

# Introducing Walter Scott: What Scott Scholars Can Learn from the Prefaces of Chinese Translations of Walter Scott's Works\*

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## ABSTRACT

The field of world literature has demonstrated how a global readership can discover new readings of a text. This article, accepting that translators have a key role in influencing how their readers respond to a text, considers six late-twentieth-century Chinese translators' prefaces of the Waverley novels. It argues that by taking the prefaces as a group, a pattern emerges in their interpretation of Scott's works. Broadly, they suggest that Scott depicts the conflict between feudal and commercial ideologies, and they argue that his novels illustrate issues with commercialism while exhibiting a nostalgia for feudalism. This paper evaluates this claim, and concludes that although this interpretation cannot fully be supported by the texts, it does suggest a new area of exploration in Scott studies.

**KEYWORDS:** Walter Scott, Scottish literature, translators, prefaces, feudal and commercial ideologies

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In a 1986 article justifying the study of world literature, A. Owen Aldridge compares scholars working in their own traditions to those who read from two corpuses, even when they are receiving one through translation. As a hypothetical example he claims that “the Chinese scholar who had read Shakespeare merely in translation is better equipped to teach Chinese drama than he would be if he knew only Chinese drama and no dramatist from any other culture” (Aldridge 124). The reverse is implied, although not explicitly stated: a British Shakespearean scholar understands Shakespeare better if he or she has a knowledge of translated Chinese drama. By making such an assertion, Aldridge positions the translated text in a central position: reading in translation helps a scholar understand his/her own literature better.

Since the time of Aldridge’s writing, the field of world literature has grown along with reception theory and questions of canon-formation, and the academy now recognises the significance of placing literature in a world context. By doing so, many longstanding and unquestioned interpretations of texts have been destabilised. With different perspectives, and through divorcing the text from the cultural context of its author, additional and diverse readings can be discovered. It is the aim of this paper to explore how a Chinese response to Scott’s work can add nuance to global interpretations of the Waverley novels and narrative poems.

When a text becomes part of world literature, a key part of its reception changes: it is often read in translation. The translator’s choices provide a medium through which the reader receives the text. How, for example, a translator chooses to reproduce the Scots vocabulary and syntax in Scott’s work greatly influences how their readers interpret the text’s political and social aspects. In addition, the translator’s preface advises the reader how to approach the text. This guidance reflects the cultural background of the translator—he/she fills in the knowledge gaps that his/her compatriots presumably have—but it also directs the reader, encouraging him/her to interpret the text in a certain way. It is therefore a hugely influential element of the translated work’s paratext, and one that can dictate which readings are revealed in the translated text.

For this study, a sample of the translators’ prefaces of the most accessible Chinese translations of Scott’s novels for contemporary Chinese readers has been chosen. The texts’ accessibility was taken into account because this study is interested in how contemporary Chinese interpretations of Scott could

influence the global perception of him. Those translations which are not available electronically, nor easily accessible by other means, are unlikely to have a relevant, direct effect on Chinese readers today. Therefore, the translators' prefaces of the following works were chosen for study: The People Publishing House's translations of *The Heart of Midlothian* (1981), *Ivanhoe* (1978, reprinted 2004), and *Waverley* (1987); Yilin Press's *The Heart of Midlothian* (1997) and *Quentin Durward* (1999); and Shanghai Translation Publishing House's *Ivanhoe* (1996, reprinted 1997).<sup>1</sup>

These prefaces relate to four of Scott's key works: *Waverley*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *Ivanhoe* and *Quentin Durward*. These can be considered as representative of the different types of novels in the Waverley canon—*Waverley*, the first novel, and the one from which the others take their group name, is representative of the Scottish novels; *The Heart of Midlothian* uniquely has a working-class female protagonist, and was recognised at its time of publication as presenting a different type of heroism than was common in early nineteenth century novels, and therefore it can be taken as an example of experimental fiction; *Ivanhoe* is the first and the prototype of Scott's medieval novels—it is also, out of all of Scott's works, the one that has been translated into Chinese the most; *Quentin Durward* exemplifies a Waverley novel that is set outside of Britain and represents Scott's international interests.

The length of the prefaces of these translations varies widely from around 1,500 words to 6,700 words. In addition, with the exception of the *Waverley* preface, which merely provides historical and biographical context, they all discuss Scott's oeuvre in general. They remark on this author's translations from German, his collection of ballads (*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*), his long narrative poems such as *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*, and the Waverley novels including *The Tale of Old Mortality* and *Rob Roy*. The writers of the prefaces appear to consider it their responsibility to inform their readers about Scott's work in general, and do not restrict their comments to the novels that they are prefacing. Therefore, this article aims to consider the overall interpretation of Scott that these prefaces have provided, and will

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank my translators. Sheng Xia (盛夏) translated *Waverley* (translated by Shih Yung-li [石永禮]), both versions of *Ivanhoe* (one translated by Liu Tsun-chi and Chang Yi [劉尊祺、章益] and the other by Hsiang Hsing-yao [項星耀]), and helped me with final translation checks. Qin Qi (秦祺) translated *Quentin Durward* (translated by Hsieh Pai-kuei [謝百魁]) and both versions of *The Heart of Midlothian* (one translated by Wang Ji and Ren Da-shiung [王揖、任大雄] and the other by Chang Yi [章益]).

examine this interpretation in relation to the texts that best respond to it, regardless of whether they are one of the four texts that the prefaces front.

Likewise, this article does not seek to provide a detailed analysis of each preface; rather it is its aim to look at all the prefaces together, and to discover any general patterns in the way in which Scott, in translation, is presented to a contemporary Chinese readership. This will include three interconnected areas: the link between orality and nationalism and class, Scott's role as a pioneer in historical fiction, and potential Marxist interpretations of Scott's work. For each area, the viewpoint of the prefaces will be presented first, and then will be evaluated in relation to a wide range of texts by Scott. In addition, these patterns will then be evaluated in light of the major trends in Scott scholarship outside of China, in order to examine whether an awareness of Chinese interpretations of Scott's work can open up new ways of interpreting this author.

In each of these prefaces, biographies of Scott and summaries of the plots are usually included, with varying degrees of accuracy and pertinence. Although what is chosen to be included and to be ignored may be of interest, this article will not consider these aspects in great detail. However, it is valuable to think about some of the general points made by the translators. Three of the prefaces include references to Scott's interest in ballad collections, romance and folklore in their biographical section, and a translation of *Ivanhoe* additionally mentions folklore in relation to the legendary character Robin Hood, who appears within the novel. Scott was heavily influenced by the oral tradition, and he made his major literary debut with the publication of *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, so it is to be expected that his interest in folklore is mentioned.

However, it is worthwhile to note that the references to folklore and ballad-collecting are connected to both nationalism and class in the prefaces. In their preface to *Ivanhoe*, for example, Liu Tsun-chi (劉尊棋) and Chang Yi (章益) recount Scott's practice of collecting ballads from farmers, arguing that this novelist's friendship with these rural men is comparable to the friendship between the biblical David and Jonathan. Liu and Chang go on to claim that Scott:

他〔司各特〕曾表示，與這些普通農民在一起，要比和貴胄廝混愉快得多。他還說：「一個民資的性格不是從它的衣冠

楚楚的紳士群中可以瞭解的。」他的歷史小說裡的不少人物，都直接以他採集民歌時所結識的民間人物為藍本。

once said that it was much more pleasant to be with these ordinary farmers than to be with nobles. He also said that one could not understand the character of a nation from its well-dressed group of gentlemen. Many of the characters in his historical novels are based on the folk figures he met in the countryside.

(Liu, Chang 1)

In this passage, Liu and Chang link the biographical details of Scott's friendship with farmers to an idea of national identity; it is through these people that the character of a nation is to be found. Chang Yi (章益), who translated *The Heart of Midlothian*, also refers to Scott's claim that a nation's character can be found in the members of its working-classes and not its gentry, and argues that the working-class Jeanie demonstrates the "firm moral character and unyielding willpower of the Scottish national character" (讓珍妮·迪恩斯嶄露頭角，作出了不尋常的英雄行為，顯示了蘇格蘭民族性格裡堅定高尚的道德品質和百折不撓的意志力 [章益 13]). Through combining the implications of the above two quotations, a sense that Scott's patriotism is linked to social class emerges. Liu and Chang's quotation, which shows that Scott believed that the character of a nation is found in its working-class people, and Chang's interpretation—this is embodied in the character of Jeanie Deans, a working-class woman—indicate that Scott's perception of national identity is clearly focussed and based on working-class people.

There is some evidence from the poems and novels to support the idea that Scott conflates class, national pride and orality, both in terms of the oral tradition and the use of everyday spoken language: generally, lower-class characters best represent both national characteristics and orality. In most of Scott's Scottish novels only the minor characters, many of whom are working-class, speak in Scots whereas, with a few notable exceptions, the heroes and heroines, who are gentlemen and gentlewomen, speak in standard English. The impression that the novels give is that the dialogues of lower-class characters reflect speech, whereas those of upper-class characters reflect written, formal language. As a result, readers have often reacted better to the minor, Scots-speaking characters than to their corresponding protagonists.

Fancett, summarising critical responses to the novels, claims that “critics have argued that the sections in Scots are the most vivid and realistic parts of the novels, especially in contrast to the formal and comparably bland English employed by the heroes and heroines.” To illustrate this, we may compare the language of two Scottish characters: Henry Morton, a gentleman, and Bessie McLure, a working-class woman, from *The Tale of Old Mortality*. Both of them are Scottish but they belong to different classes. Morton’s language, even when he is speaking with passion, is presented in an inexpressive way. The “bland” nature of his speech is obvious when he is compared to his rival, Evandale. Throughout the novel Evandale and Morton compete for the same woman, and position themselves on opposite sides of the political divide. However, despite their rivalry and differences, the two young men could be the same person, as can be seen by comparing their ways of speaking:

“... I will not trust Lord Evandale’s life with these obdurate men. —You are wounded, my Lord. Are you able to continue your retreat?” Morton continued, addressing himself to his prisoner, who, half stunned by the fall, was beginning to recover himself.

“I think so,” replied Lord Evandale. “But is it possible? Do I owe my life to Mr. Morton?”

“My interference, out of common humanity, would have been the same for anyone,” replied Morton; “to your Lordship it was a sacred debt of gratitude.” (Scott, *Old Mortality* 149)

The two men’s formal and polite language belies the danger that Evandale is in, and hides both the rivalry and the mutual respect of the two men. They speak, not as seventeenth-century fighters, but as respectful and respectable nineteenth-century gentlemen. Their nationality, and even their personalities, are veiled by their formal, impersonal language.

Bessie, on the other hand, is a minor character who is marked by her great misfortunes (both in terms of money and in terms of the loss of her children), and by her humanity in contrast to the extremes that surround her. Her language is expressive and emotional:

“It’s a long story, sir. But ae night, sax weeks or thereby afore Bothwell Brigg, when I had just dune milking the cow, a young

gentleman stopped at this pair cottage, stiff and bloody with wounds, pale foot after the other, and his faes were close ahint him, and he was ane o' our enemies—What could I do, sir?—You that's a soldier will think me a silly auld wife—but I feed him, and relieved him, and keep him hidden till the pursuit was over. . . . I gat ill-will about it amang some o' our ain folk. They said I should hae been to him what Jael was to Sisera—But weel I wot I had nae command to shed blood, and to save it was baith like a woman and a Christian.—And than they said I wanted natural affection to relieve ane that belonged to the band that murdered my twa sons.” (Scott, *Old Mortality* 328)

The very natural pacing that can be heard in the above quotation proves that Bessie's language is more in tune with both her words and character than Morton's is with his. Her use of a rhetorical question, a biblical allusion, and pauses reflect natural human speech. She comes across as a complex and sympathetic character. She has not allowed her personal tragedy to consume her humanity, and she is defensive against those who have criticised her actions. Although Morton is the hero, and the reader is presumed to support him, he is unexceptional. Indeed, close comparisons can be made between him and other heroes of the Waverley novels, some of whom are not Scottish. As a general rule, they are all unremarkable, as has been noted by Scott scholarship from Alexander Welsh's *The Hero of the Waverley Novels* onwards. Although Morton also acts out of humanity, his behaviour follows perceived universal ethical codes and is not connected to either his language or his nationality. The reader's admiration for Bessie, on the other hand, which comes through reading her words in Scots, is necessarily linked to both her nationality and, as her use of Scots is a marker of her social status, her class.

In addition, whereas Morton's good fortune belies his historical moment, Bessie's pain is directly connected to it; she suffers from the loss of her sons because of the political situation, whereas Morton wins both fortune and love despite it. Tysdahl argues that Morton's happy ending only occurs because the narrative switches from a historical to a mythical mode; by the end of the novel he is more of an archetype of a returning hero, as opposed to a seventeenth-century gentleman (172-83). He is positioned in the novel to show historical events to the readers, but appears to be exempt from their consequences. This

narrative device can be seen across Scott's novels, with heroes as diverse as Waverley, from *Waverley*, and Hereward from *Count Robert of Paris* being "rewarded" with financial gain and love, despite, as Tyshdahl has demonstrated in relation to *The Tale of Old Mortality*, the historical unlikelihood of this happening. A link between class, national character and orality is therefore borne out by the novels themselves.

As will be seen below, in his preface to *The Heart of Midlothian* Chang argues that the uniqueness of Scott's historical fiction lies not in the fact that he sets his work in the past, as that had been done before, but that he makes ordinary people his protagonists, and uses those around him or her to represent the manners and values that may have existed in that historical time period. This implies that Scott's historical fiction relies on his representation of the middle and working classes. Firstly, as has already been argued, by presenting the qualities of national identity in minor, working-class characters, Scott creates an interest in the working people. Secondly, as Chang states, by choosing ordinary people as his protagonists, Scott moves historical fiction away from presenting, as spectacle, the actions of princes or other important people of state, and instead focuses on the experience of ordinary people who are caught up in the events of their time. Henry Morton, discussed above, is a good example of this; although he is one of the most militarily active of the heroes in Scott's Waverley novels, Morton only fights reluctantly and after considering the different claims on his loyalty. He is someone who is affected by history; he is not someone who makes it.

Morton may be an ordinary person caught up in the events of history but when social class is considered, the most ordinary of all of Scott's heroes is Jeanie Deans from *The Heart of Midlothian*. In the two translations of the novel that play a role in this article, both prefaces laud Scott for choosing a working-class protagonist. Chang says that "Scott abandoned the usual practice of letting the princes and the noblemen play the protagonists, and made a common rural woman the protagonist for the first time in that age" (司各特拋棄了讓王侯將相和貴族紳士扮演主人公的通常作法，第一次在小說裡讓一個平常的農村婦女擔任主人公，歌頌了蘇格蘭人民純樸堅定的民族性格 [章益 1]). Moreover, in their preface to *The Heart of Midlothian*, published by Yilin Press, Wang Ji (王楫) and Ren Da-shiung (任大雄) argue that Jeanie was normal but with a noble heart (2). These claims are not unique to Chinese interpretations of the novel; however, when put together with previously argued points, these



statements add to the overall pattern of how Chinese readers and translators of the late twentieth century have interpreted Scott's use of historical fiction.

Scott's status as the founder, or one of the founders, of the historical novel, is mentioned in most of the prefaces. This is not unexpected; one of the reasons that Scott was so influential and is still studied today is because of his contribution to the creation of this genre. However, when taken as a group, a pattern emerges across the prefaces. The translators, unsurprisingly, understand Scott's novels in relation to a Marxist view of history, in which different classes struggle against each other in epochs. They therefore see Scott's novels as representative of class struggle, and consider the issues that he presents, either deliberately or unwittingly, a representation of this struggle. To some extent, such as when, in his preface to *Quentin Durward*, published by Yilin Press, Hsieh Pai-kuei (謝百魁) states that "Scott's magnificent novels reflect the collisions and conflicts of the historical turning points in England, Scotland and Europe" (司各特的歷史小說氣勢磅礴，宏偉壯麗，出色地反映了英格蘭，蘇格蘭和歐洲歷史重大轉折時刻的矛盾衝突 [1-2]), this is unremarkable as most literature set in the past interacts with important changes and conflicts. However, the overwhelming trend within the prefaces is that Scott limits his representation to the collisions and conflicts between a feudal and a bourgeois ideology. This claim suggests that Scott's uniqueness lies in his presentation of class struggles, which is not an aspect of Scott's work that has been previously considered by scholars. It is therefore worth considering in depth.

When considered as a group, the prefaces suggest that the representation of historical conflict between a bourgeois and feudal society is shown in two ways. Firstly, they note that Scott himself was living and writing through the first industrial revolution, which was a crucial moment for the ideological move from feudalism to capitalism. Although pre-industrial Scotland was not a feudal state, the prefaces imply, correctly, that the last vestiges of feudal hierarchy were not abandoned until the emergence of industrial industry and the increase of wage labour which led to an anxiety of social change in Scott's work which has been recognised by James Kerr and Judith Wilt (Kerr 45; Wilt 6). Whereas most critics have seen a conflict, within Scott's work, between a desire for the past and a recognition that the present is an improvement of it, the prefaces suggest that Scott's interest in history and old values is a symptom of his nostalgia for feudal ideology; an ideology which he saw as in its death throes during his own lifetime.

For example, Liu and Chang argue that “Scott’s romanticism not only has the negative side of beautifying the feudal emperor, and promoting the knightly spirit, but also has the positive side of characterizing the figures and the romantic atmosphere” (司各特的浪漫主義既有美化封建帝王，宣揚騎士精神的消極一面，也有烘托人物性格，渲染浪漫氣氛的積極一面 [劉尊棋、章益 3]). Although this quotation refers to Scott’s historical novels, its representation of the author as being nostalgic for an older way of life illuminates the changing historical moment in which he lived. Chang likewise recognises this same nostalgia in Scott’s construction of his castle-like estate, Abbotsford. Although Scott’s nostalgia was most likely unconscious, evidence of it can be found in his work, particularly in the pervasive theme of loss that runs through his poems and novels. A section of the opening passage of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* can be taken as an example:

The last of all the Bards was he,  
Who sung of Border chivalry;  
For, welladay! their date was fled,  
His tuneful brethren all were dead;  
And he, neglected and oppress’d,  
Wish’d to be with them, and at rest.  
No more on prancing palfrey born  
He caroll’d, light as lark at morn;  
No longer courted and caress’d,  
High placed in hall, a welcome guest  
He pour’d to lord and lady gay  
The unpremeditated lay: (Scott, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*)

Here, the minstrel’s personal loss reflects a social change. In the early nineteenth century, the oral tradition had, as Penny Fielding has demonstrated, suffered a demotion, and was associated with a low level of literacy (23). Writing, on the other hand, as Scott well knew, was in the hands of a commercial network of publishers, printers, book-sellers and reviewers, as opposed to patronage (although some remnants of the old system remained in dedication pages). The loss that this change entails is clearly presented in the juxtaposition between the minstrel’s desire to be dead, and those joyful, active verbs, such as “prancing” and “caroll’d,” that represent the past.

A similar feeling of the sense of loss implied in the prefaces is also found in Scott's novels. The opening paragraph of *Saint Ronan's Well* provides an example of this:

Although few, if any, of the countries of Europe have increased so rapidly in wealth and cultivation as Scotland during the last half century, Sultan Mahmoud's owls might nevertheless have found in Caledonia, at any term within that flourishing period, their dowry of ruined villages. Accident or local advantages have, in many instances, transferred the inhabitants of ancient hamlets from the situations which their predecessors chose, with more respect to security than convenience, to those in which their increasing industry and commerce could more easily expand itself. Hence places which stand distinguished in Scottish history, and which figure in David Mc'Pherson's excellent historical map, can now only be discerned from the wild moor by the verdure which clothes their site, or, at best, by a few scattered ruins, resembling pinfolds, which mark the spot of their former existence. (Scott, *Saint Ronan's Well* 1)

Here, the loss of the old, feudal way of life is presented in overtly commercial terms, and thus supports the claim that Scott was uncomfortable with the replacement of feudal ideology by commercial life. Firstly, the narrator contrasts the rapid increase of wealth in Scotland with the ruined villages, which he claims can be found all across the country. This demonstrates that with increasing wealth, much of what is valuable and famed, as reference to McPherson's map indicates, has been lost. As industrial enterprise has increased, the abandonment of old villages, and by extension, an old way of life, has also accelerated. The narrator then goes on to claim that the latter has a causal relationship with the former; the villages have been abandoned *because* people sought places better suited for the expansion of industry and trade. In a final financial metaphor, the narrator calls these abandoned villages a "dowry" (dowry). As a dowry is associated with a happy event (marriage), the fact that these abandoned villages are likened to dowries suggests a degeneration of the natural order of things. Both of these examples support the idea inherent in the

prefaces that Scott grieves for the loss of a way of life, even if he was not consciously aware of this.

In addition to recognising a change of ideology regarding the commercial in Scott's own lifetime, the prefaces, when considered as a group, also suggest that the historical periods that Scott chooses to portray all express a movement from worldviews that contain vestiges of the feudal to those expressing more commercial or bourgeois ways of viewing the world. Whereas his novels may not literally show a movement from feudalism to capitalism, the crux of the conflict in each novel often hinges on an ideological movement from a feudal to a commercial mindset.

This can be seen throughout the Waverley Novels. In *Waverley*, for example, the Jacobites in general, and Highland culture specifically, are in conflict with the interests of the Hanoverian government. The Highlanders live within a feudal hierarchy in which loyalty to the clan leader is of the utmost importance. Their way of life, reminiscent of feudalism, is shown to be dying out. Even in the novels and poems in which there are no historical groups of people in conflict with each other, ideologies are represented as being in conflict, as can be seen in the conflicted actions of the Laird of Ellangowan in *Guy Mannering*: his personal actions and ideas represent historical trends, even if they do not represent specific historical actions. For example, the decision to expel the gypsies from his land is a personal one, borne out of his desire to appear more important, yet it reflects the historical trend of the changing nature of landownership. Instead of being positioned as the *paterfamilias* of an estate, landowners became more interested in the commercial value of the land, and the status and money that it could bring them. Although the Laird of Ellangowan is a generally sympathetic figure, and his mistakes have their origin in stupidity, he mirrors an historical change in opinion that brought about significant historical actions, including the Highland Clearances.

Scott's propensity to present these conflicts, and his habit of leading his readers to admire the group that must lose and be sceptical of the one that represents progress and modernity, has led to a greater recognition of the conflicts inherent in his work, as can be evidenced by the increasing amount of scholarly work engaging with the destabilisations within Scott's texts, and which will be discussed later. In *Waverley*, it is safe to presume that Scott's implied reader, a citizen of Hanoverian rule, would not support the claims of the Jacobites, yet MacIvor is depicted with more passion and in a more

interesting way than any Hanoverian supporters, including Talbot. In *Guy Mannering* the gypsy, Meg, is a more interesting and sympathetic character than Mannering. Although both Meg and Mannering enable the young hero to regain his ancestral estate, Meg dies at the end of the novel and, as she has previously stated that her numerous children are already deceased, represents the end of a family line and a way of life. Mannering, on the other hand, remains with his daughter and son-in-law. His money, earned in overseas enterprises, represents a more modern type of wealth, one which replaces that of the dying Ellangowan estate.

However, although the novel may present a generic comic ending to a first-time reader, with the marriage of the hero and heroine, and the reestablishment of the social order, re-readers are likely to discover an unease with the “happy endings” of these novels, and their Chinese translators’ prefaces’ focus on the conflicts between feudal and commercial ideology, as discussed above, implies that this unease is connected with the conflict between these two ideologies.

Scott’s personal and artistic response to the perceived historical trend of class struggle is of interest to the translators. In their translation of *Ivanhoe*, published by People’s Literature Publishing House, Liu and Chang claim that *Ivanhoe* “reflects and describes social contradictions” (反映和描寫社會矛盾 [劉尊棋、章益 3]) and in his preface to *Ivanhoe*, published by Shanghai Translation Publishing House, Hsiang Hsing-yao (項星耀) explains that Scott’s works “reflect the progress of history” (反映了歷史的進程 [項星耀 4]). In addition, Hsiang claims that “Scott is a conservative writer, but he understands that the human heart is the basic factor in determining historical trends” (司各特是一個保守主義作家，然而他明白，人心向背是決定歷史趨勢的基本因素 [項星耀 3]). In this way, the translators are able to read Scott’s work as representing a Marxist concept of history, without denying the author’s personal politics. Chang, arguing that this awareness of historical forces and changes makes Scott an influential author, claims that

司各特的小說猶如一幅幅巨大的歷史畫卷，把中世紀到資產階級革命時期的英格蘭和蘇格蘭的社會生活包羅無遺。司各特具有藝術家的銳敏觀察力，善於捕捉重要的歷史轉折時期和不同的社會集團之間尖銳複雜的矛盾衝突作為描寫的題材，從而反映出歷史發展的必然趨勢。讀了他的作品使人對這些國家和民族的歷史進程增長了感性知識，開闊了眼界。

Scott's novels were like a huge historical picture, covering the social life of England and Scotland from the Middle Ages up to the bourgeois revolution. Scott had an artist's sharp powers of observation, and he was good at capturing important historical turning points, including the sharp and complicated contradictions and conflicts between different social groups, as the object of his descriptions; thus he was able to depict and reflect upon the inevitable trends of history. Reading his work has increased our sense of the historical process that broadened the horizons of these countries and nations. (Chang 5)

In addition to claiming that Scott presents the historical conflicts between feudal and commercial ideology, the prefaces also claim that Scott, as can be evidenced by both his creative and his personal life, supports older, more feudal values. Discussing this author's narrative poems, Chang states that "These long poems also revealed some conservative emotions that beautified past eras and sympathized with the feudal dynasties, and so they had a strong nostalgic colour" (這些長詩也流露了一些美化過去時代和同情封建王朝的保守情緒，有比較濃厚的懷舊色彩 [章益 3]). In their preface to *Ivanhoe*, published by People's Literature Publishing House, Liu and Chang argue that "Scott's romanticism not only has the negative side in beautifying the feudal emperor and promoting the spirit of knighthood, but also has a positive side in characterizing the romantic figures and atmosphere" (司各特的浪漫主義既有美化封建帝王，宣揚騎士精神的消極一面，也有烘托人物性格，渲染浪漫氣氛的積極一面 [劉尊棋、章益 3]). Moreover, Chang argues that this conflation of conservatism and romanticism is seen in Scott's personal life, for Scott "built a house modelled on the style of a castle, where the landlord lived a paternalistic life. In 1820, Scott accepted the aristocratic title given him by the British government" (他寫詩成名後就於一八一二年買下了特威德河上的厄博斯福領地，仿照古堡樣式建造了一所住宅，在那裡過著家長式的地主生活。一八二〇年司各特接受了英國政府封賜的貴族頭銜，成為從男爵 [章益 4]). In both of these comments, Scott's conservatism is not shown as being at odds with his creative output, as others have argued. Although Chang's and Liu and Chang's points of view are not fully convincing when Scott's political life is taken into account, the claim that he felt drawn towards feudalism may help to illuminate his creative output.

Since the late twentieth century, Scott scholarship has been increasingly aware of the polyphony of readings of this author's work. Often, this is placed in a nationalistic context. Julian M. D'Arcy's *Subversive Scott*, for example, argues that Scott's personal unionist viewpoint is undercut by a secret narrative hidden in his work, one in which he expresses a pro-Scottish and anti-union stance. Taking a broader perspective, Caroline McCracken-Flesher's *Possible Scotlands* successfully moves our perception of Scott, and of his engagement with Scottish national identity, away from the "shortbread tin" image of Scotland that he is often attributed with creating or strengthening. She explores the destabilisations Scott creates in a wide range of ways. Other scholars build on Scott's linguistic diversity, re-discovered by the new Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels, arguing that Scott includes a complexity in his language that destabilises many conventional readings. Alison Lumsden's *Walter Scott and the Limits of Language*, and J. H. Alexander's *Reading the Waverley Novels*, are two excellent explorations of this complexity, written by members of the Edinburgh Edition team. Yet others have investigated various individual types of destabilisations in Scott's corpus. Recently, for example, Caroline Jackson-Houlston has demonstrated how Scott, whose portrayal of female characters is often criticized, raises a number of questions and destabilisations regarding the representation of gender.

The academy, therefore, has interpreted the destabilisations in Scott's texts in various ways. The prefaces, however, view these as a result of the author's attempt to represent the move from feudal to bourgeois ideology. By claiming that Scott is a feudal sympathiser, the prefaces allow for an interpretation of this author's work that sees the inherent subversions as criticisms of bourgeois society, and as being symptomatic of a desire to return to feudal times. In Chang's lengthy preface to *The Heart of Midlothian*, this argument is clearly outlined. Looking at Scott's overall literary project, he claims that "[a]t the same time, in criticizing the great disaster that capitalism was for the Scottish people, Scott deliberately beautified the extremely backward and underdeveloped Scottish feudal society" (同時，在批判資本主義給蘇格蘭人民帶來的巨大災難時，他又著意美化了極端落後和不發達的蘇格蘭封建社會 [章益 7]).

Scott's novels, then, strive to represent the ordinary people of Scotland, those who have been unchanged by the development of commercialism, and who often remain in pseudo-feudal roles. Bourgeois culture, the prefaces argue,



is criticised in the novels, an idea particularly well-presented in Chang's preface on *The Heart of Midlothian*. This novel is unique in that it takes a working-class woman as its protagonist, and Chang argues that through the representation of Jeanie Deans, who could easily be contrasted with Queen Caroline or Effie Deans, peasant values are praised and bourgeois values are criticised.

The story of Jeanie Deans is based on that of Helen Walker who, refusing to perjure herself in order to save her sister's life, walked to London to seek royal clemency. In *The Heart of Midlothian*, Scott presents a personal meeting between Queen Caroline and Jeanie in which the Scottish woman is portrayed as being naïve and honest, whereas the Queen is very political and conniving. Chang argues that "[t]he two women's images formed a stark contrast, making Jeanie's farmer character seem simple and noble" (這兩個女性形象形成了鮮明的對比，使珍妮的勞動人民純樸本色顯得更加高尚和可貴 [章益 14]). The contrast between these two is presented in a number of ways, including their class, their nationality, their morality, and their motivations. Whereas Jeanie is pure and innocent, the Queen is motivated by her own politics, and merely acts the part of being merciful. This contrast highlights the value of Jeanie's character.

Chang furthers his argument by looking at Effie's life after her pardon and marriage to Staunton. He argues that Effie's "advancement" demonstrates a degeneration of values. Although she is considered to be a criminal by law (but not by the reader) at the beginning of the novel, she evokes the reader's sympathy. Her character flaws, the narrator says, are the result of her being spoiled by her father and sister, that is, because she has been subjected to treatment that is not consistent with that usually associated with girls of her class. However, by the end of the novel Effie is neither sympathetic nor happy. To understand Chang's argument, we must consider the narrative conventions of the early nineteenth century. Effie is, despite the reader's sympathy for her, guilty of committing a social crime, that is, she had sex outside of marriage, which in the fiction of the nineteenth century, if not in reality itself, was unacceptable.

Often, in novels, women who act in such a way suffer death or suffer from madness. However, this is also connected to class, as Scott himself complained to James Ballantyne in response to Ballantyne's request to obscure one of the novelist's other heroines' sexual adventures. Scott writes: "You would never



have quarrelled with it had the thing happened to a girl in gingham. The silk petticoat can make little difference” (Robertson 103). Effie, of course, starts the novel “in gingham” and ends it in a “silk petticoat,” and Scott therefore had some freedom in portraying her. Because of her parentage, he does not have to let her die, nor would this work inasmuch as Effie’s pardon is the result of Jeanie’s endeavours, and killing Effie would create an unhappy ending for Jeanie.

However, Scott does make Effie unhappy. Her married life, as shown in the fourth volume, is characterised by ennui, whereas her sister, who is in the context of the narrative more deserving, settles down to a fairly conventional, domestic happy ending. It could be argued that the final volume depicts a morally providential reading of the novel; although Effie can be saved from the law, she cannot be saved from herself. However, this is not quite satisfactory, especially as Effie is financially much more rewarded than is Jeanie, and because the slow-paced final volume, which, over the years has garnered much criticism for being a money-making add-on, gives the reader enough time to notice the hidden unhappiness in Jeanie’s apparently happy ending.

Chang makes two significant points in relation to the ending of *The Heart of Midlothian*, points which he links back to the idea of class. The first is that although Jeanie, living on the Duke’s estate, seems to be happy, there are hidden fractures. Additionally, the real-life Helen Walker did not have a happy ending. Although Scott rewrites her life to make it better fit the expectations of the genre, he is open about his source material, and the shadow of the real woman remains cast over his fictional one. Likewise, the problems of the commercialisation of feudal estates is depicted through the presentation of the Duke’s representative. Whereas the Duke himself is fair and considerate towards Jeanie, the person he leaves in charge of ensuring that his estate makes him money is a dangerous element: he has the potential to financially ruin Jeanie and her husband, and has none of the Duke’s benevolence. Along with Scott scholars from around the world who have studied this author’s destabilisations, Chang recognises that there is some friction between the discourse and the plot of the novel. Although the plot may tell the reader that Jeanie is contented and fairly treated, the discourse, as Chang implies, overshadows this through the character of the representative and the story of the real Helen Walker.

Secondly, Chang argues that Scott criticises commercialism through the character of Effie:

他十分厭惡資產階級腐朽糜爛的奢侈生活，認為資本主義的發展帶來了社會道德的墮落，敗壞了純樸的社會風氣。所以他把希望寄託在像珍妮這樣普通的農村婦女身上，認為只有這樣的人們才能抵制資產階級社會的罪惡影響，認為在他們身上保存了蘇格蘭民族的健康精神。為了和珍妮形成對比，司各特在愛菲這個形象身上寫出了沾染資產階級壞影響以致喪失了勞動人民純潔本質的反面例子。

He was very disgusted with the bourgeois, decaying and luxurious life, and believed that the development of capitalism had brought about the fall of social morality and ruined the simple social atmosphere. So he pinned his hopes on ordinary rural women like Jeanie, thinking that only then could people resist the evil influence of bourgeois society and preserve the healthy spirit of the Scottish nation. In contrast to Jeanie, Scott's description of Effie reflected the negative impact of the bourgeoisie and the loss of the pure nature of the working people. (Chang 15)

At the beginning of this article, we considered how the prefaces relate to Scott's interest in balladry, folklore and to social class, and we saw how Scott's claims that a nation's character can be found in its workers, not its gentry, was referenced by the Liu and Chang's preface to *Ivanhoe* and Chang's preface to *The Heart of Midlothian*. This same conflation between class and national character is seen in this description of Jeanie. According to the quotation above, she represents the spirit of Scotland because she does not abandon her class roots. Through her values, Scotland can be understood and cherished. On the other hand, Chang argues, Effie's misery and ennui are a result not of her sexual exploits, which may have been accepted by Scott's original readership, but by her inclusion in a higher class. Living as a member of the bourgeoisie negates any of the national qualities that Effie may have been able to cultivate. Therefore, Chang implies, Scott's representation of these two sisters presents a veiled criticism of bourgeois society, and a desire to return to feudal ideology.

This claim is worth considering in depth. Finance, and the limits of commercial society, are themes which are found across Scott's work. In the narrative poem *Marmion*, the eponymous protagonist betrays his love for financial gain, which reflects the king's disastrous leadership that ends in tragedy. In *Rob Roy* and *Redgauntlet* the young protagonists, Frank Osbaldistone and Darsie Latimer, chafe against the demands of trade and the law respectively. However, in both novels the heroes return to their duties; dismissal of commercial values is presented as a phase that young men often go through before they return to their everyday lives. The other female character who ascends from one class to another is Mary Avenel, who progresses from living a simple life in *The Monastery* to one of high status in *The Abbot*. Unlike Effie, Mary was born into the gentry, and was merely raised in a working-class family. After the reinstatement of her fortune, Mary's life is presented as being rather bleak by the narrator of *The Abbot*:

. . . the dames of the neighbouring barons affected to regard her less as the heiress as the House of Avenel, than as the wife of as a peasant, himself the son of a church-vassal, raised up to the mushroom eminence by the capricious favour of Moray.

This pride in one's ancestry, which rankled in the bosoms of the more ancient gentry, was more openly expressed by their ladies, and was, moreover, embittered not a little by the political feuds of the time, for most of the Southern chiefs were friends to the authority of the Queen, and very jealous of the power of Moray. The Castle of Avenel was, therefore, on all these accounts, as melancholy and solitary a residence for its lady as could be imagined. (Scott, *The Abbot* 6)

The ennui of Mary is similar to that of Effie, suggesting that Scott wishes to present the dissatisfaction that can come with a quick reversal of fortune, particularly for women. However, Chang has claimed that this is a veiled criticism of commercialism, which does not hold up in relation to *The Abbot*. The class that Mary joins does not represent the new commercial class which the prefaces suggest Scott criticises, but rather the upper class in a feudal society. Likewise, Mary is not dissatisfied with her life because of the wealth that she

now has, but rather because due to the conventions of the feudal hierarchy, she is neglected by her contemporaries.

What can be seen in Scott's presentation of Effie and Mary, then, is not a criticism of commercial ideology. Effie's ennui does not suggest that Scott wishes that everyone could live in a feudal society. However, it does work together with the dissatisfaction of Mary Avenel to suggest that Scott was engaged in asking questions relating to genre conventions. Effie and Mary both represent women who have experienced the "happy ending" of marriage and an increase in wealth. However, their lives are miserable. This suggests that Scott's work encourages readers to interpret the texts beyond the conventions of genre. Although Scott does engage directly with the question of class, especially in *The Heart of Midlothian*, his doing so does not necessarily indicate a wish to return to a feudal ideology. Instead, as with the other ways in which his work includes destabilisations, Scott allows his readers to join a discourse instead of giving them a clear answer.

Over the last fifty years, the study of Walter Scott's *oeuvre* has grown exponentially with most studies focussing on the ways in which his work subverts expectations. Major studies have focussed on his use of language, his *genre* playfulness, his representations of Scotland, and his presentations of gender. Within these studies, class has sometimes been considered, but none of the major studies on Scott's work have focussed on the presentation of feudal and commercial ideologies. Although there is not sufficient evidence to support the pattern that emerges from the prefaces—that Scott includes a veiled criticism of commercial culture in order to depict his yearning for a feudal society—the modern Chinese interpretation of the clash between the two ideologies does illuminate his work in a way that has not been done before.

By taking Scott's personal life, including his creation of Abbotsford, alongside the representation of feudal loyalties that appears in a number of his works, it is possible to see a conflict between the loyalties of the patronage system and the networks of the commercial one. Within this context, Scott appears to show his readers the strengths and weaknesses of both systems, and thus can be seen as someone who highlights the problems common to his own industrial era. This is one of the ways in which he may be of interest to contemporary Chinese readers. Likewise, this understanding of class struggles, as presented by the Chinese translators, opens up a new area of investigation for Scott scholars throughout the world.

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