Gaelic Scotland in the Colonial Imagination

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I would also like to thank the friendly staff at Bridgeman Images for supplying the picture reproduced on the cover—this Victorian scrap perfectly captures the ambiguity of the Scottish Highlanders’ position in British colonial discourse: on the one hand, the Highlander marches alongside the other (ethnically unmarked) British redcoat soldier as a leader of the pageant, presumably a fellow conqueror of the “exotic” people and animals behind him, but on the other hand he is arguably also part of the pageant of the colonized—ethnically marked like them, and with some “primitive exoticism” emanating from his garb. Recalling the triumphant marches in ancient Rome where victorious commanders and emperors paraded themselves, their troops, foreign captives and spoils, this Victorian procession also reflects Britain’s attempts to portray itself as a successor to imperial Rome—with “Celts” as barbarian Others to both empires, and a bridge between them.

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Some of the ideas presented in this book were previously published in a different form as parts of essays in the following collections and journals:
Global Fragments: (Dis)Orientation in the New World Order, edited by Anke Bartels and Dirk Wiemann; Transcultural English Studies: Theories, Fictions, Realities, edited by Frank Schulze-Engler and Sissy Helff; Translation of Cultures, edited by Petra Rüdiger and Konrad Gross; The Bottle Imp 10; Within and Without Empire: Scotland Across the (Post)colonial Borderline, edited by Carla Sassi and Theo van Heijnsbergen; Anglistentag 2012 Potsdam: Proceedings, edited by Katrin Röder and Ilse Wischer; and Contested Identities: Literary Negotiations in Time and Place, edited by Roger Nicholson, Claudia Marquis, and Gertrud Szamosi. In terms of theory and historical basics, there are also some overlaps with my earlier monograph Uneasy Subjects: Postcolonialism and Scottish Gaelic Poetry—in a way, these two studies complement each other, approaching the Scottish (post)colonial question from different linguistic angles.

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