theory to promote the development of modern tourism. This paper examines the tourist performances in *Waverley* from the perspective of literary tourism and shows that Scott shapes the performances of the three main characters: Fergus as a representative of the Scottish ethnic spirit, Flora as a representative of Scottish ethnic culture, and Waverley as a tourist whose performance is an appreciation of the Scottish ethnic spirit and culture as well as an affirmation of Scottish tourism resources. The performances of the three together form a picturesque, culturally rich, heroic and strong image of the Scottish nation, constructing a charming kingdom of otherness that attracts countless literature lovers to travel to Scotland, contributing significantly to the development of the Scottish tourism industry. This study offers a new perspective on how literature and performance can be integrated into tourism promotion strategies. In modern tourism, in order to maintain the attractiveness of a destination, we should fully utilize the positive role of performance in building the images of ethnic tourism. For example, destinations need to explore local natural and cultural landscapes, highlight ethnic characteristics and avoid the phenomenon of Disneyfication to satisfy tourists’ cultural and

emotional needs.

References

- [1] Durie, A. J. (2007). *Scotland and Tourism: The Long View, 1700–2015*. London&New York: Routledge.
- [2] Mewshaw, M. (2005). Travel, travel writing, and the literature of travel. *South Central Review*, 22(02): 2-10.
- [3] Schechner, R. (2002). *Performance Studies: An Introduction*. London&New York: Routledge.
- [4] Perkins, H., & Thorn, D. (2001). Gazing or performing? Reflections on Urry's tourist gaze in the context of contemporary experiences in the Antipodes. *Interethnic Sociology*, 16(2): 185-204.
- [5] Perkins, H., & Thorn, D. (2001). A decade on: Reflections on the Resource Management Act 1991 and the practice of urban planning. *Environment & Planning B: Planning & Design*, 28(5): 639-654.
- [6] Chiu, K. Y. (2012). *Hospitality, Nation and Empire in Walter Scott's Waverley Novels*. Diss. University of Glasgow.
- [7] Lamont, C. (1998). *Waverley; Or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [8] Hazlitt, W. (1905). *Table-Talk: Essays on Men and Manners*. London: Henry Frowde.
- [9] He, J. M. (2011). Landscape reconstruction: A case study of the construction of Guizhou's tourism destination image. *Tourism Science*, 25(02): 1-7.
- [10] Dennison N. (1996). *Anthropology of Tourism*. Tarrytown&NewYork: Elsevier Science.
- [11] Liu, D. Q. (2008). Experience and performance: Tourists cultural expression. *Journal of Central South Forestry University of Science and Technology*, 8(03): 38-40.
- [12] Zhang, J. F. (2004). Landscape and the construction of ethnicity-Taking Walter Scott as an example. *Foreign Literature Studies*, (04): 135-141.
- [13] Urry, J., & Larsen, J. (2011). *The Tourist Gaze*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- [14] Brown, I., & Berton, J. (2014). *Roots and Fruits of Scottish Culture: Scottish Identities, History and Contemporary Literature*. Glasgow: Scottish Literature Interethnic.