

*Look Who's Talking:
Walter Scott, Thomas Raddall, and
the Voices of the Colonized*

CHRIS FERNS

DRAWING COMPARISONS BETWEEN the historical fiction of Thomas H. Raddall and that of Sir Walter Scott has become something of a critical commonplace.¹ Although, as Alan Young points out in his study of Raddall, "there is no evidence that Raddall in any way consciously imitated the author of the *Waverley* novels" (*Thomas* 6-7), there are nevertheless, as Young himself suggests, numerous observable parallels between Raddall's historical novels and those of Scott. Indeed, when one examines the list of authors whose influence Raddall does acknowledge—James Fenimore Cooper, Robert Louis Stevenson, Charles Kingsley, the historian Francis Parkman, even G. A. Henty—it would seem clear that, even if only indirectly, Scott's fictional model must have exercised a decisive formative influence on Raddall.²

This is particularly apparent in the case of Raddall's first three historical novels, *His Majesty's Yankees* (1942), *Roger Sudden* (1944), and *Pride's Fancy* (1946). In fact, if one considers these works in the terms of Georg Lukács's analysis of Scott's historical fiction (30-88), it would seem that much of what Lukács says of Scott could be applied, interchangeably, to Raddall. Like Scott, Raddall chooses protagonists who embody a "middle way," charting a precarious path between conflicting allegiances. Both David Strang, the Yankee rebel of *His Majesty's Yankees*, who ends up fighting to preserve British hegemony in Nova Scotia, and Roger Sudden, the former Jacobite who dies assisting the British in their victorious assault on Louisbourg, are clearly akin to such Scott figures as Edward Waverley or Henry Morton—sometime rebels who end up acquiescing in the established order.

Like Scott's Scottish novels, Raddall's narratives are set in a historical context in which a new order is emerging from or is supplanting an older one. There are clear parallels between Scott's portrayal of the struggle between the old Stuart order and the new Hanoverian establishment and Raddall's depiction of the supplanting of French rule by the British, or of the failure of the Yankee challenge to British authority in Nova Scotia. In both cases, it also becomes apparent that the establishment of a new order involves the marginalization and ultimate destruction of other, older cultures, with Raddall's Micmac and, to a lesser extent, Acadians filling a role similar to that played by Scott's clansmen. Indeed, Scott, in his depiction of the Highland clans, draws clear parallels with the tribal societies of North America: in *Rob Roy*, for example, Rob is described as combining "the wild virtues, the subtle policy, and unrestrained license of an American Indian" (385), while one of his residences is referred to as a "hospitable wigwam" (327).

Equally evident are the ideological parallels between the two writers. In *His Majesty's Yankees*, in particular, the humane conservatism that Lukács distinguishes in Scott likewise characterizes Raddall's presentation of the struggle between conflicting social and political interests. While, like Scott, Raddall sees the stability and permanence of the existing order, in a sense, as justification for the entire historical process leading up to its establishment,³ he also shares Scott's keen awareness of the pathos and the human qualities involved in the cause of the defeated. While David Strang, like so many of Scott's protagonists, is powerfully attracted by the lure of military glory, the emphasis (as is also the case in Scott) is less on the glamour of war than on the human suffering it causes. Raddall likewise shares Scott's acute sense of the importance of economic concerns to the historical process. The eye for the economic realities underlying the decline of the clans, so apparent in *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*,⁴ or of the old nobility (a realism that helps to balance the Gothic excesses of *The Bride of Lammermoor*), is equally evident in Raddall's portrayal of Roger Sudden's unscrupulous pursuit of prosperity through the fur trade, counterpointed as it is with the decline of the more primitive hunter-gatherer economy of the Micmac, and in his depic-

tion of the economic pressures that ultimately transform the Yankee sympathizers of Nova Scotia's South Shore into defenders of the British monarchy.

What becomes clear, in effect, is that what is involved is less the comparatively sterile question of literary influence than that of the extent to which Raddall may be seen as engaged in a fictional project similar to Scott's. James Kerr argues that Scott's portrayal of the subjection of a range of distinctive subcultures within Scottish society to the broader political, economic, and cultural hegemony of Great Britain offers "a version writ small, of a larger pattern of exploitation, a movement central to England's relationship with Ireland and Wales, which would occur on a much greater geographical and economic scale in India and Africa" (3). Or, it might be added, in North America: Scott's treatment of Anglo-Scottish relations may be seen as prefiguring the larger patterns of dominance and subordination that characterize the relations between colonizers and colonized within the larger framework of the British Empire—which is precisely the theme that Raddall addresses. While writing more than a century later, Raddall makes use of Scott's fictional model to explore aspects of what is essentially the same historical process.

There are, nevertheless, some significant differences—and while the terms of Lukács's analysis are helpful in illuminating the extent of the parallels between Raddall's fictional practice and that of Scott, they shed rather less light on the nature of these differences. To give just one example, there is present in Raddall's historical fiction a strong sense of racial destiny quite absent in Scott (or, at any rate, in the Scottish novels), and one that might be attributed in part to the mediating influence of the crass racism of writers such as Parkman and Henty. Yet, distasteful though this undoubtedly is, it is in effect only a symptom of a far more deeply rooted difference, for which an analysis conceived of in Lukács's terms cannot readily account.

Comparing Lukács's theory of the novel to that of Bakhtin, Eva Corredor notes that, while Lukács and Bakhtin share a common preoccupation with the nature of ideology, "the use of ideology is viewed quite differently" by the two theorists (98). Where Lukács tends to focus on the ideological content of the works he dis-

cusses, Bakhtin is more concerned with such content's linguistic and stylistic manifestations. In Corredor's perhaps too-neat formulation, where the concern of Lukács is with the "changing world," Bakhtin's is with the "changing word" (101)—with the ways in which political and economic change are manifested at the verbal level, in the interaction of different languages, discourses, and verbal styles. And it is when one turns from a consideration of the ideological preoccupations shared by Scott and Raddall to an examination of their linguistic and stylistic manifestations that both the nature and extent of the differences between the two writers become apparent. While both Scott and Raddall are concerned with portraying the interaction between conflicting political and social forces within an essentially similar historical context, what is very different is the manner in which the interests and distinctive modes of perception associated with such forces are verbally articulated.

Scott, as Lukács points out, tends to employ as his protagonists relatively "mediocre" individuals, whose function as passive observers of the action overshadows their role as participants (35). Perhaps the most extreme example is that of Darsie Latimer in *Redgauntlet*, whose passivity has been compared to that of the heroine in Gothic romance (Sutherland xviii). (He is even forced to dress up *as* a woman at one point in the narrative.) Yet even where the protagonist displays the military virtues expected of the conventional romantic hero, his exploits remain secondary to his function as witness.⁵ Although Henry Morton, in *Old Mortality*, becomes one of the leaders of the Covenanters' insurrection, his role is marginal to the central conflict embodied in the figures of Burley and Claverhouse; in *Waverley*, likewise, the double identity of the charismatic Jacobite aristocrat Fergus MacIvor (who is at one and the same time the clan chief, Vich Ian Vohr) quite overshadows the personality of the rather lacklustre hero. This marginal status is reflected in the character of the protagonist's utterance, which tends to be formal, colourless, and, indeed, often barely distinguishable from the voice of the narrator. Yet it serves, by contrast, to highlight the far greater linguistic vigour and individuality of the disparate groupings among whom the hero moves: both those doomed to political

extinction, such as the clans, Covenanters, Jacobite aristocracy, and those destined to supersede them—the rising commercial and professional classes of Glasgow and Edinburgh. The protagonist serves to register, rather than comprehend, a historical process too complex to be fully grasped by any single individual, and what emerges as a result is a historical perspective to which Bakhtin's words might well be applied: "a unified truth that requires a plurality of consciousnesses, one that cannot in principle be fitted into the bounds of a single consciousness" (*Problems* 81).

In Raddall's case, however, a rather different pattern emerges. To begin: Raddall's preference is for a first-person narrative, in which the voice of the protagonist is dominant; even where he departs from this, as in the third-person narration of *Roger Sudden*, virtually all of the action is presented from the hero's perspective. Both *His Majesty's Yankees* and *Pride's Fancy* employ an older narrator looking back on and recounting the events of his youth, and while it is true that Scott uses a similar method in *Rob Roy*, the effect scarcely could be more different. Compared to David Strang in *His Majesty's Yankees*, or to Nathan Cain in *Pride's Fancy*, Frank Osbaldistone is a relative cipher, overshadowed as he is by the verbal exuberance of such figures as the Glasgow magistrate, Nicol Jarvie, or the bandit chieftain, Rob Roy. Unlike Scott's protagonists, Raddall's heroes tend to embody rather than merely witness or reflect the central conflicts portrayed. While Edward Waverley or Henry Morton may take sides, they are not central to the conflict between Jacobite and Hanoverian, Crown and Covenant; David Strang and Roger Sudden, by contrast, *do* embody the conflicts between rebel and Loyalist, French and British. And it is their voices that constitute the dominant discourse: where other voices are present—those of Richard Uniacke and Michael Francklin in *His Majesty's Yankees*, of Le Loutre in *Roger Sudden*, or of Victor Brule in *Pride's Fancy*—they remain subordinate to the controlling utterance of the narrator.

The effect of these contrasting narrative strategies becomes apparent when one examines specific episodes in the works of the two authors. Early in *Old Mortality*, for example, there is a striking instance of Scott's distinctive method of presenting

opposing political attitudes, and the voices through which they are articulated. While Henry Morton is celebrating his victory in the shooting match at Niels Blane's tavern, he witnesses an altercation between Sergeant Bothwell (not only a soldier, but distantly related to the King) and the Covenanter, John Balfour of Burley. Clearly looking for trouble, Bothwell decides to force all those present to drink to the health of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, beginning with the suspicious-looking Burley, whom he addresses as follows:

"I make so bold as to request of your precision, beloved . . . that you will arise from your seat, beloved, and, having bent your hams until your knees do rest upon the floor, beloved, that you will turn over this measure . . . of the comfortable creature, which the carnal denominate brandy, to the health and glorification of his Grace the Archbishop of St Andrews . . ." (89)

This, of course, is a deliberate parody of the characteristic speech of the Covenanters; still more interesting, however, is the nature of Burley's reply. While, as we soon learn, he is quite capable of speaking the language that Bothwell parodically appropriates, his reply is couched in a very different verbal style—one more closely resembling that of Bothwell's own military superiors, not to mention that of the narrator: "And what is the consequence . . . if I should not be disposed to comply with your uncivil request?" (89)

Bothwell chooses to ignore the very different tonality of Burley's utterance, however, and persists in his parody; in the end, Burley agrees to drink the toast, which he does in the following, rather curious, terms: "The Archbishop of St Andrews, and the place he now worthily holds;—may each prelate in Scotland soon be as the Right Reverend James Sharpe!" (90). While somewhat puzzled by the response, Bothwell professes himself satisfied, unaware that Burley's apparent compliance is actually a gesture of gross defiance. That he is unable to interpret it as such is due to his ignorance of the surrounding context, an awareness of which would enable him to decipher Burley's enigmatic utterance: unknown to him, Burley, in fact, has just taken part in the Archbishop's murder.

What becomes apparent, as is the case so often in Scott, is the extent to which, as Volosinov puts it, "the word is a two-sided act

. . . determined equally by whose word it is and for whom it is meant. . . . A word is territory *shared* by both addresser and addressee, by the speaker *and* his interlocutor" (85-86). Bothwell's insulting parody, in effect, is an invasion of Burley's verbal territory; Burley's response is a counter-appropriation of his opponent's discourse, while his toast to the Archbishop is an utterance that Bothwell cannot fully understand because of his lack of awareness of its larger context. What we witness is an enactment at the verbal level of a conflict that will soon become the focus of the entire novel: the clash between the forces of Stuart absolutism and the dissident adherents of the Covenant; for while each is capable of appropriating the discourse of the other side, there is little effective communication—until, that is, Burley offers to communicate with Bothwell in a language he *does* understand: that of physical force. Challenging the sergeant to a wrestling match, he brutally hurls him to the ground—an action that, oddly enough, earns Bothwell's grudging respect: it is as though Burley's ability to cause Bothwell physical pain is the only thing that can make Bothwell aware of the Covenanter's reality as another human being. In this representative verbal interaction, the inevitability of military conflict is thus prefigured.

Unsurprisingly, given the very different nature of his narrative strategy, such episodes are less common in Raddall's work: the conflicting forces involved are more often presented within the terms of the protagonist's own perception. Nevertheless, a not-dissimilar exchange occurs in *Roger Sudden*, in a scene in which Roger encounters the French priest, Père Le Loutre. The former Jacobite Roger, like Bothwell, is a man of aristocratic blood who has fallen on hard times, while Le Loutre, if in nothing else, is Burley's equal in fanaticism. Le Loutre denounces the English traders for corrupting the Indians, to which Roger responds by accusing the French of inciting the Indians to fight their battles for them, while further insinuating that Le Loutre himself is responsible for the impending expulsion of the Acadians:

"You have involved the Acadian people in your crimes against God and man. Now there is a debt to be paid and the Acadians will have to pay for it—for you will save your miserable skin, I do not doubt."

"What do you mean, infidel?"

Roger put his tongue between his teeth. It was a rich temptation to tell the man of the storm about to burst. But Le Loutre confounded him. A fanatical smile convulsed the narrow features.

"You mean this English venture against Fort Beausejour? Pfui! One is aware of that! One has eyes, Monsieur Beau Soleil—and ears in unexpected places! I have been gathering my savages and Acadians, and we shall entrap the English as they try to cross the Misaguash. The good God fights for France, always for France!" (217)

Comparing this with Scott's example, a number of features are observable. Notable is the nature of the contrast between the two utterances: Roger's utterance is far more dignified and authoritative, while that of Le Loutre is couched in much the same stereotypical stage French that characterizes French-speakers whenever they appear in Raddall's fiction. With its colourful expletives, its tendency towards impersonal constructions, its preponderance of exclamation marks, Le Loutre's voice is barely distinguishable from that of Victor Brule in *Pride's Fancy*. Whereas Bothwell and Burley, in addition to possessing clearly individualized voices of their own, have the power to parodically appropriate the voice of the other, Le Loutre's utterance is restricted to a voice that in itself comes perilously close to parody. Even so, Raddall seems reluctant to leave matters there: whereas Scott's presentation of the exchange between Bothwell and Burley is notable for its neutrality, with little in the tone of the narrative voice to suggest a privileging of one utterance over the other, Raddall's narrative commentary further reinforces the imbalance apparent in the dialogue. The "fanatical smile" that convulses Le Loutre's "narrow features" is merely one of a number of derogatory stage directions: "In the eyes—the priest's monomania glittered"; "the madman cried in a strangled voice"; "the little black eyes blazed" (216-17). And lest there be any doubt in the reader's mind as to who is right and who wrong, it is Roger who is left with the last word. As he surveys the ruins of the deserted Micmac settlement at Shubenacadie (a desolation clearly implied to be the result of the priest's machinations), he is asked by his servant who Le Loutre is: "Roger looked at the deserted chapel, the broken door, the fallen wooden cross. 'Lucifer,' he said" (217).

So blatant an attempt to overdetermine the reader's response may be seen as inspired in part by Raddall's own rather idio-

syncratic conviction that the expulsion of the Acadians was not merely politically expedient but morally justifiable and by his desire to prove himself "an author who can write of eighteenth century Nova Scotia without lingering sentimentally over the Acadians" (qtd. in Smyth 73). Yet it is hardly an isolated example: the contrast with Scott is equally marked when Raddall's portrayal of the Micmac is compared to Scott's depiction of the Highland clans. While, as Graham Tulloch warns, it is possible to overestimate the accuracy of Scott's renderings of Scottish dialect—in particular the speech of the clansmen, which often verges on the parodic—they nevertheless remain masterpieces of fidelity when compared to the speech of Raddall's Indians, most of whom talk as if they had wandered in from one of Cooper's Leatherstocking tales. Like Cooper, Raddall frequently renders the Indians' utterance in the form of indirect speech, even in scenes in which their eloquence is supposed to have maximal effect, thereby considerably diminishing its impact.⁶ Where they are allowed to speak in their own voice (however stereotypically presented), it occurs most commonly when they express sentiments that the British want to hear—a classic instance being the speech of the Micmac sagamore in *Roger Sudden*, in which (again in the best traditions of Cooper) he declares that the ultimate victory of the "pale men" from beyond the sunrise has been foretold by the Great Spirit (317-18), thereby acquiescing, in effect, in the ultimate destruction of his people.

What is at issue, in fact, is less the authenticity with which the author reproduces different speech patterns than the extent to which such patterns are allowed to articulate the distinctive perceptions and life experiences of different cultures, classes, and class fractions. Indeed, in their respective presentation of relations between classes, the contrast between Scott and Raddall is no less marked. When Scott's depiction of the relations between master and servant (between Henry Morton and Cuddie Headrigg, or Frank Osbaldistone and Andrew Fairservice, for example) is compared to Raddall's equivalent portrayal of those between Roger Sudden and Tom Fuller, or David Strang and François Dekatha, a number of differences become apparent, of which the much greater linguistic vitality of Cuddie and Andrew

is only one. While Cuddie, for instance, is genuinely fond of his master, it is clear that his main motive for worming his way into his service is economic: having lost his tenancy due to his mother's inability to remain quiet about her religious principles, he has to find some other means of making a living; and in a situation in which civil disorder seems likely to prevail in the foreseeable future, the position of servant to one of the leaders of the contending sides clearly has its advantages. Andrew Fairservice is still more pragmatic, being almost exclusively concerned with how much money he can extract from the guileless Englishman into whose service he has wheedled himself. And while Andrew's conspicuous cowardice is certainly comical, his instinct for self-preservation is not unreasonable when contrasted with his master's romantic recklessness or with the almost pathological quarrelsomeness of the Highlanders. Indeed, the presentation of the practical self-interest of the lower classes in such a way as to offer a wholesome corrective to the romantic illusions of their social superiors is a recurrent feature in Scott's fiction. What is embodied, and given a voice, is a perspective on events very different from that of the hero, yet one that, in its own terms, is no less valid.

Raddall, however, presents the master/servant relationship in a far more idealized light. Lacking the clearly delineated economic agenda of Scott's servants, Raddall's servants conform far more closely to the ruling-class ideal of what servants *ought* to be like—faithful retainers whose service is prompted by feudal loyalty rather than economic necessity. While Tom Fuller and Roger Sudden begin as companions in crime, joining forces to rob a stage-coach, Tom is appalled when Roger offers to split the proceeds “fifty-fifty.” Rather than accept his share, he begs Roger to take him on as a servant: “I wouldn't be in your way, sir. I could do things for ye, sir. . . . I'd do anything for a man like you” (33). Later, when he re-enters his master's service, after Roger returns from his years of Indian captivity, we are told that “the light in his gray eyes was the light of a happy dog's” (203). François Dekatha is still less individualized. Although he saves David Strang's life at one point,⁷ his relation to his master is one of almost complete subservience: he leaves his pregnant wife to follow David at a

moment's notice, loses the use of his arm fighting in his master's quarrel, and appears towards the end of the narrative crouched at David's feet, once again "like a happy dog" (*His Majesty's Yankees* 221).

Scott, of course, provides examples of equally blind devotion: Dougal MacGregor's idolization of Rob Roy, or Evan Dhu's of Vich Ian Vohr, if possible, are even more extravagant than anything in Raddall. The effect, however, is very different. To begin with, it is clear that the devotion of Dougal and Evan Dhu is far from anachronistic in the cultural context of the Highland clan (it is the clan itself that Scott depicts as becoming increasingly anachronistic in the light of the historical process): their devotion is the more primitive tribal loyalty of the clan member to the chieftain, who embodies the clan identity, rather than the essentially economic relationship of servant to master within the historical context of emergent capitalism. Nor does such loyalty preclude the display of distinctive individuality. Dougal MacGregor's virtuoso piece of play-acting, which dupes the British commander and leads his troops into an ambush, stamps him as more than *merely* a subordinate; while, in *Waverley*, Evan Dhu's great speech in the courtroom at Carlisle is one of the most powerful scenes in all of Scott's fiction. Condemned to death along with his leader, Evan sees the execution of Vich Ian Vohr as a literally unimaginable catastrophe, tantamount to the death of the clan itself, and he accordingly proposes an alternative:

"... that if your excellent honour, and the honourable Court, would let Vich Ian Vohr go free just this once, and let him gae back to France, and no to trouble King George's government again, that ony six o' the very best of his clan will be willing to be justified in his stead; and if you'll just let me gae down to Glennaquoich, I'll fetch them up to ye mesell, to head or to hang, and you may begin wi' me the very first man." (465)

It is, of course, at one level an outrageous proposal, as indeed is reflected by the reaction in court: embarrassed, disbelieving laughter. Yet Evan's apparent solecism, in presenting the court with what is effectively a negotiating proposition, does more than simply dramatize the gap between the two worlds, whose collision Scott portrays; it also serves to unmask what the ostensible objectivity of the law is designed to conceal—the extent to which

it is in fact a political instrument, employed by the British State both to validate and enforce its authority.

What also becomes clear is the extent to which Evan's markedly different cultural experience is reflected in the very language he uses: as is so often the case in Scott's fiction, what the speaker says and what the audience he addresses hears are often two different things.⁸ As Evan uses it, for example, the word "justified" is simply a synonym for "executed" (Tulloch 265), whereas for his hearers in the English courtroom (not to mention the reader) the term has a very different and, indeed, bitterly ironic resonance, calling into question not only how far Evan and his master might indeed be seen as "justified" in their allegiance to an earlier (and equally legally constituted) authority but also the very nature of the justice that condemns them and is seen by the Highlanders as merely synonymous with punishment.

Far more than Raddall, Scott reveals an awareness of the extent to which meaning resides in the context of an utterance—a context that may well be very different for the speaker than for the person addressed. Indeed, it is striking how often the verbal interactions in Scott's fiction are characterized by non-communication, whether due to those involved literally speaking different languages, or to less obvious obstacles to comprehension. The gap between the reality inhabited by Edward Waverley or Frank Osbaldistone and that of the clansmen is underscored by the fact that the latter's discourse frequently is quite literally unintelligible to an upper-class Englishman, simply by virtue of being conducted in Gaelic. To Edward Waverley, indeed, this adds to the mystery and romantic allure of the Highlands. As Fergus MacIvor remarks to his sister: "I must tell you that Captain Waverley is a worshipper of the Celtic muse; not the less so perhaps that he does not understand a word of their language" (171). But these are only extreme examples of a more widespread phenomenon. In *Rob Roy*, Andrew Fairservice often appears to be quite deliberately playing on his master's ignorance of Scots dialect; while in *Old Mortality* there is mutual incomprehension even between characters so relatively close in cultural background as Henry Morton and Burley. To the more

fanatical Covenanters, Morton's verbal moderation, his tendency to converse in the language of the educated elite rather than of the Bible, is an indication of his failure to see the light; for his part, Morton comments on the characteristic discourse of the Covenanters in equally unfavourable terms: "much of this sort of language, which, I observe, is so powerful with others, is entirely lost on me" (259). To this, Burley responds that, since Morton "is but a babe in swaddling clothes," he will therefore have to "speak to [him] in the worldly language of . . . carnal reason" (259). By their very existence, such barriers to communication serve to emphasize the distinct character and informing cultural contexts of the different utterances involved.⁹

In Raddall's historical fiction, by contrast, there are few barriers to communication—at any rate, as far as the protagonist is concerned. Where other languages are present, they are easily "mastered." Roger Sudden, for instance, has a "gift for languages" (140): in his travels he has learned both Italian and Gaelic; his progress in Micmac delights his instructor, while his fluency in French so impresses his Indian captors that they promptly make him their chief agent in bargaining with the French traders. In *Pride's Fancy*, similarly, Nathan Cain learns "the patois of the Hispaniola negroes . . . with surprising ease" (46). Other groups—the French, the Micmac, the "dull Acadians"—may possess only an imperfect understanding of the dominant discourse of the protagonist (which often is also that of the narrative itself), but the protagonist enjoys complete comprehension of the language of both other races and other social classes—to which the reader is allowed access only in a context strictly limited by the narrator's controlling commentary. Unlike Scott's fiction, Raddall's presents a world in which one language is overwhelmingly dominant.

These very different attitudes, not only to language but to the nature of the relationship between languages, have in their turn a range of corresponding ideological implications. In Scott's case, while there is no lack of dialogic interplay between the utterances of disparate social and cultural groupings, the implications of such interplay remain deeply ambiguous. As Graham Pechey suggests,

Dialogism makes possible incorporation . . . as well as resistance: witness the liberal “social problem” novel (Gaskell, Eliot, et al.) in which social- and regional-dialectal speech and subaltern ideological discourses enter into colloquy with a sympathetic authorial voice, just as subaltern classes and class fractions were then being incorporated in the wider process of social hegemony—a process which is itself dialogical. (54-55)

For all the distinctiveness of their utterance, the voices of the marginalized subcultures within Scottish society, however wild and exotic, can be accommodated safely within the normalizing civility of the framing narrative, a process further facilitated by Scott’s comforting emphasis on the distancing effect of the passage of time. The subtitle of *Waverley*, “’Tis Sixty Years Since” (with due adjustment of the number of years involved), might serve just as aptly in the case of his other historical fictions; indeed, part of the appeal of Scott’s characteristic blend of realism and romantic nostalgia lies in the fact that, even as his novels celebrate the distinctive character of the old order, they also communicate the reassurance that its implicit challenge to the norms of his own society is no longer a threat. At the same time, however, that reassurance, that sense of the stability of a present to which the past constitutes a “prehistory” (Lukács 53), is perhaps the source of the confidence that permits the deployment of a complicating and, at times, even subversive irony. Despite its temporal remoteness, the past remains connected to the contemporary;¹⁰ and while Scott’s realism is used to expose romantic illusions precisely *as* illusions, as ideas no longer in touch with the changing realities of history, there is also a sense that something has been lost in the process of reaching a settlement which Scott in general endorses—and lost not merely by the losers. For all of their flaws and limitations, their blindness to the historical process by which they are marginalized, Fergus MacIvor and Evan Dhu, Burley, Rob Roy, even the Laird of Redgauntlet, embody qualities decreasingly evident (perhaps because decreasingly useful) in the more pragmatic world of “civil courage” (*Redgauntlet* 47) that has displaced the fierce loyalties and military heroism of the past. Indeed, much of the pathos of their historical situation resides in their doomed refusal to admit the powerlessness of individual action to change

the course of history: in the face of historical forces that sweep Scott's passive protagonists into reconciliation with the emergent capitalist order, his clansmen, Covenanters, and Jacobite aristocrats continue to act *as if* significant individual action were possible.

For Raddall, by contrast, writing in the tradition of Scott, but in the very different historical context of the 1940s, the past has regained much of the romantic allure that Scott's realism calls into question. While Raddall insisted repeatedly on the realism of his historical fiction,¹¹ his is a realism used to very different effect. This is, of course, in part attributable to the changing implications of realism itself with the passage of time. Fredric Jameson, for example, argues that Scott's particular *kind* of realism is very much specific to its time. For Jameson, Scott's is

... one of the first great realisms ... characterized by a fundamental and exhilarating heterogeneity in their raw materials and by a corresponding versatility in their narrative apparatus. In such moments, a generic confinement to the existent has a paradoxically liberating effect on the registers of the text, and releases a set of heterogeneous historical perspectives ... (104)

Jameson goes on, however, to suggest that "the gradual reification of realism in late capitalism" (104) progressively deprives realism of this liberating effect. Certainly in the hands of Raddall more than a century later it creates none of the productive tension with romance that characterizes the work of Scott; rather, its effect is to lend a veneer of actuality to a scenario that is essentially one of romance. Although no less diligent than Scott in his historical researches, following Scott in his practice of personally exploring the actual terrain where his fictions are set, his claim that this enabled him to "know precisely the feelings and thoughts of a man ... two hundred years ago" (qtd. in Smyth 63), as Donna Smyth astutely observes, is oddly inconsistent with his representation of character, which tends "toward the typical and the emblematic, the mythic disguised as the realistic" (63). There is little of Scott's complicating irony in Raddall's presentation of his decisive, manly heroes (the only qualification allowed is an indulgent acknowledgement of the limitations of their youthful enthusiasm): their ability not only to participate in

history but decisively to affect its course (most spectacularly in the case of Roger Sudden, who single-handedly makes possible the British capture of Louisbourg), it would seem, is something in which Raddall *needs* to believe. As Barry Moody argues, Raddall's fascination with the past is fuelled by a disillusion with the present (150-53), rather than, as in Scott's case, a sense of its connection with the contemporary. The past becomes a refuge, but also one whose specific historical character is not open to question—hence Raddall's insistence that history (in his hands at least) is a reliable narrative rather than a network of competing narratives (see Young, *Thomas* 6; Ferns 156-57), and his reluctance to allow competing voices to challenge his own interpretation of a past, which Moody describes as “created in his own image” (152). While Scott may show the fate of the clans, the Covenanters, the Jacobite dissidents as inevitable, given the nature of the historical process, Raddall goes one step further: for him the fate of the losers—the Acadians, the Micmac—is not only inevitable, but justified.

It is hardly coincidental that this should be reflected in Raddall's narrative practice. Whereas Scott allows an unusually free interplay of voices (to the point, indeed, where the voices of marginalized individuals and groupings often upstage those of both narrator and protagonist), Raddall maintains a much tighter control, using narrative commentary to reinforce the authority of the protagonist's utterance and, as far as possible, subordinating the dialogic interplay of other voices to the monologic discourse of the narrator. And it is here, perhaps, that the ideological difference between the two writers becomes most apparent. While Scott endorses the emergent capitalist order in the context of which he is writing, his articulation of the voices of the adherents of lost causes does full justice to their role in the dialectical process from which the capitalist order emerges. Though defeated, they remain a constitutive factor in the historical process in which they have been sublated; and in presenting the process of their defeat, however inevitable, Scott acknowledges, even celebrates, the distinctiveness of their utterance. For Raddall, however, in his portrayal of the establishment of British colonial hegemony, neither the voice of the colonial rival nor the

indigene is seen as contributing anything to the discourse of the dominant order that emerges: not the existence of such voices but their erasure is what Raddall celebrates. Rather than challenging the order that marginalizes them, as do Scott's clansmen, gypsies, dissenters, and wandering beggars, Raddall's losers are at best allowed the occasional plaintive aria acknowledging the inevitability of their own defeat (as in the case of the Micmac sagamore alluded to earlier). For the rest, the dominant discourse of Raddall's historical fictions of the 1940s remains the mind of monologic, unitary utterance, which, as Bakhtin observes, is typically that which "gives expression to forces working towards concrete verbal and ideological unification . . . and the processes of sociopolitical and cultural centralization" (*Dialogic* 271). This is, of course, precisely the process that Raddall depicts: the rest is silence.

NOTES

- 1 For example, Fred Cogswell writes, "what such a novelist as Scott did in the nineteenth century for Scotland, his follower, Thomas H. Raddall, might conceivably be attempting with respect to the Nova Scotia of the twentieth century" (iv). For a comprehensive survey of Raddall criticism, see Young, "Thomas H. Raddall and the Canadian Critics."
- 2 Young makes this point in his full-length study, *Thomas H. Raddall* (6).
- 3 Barry Moody, however, argues persuasively that the sense of connection between past and present is precisely what is lacking in Raddall's historical fiction. Taken together, Moody suggests, Raddall's historical novels and those with a contemporary setting constitute "a trilogy [*sic*] with the second volume still missing" (153).
- 4 In *Waverley*, not the least of Fergus MacIvor's motives for supporting the Jacobite cause is the increasing difficulty of maintaining the feudal establishment of a clan chieftain: his estate is described as crowded with "a tenantry, hardy indeed, and fit for the purposes of war, but greatly outnumbering what the soil was calculated to maintain" (157). In *Rob Roy*, likewise, Rob's transformation from (relatively) honest cattle-dealer to outlaw is explicitly linked to the economic situation in the Scottish Highlands, where Nicol Jarvie estimates that out of an adult male population of "fifty-seven thousand five hundred men. . . it's a sad and awfu' truth, that there is neither wark, nor the very fashion nor appearance of wark, for the tae half of thae puir creatures" (234). As Lukács suggests,

it has become a matter of economic necessity for the clans to wage their desperate and hopeless battles on behalf of the Stuarts. They are no longer able to maintain themselves on the basis of their primitive economy. They possess a surplus population, permanently armed and well seasoned who cannot be put to any normal use. . . . for whom an uprising of this kind is the only way out of a hopeless situation (58).
- 5 As Jane Millgate remarks in her discussion of *Rob Roy*: "The hero, though young, courageous, and quick to take the offensive, is repeatedly involved in scenes of conflict and bloodshed not as an actor but as a powerless witness" (134).

- ⁶ Admittedly, Raddall does not go as far as Cooper in this regard; an interesting example is nevertheless provided in *Roger Sudden* (306-09) in the description of Roger's confrontation with San Bades Koap (surely a lineal descendant of Magua in Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*). While Raddall describes Koap's rhetorical gifts—"There was no gainsaying his hold on them [the Micmac]. He was one of those remarkable creatures spawned from time to time by warrior tribes. . . . gifted with a rousing tongue"—the bulk of the exchange consists of Roger's words, which include a derisive parody of Koap's own verbal style.
- ⁷ Having one's life saved by an Indian seems almost *de rigueur* for Raddall's heroes. David Strang's is saved not only by François Dekatha but, on another occasion, by Dekatha's father, Peter, who loses his own life in the process. Roger Sudden's life is spared at the instance of Wapke (despite which Roger somewhat ungallantly spurns her sexual advances); while in *Pride's Fancy* the character of Wokwees appears to have been introduced for no other purpose than to save Nathan Cain's life at an opportune moment during a sea battle. It would seem that the symbolic blessing of the indigene is essential in order to validate the authority of the protagonist.
- ⁸ P. N. Medvedev proposes that where "differences between . . . two social groups arise from important socioeconomic premises of their existences, the intonation of one and the same word will differ profoundly between groups. . . . One and the same word will occupy a completely different hierarchical place in the utterance as a concrete social act" (123). Evan's speech is merely one of many instances of this principle at work in Scott's fiction.
- ⁹ At the same time, mutual recognition of the ambiguity of language can be seen to fulfil a valuable social function. In *Redgauntlet*, for instance, the growing political accommodation between supporters of the Hanoverian establishment and their former Jacobite opponents expresses itself in a tacit agreement to use non-contentious terms for the Stuart claimants to the throne ("Chevalier" rather than "Pretender," for example). It is a sign of the Laird of Redgauntlet's (increasingly anachronistic) intransigence that when Alexander Fairford, deferring to his guest's known Jacobite sympathies, proposes a toast simply to "the King" rather than to "King George," the Laird responds by passing his glass over the water decanter, adding "[o]ver the water," thus refusing his host's implicit offer of accommodation. The novel's conclusion, in which the authorities refuse even to punish the last doomed attempt at a Jacobite uprising, is in a sense prefigured by Fairford's response to his guest's outrageous piece of rudeness: he simply pretends not to have heard (51).
- ¹⁰ See Medvedev:
 That which has already lost its historical timeliness and importance, that which has already been finalized or, more precisely, has been repealed by history itself, can easily be finalized, but this finalization will not be perceptible. This is the reason that, if the artist chooses historical material, he makes it ideologically timely by a valuational connection with the contemporary. (158)
 It is, of course, precisely this sense of the "valuational connection" between past and present that Lukács sees as central to Scott's achievement as historical novelist.
- ¹¹ In the case of *His Majesty's Yankees*, for example, Raddall claims that "that particular book is really history with a very thin coating of fiction. Much of it is pure fact, even to the minor conversations of minor characters" (qtd. in Smyth 63).

WORKS CITED

- Bakhtin, M. M. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P, 1983.

- . *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Trans. Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984.
- Cogswell, Fred. Introduction. *Pride's Fancy*. By Thomas H. Raddall. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1974.
- Corredor, Eva. "Lukács and Bakhtin: A Dialogue on Fiction." *University of Ottawa Quarterly* 53.1 (1983): 97-109.
- Ferns, Chris. "Building a Country; Losing an Empire: The Historical Fiction of Thomas H. Raddall and J. G. Farrell." Young, *Time and Place* 154-64.
- Jameson, Fredric. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1981.
- Kerr, James. *Fiction Against History: Scott as Story-Teller*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989.
- Lukács, Georg. *The Historical Novel*. Trans. Rodney Livingstone. London: Merlin, 1971.
- Medvedev, P. N. *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics*. Trans. Albert J. Wehrle. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978.
- Millgate, Jane. *Walter Scott: The Making of the Novelist*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1984.
- Moody, Barry. "The Novelist as Historian: The Nova Scotia Identity in the Novels of Thomas H. Raddall." Young, *Time and Place* 140-53.
- Pechey, Graham. "On the borders of Bakhtin: dialogisation, decolonisation." *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory*. Ed. Ken Hirschkop and David Shepherd. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1989. 39-67.
- Raddall, Thomas H. *His Majesty's Yankees*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1942.
- . *Pride's Fancy*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1946.
- . *Roger Sudden*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1944.
- Scott, Sir Walter. *The Bride of Lammermoor*. 1819. London: Dent, 1988.
- . *Old Mortality*. 1816. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985.
- . *Redgauntlet*. 1824. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985.
- . *Rob Roy*. 1817. London: Dent, 1986.
- . *Waverley*. 1814. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985.
- Smyth, Donna E. "Raddall's Desiring Machine: Narrative Strategies in the Historical Fiction." Young, *Time and Place* 60-86.
- Sutherland, Kathryn. Introduction. *Redgauntlet*. By Sir Walter Scott. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985.
- Tulloch, Graham. *The Language of Sir Walter Scott*. London: Deutsch, 1980.
- Volosinov, V. N. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Trans. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1986.
- Young, Alan R. *Thomas H. Raddall*. Boston: Twayne, 1983.
- . "Thomas H. Raddall and the Canadian Critics." Young, *Time and Place* 25-42.
- , ed. *Time and Place: The Life and Works of Thomas H. Raddall*. Fredericton: Acadiensis P, 1991.