Scotland in the Encyclopédie

It cannot be denied that the monumental Encyclopédie compiled by Diderot and his numerous collaborators was designed to combat ignorance. The ambitious aim is clearly stated in the Discours préliminaire, where d’Alembert examines the relationships existing between the sciences and the arts, and the progress useful knowledge has made since the dawn of civilisation. Knowledge, the encyclopédistes believed, was the most effective weapon that could be wielded against threatening reactionary philosophies which thrived on the suppression of information. The majority, if not all, of the contributors were inspired by this unifying, basic belief. Yet, Diderot and his confrères were not satisfied merely to present knowledge in a passive, indifferent fashion. It was their duty to eradicate the fruits of ignorance through language that was forceful, if at times marked by irony and sarcasm. The article “Encyclopédie” outlines these aims with a surprising forthrightness.

What should not be forgotten, however, is that the idea of this compendium stemmed, in large measure, from a desire to give France a dictionary which would serve as a worthy counterpart to Chambers’ Cyclopedia, first published in 1728, carrying the sub-title Universal Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences. If only for this reason, it may be appropriate to consider the French enterprise and to assess its merits first as a compilation and subsequently as a skilful organisation of anti-establishment critique. The well known cross reference technique could achieve its maximum effect only in a medium of adequate accumulation of facts and ideas. An examination
of the index reveals that almost every known country on earth has merited some attention within the pages of the work, attesting to the editors’ concern for universality and comprehensiveness. It comes as no surprise, therefore, to find countries such as Great Britain treated not only as modern geopolitical units but also as composite states. Peoples or countries which contributed significantly toward determining the existing political reality receive their share of attention. Scotland is a case in point. The purpose of this short study is to examine the nature of information on Scotland offered by contributors and, hopefully, to discover whether the inclusion of Scotland provided any opportunity for the editors to fulfil their propagandistic aims.

Before the coming of the Encyclopédie (the last volume appeared in 1780), Scotland had long been the subject of discussion among members of the European and particularly the French intelligentsia. During his stay in England (1726-29), Voltaire had taken time to study the Scottish national religion. He compared it unfavourably with the Anglican religion, mocking its asceticism and equating it with Calvinism, aspects of which he had come to detest. There is no record, however, that he ever visited the northern kingdom himself or attended a Presbyterian service. It can therefore be assumed that all of his comments were based on secondary sources. If there were other Scotland watchers among the philosophers, little evidence is known to exist attesting to this fact. In fact, interest in Scotland as a cultural unit appears, at least in France, to have been on the wane since her union with England at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The alacrity with which the state of union was accepted, despite dissiension in Scotland itself, may have been the result of Cardinal Fleury’s efforts directed toward normalising relations with England. Scotland had become, in reality, a kind of northern province and, in general, the French bonne homme kept a discreet distance from provincials. In any case, his associates would most likely congregate at Court or in the large towns.

It will also be remembered that Scottish intellectuals went south in search of diplomas and dignity, to accumulate finance and fame by their pens. Enlightenment in Scotland was a phenomenon acknowledged much later than it was in England and France. To many European visitors in the eighteenth century, Scotland was beautiful
because of its exoticism and its tourist attractions. Ruined Frenchmen have long memories and their economic humiliation of 1720, instigated unintentionally by a former Scot, certainly did not help the Scottish tourism trade, despite the fact that John Law was Catholic and a naturalised Frenchman.

Scotland's inclusion in the Encyclopédie, it may be argued, had nothing to do with subscribers' interests, but rather that Diderot, overwhelmed by Jaucourt's enthusiasm, may simply have followed the order of items in Chambers' work, The same argument can be advanced to justify inclusion of obscure islands and several faits divers which dot the pages of this ponderous compilation. It is our belief, nevertheless, that when Diderot and D'Alembert stated their intention to collect "toutes les connaissances", they meant just that. They recruited a vast army of researchers and scholars in order to accomplish their aims, to ensure that nothing of value would escape their notice. What is more, the reading public, those people who would eventually make the venture a financial success, was ready for obscure facts. When it came to history, a compelling curiosity ruled the eighteenth-century Frenchman.

Justification for mention of Scotland in the French work may also be sought at another level. Her contribution to Enlightenment thought, though still small quantitatively, was significant, qualitatively. By 1750, Hume and Adam Smith had already become fairly well known in France for their controversial ideas and, in circles that popularised Freemasonry, Scotland had played an important role by the time the first volume of the Encyclopédie appeared. For one thing, she had produced the Chevalier Ramsay who, as early as 1716, as Master of the Grand Lodge in Paris, had exhorted the community of scholars to initiate compilation of useful knowledge in a form of immense proportions.

The first mention of Scotland of any significance occurs in a long pastiche entitled "Chancelier", covering several pages (3:99).\textsuperscript{1} Subtitled "Chancelier d'Écosse", this article occupies .2 of a column and carries no signature.\textsuperscript{2}

The Scottish Chancellor, according to this article, resembles his English counterpart. He performs a similar role in the government and holds comparable authority. Keeper of the seal, he lives on the revenue that accrues from its use — a kind of stamp duty he receives from the exercise of this function. This information is purely factual.
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What is more interesting is the cross reference to "Chancelier d'Angleterre". Here mention is made of the equitableness and moderation characteristic of the office of Chancellor: as the final and supreme arbiter in civil cases, he may commute sentences which, in his opinion, are too harsh: "[il] peut ... juger selon l'équité et modérer la rigueur de la loi, ce que ne peuvent pas faire les autres juges". Here is, then, an institution which French legal reformers would consider based on humane values. The Scottish Chancellor fits into the ideals of progressive people in France.

We also note with interest that the scientific method of gathering historical information is very much in evidence. The editors reproduce verbatim a Latin quotation from chapter II of King Malcom's laws outlining policy for remuneration of the chancellorate. Reference is also made to Thomas More, who is viewed as a victim of political oppression, and Bacon, "deux des plus illustres chanceliers d'Angleterre".

The intense preoccupation with religion which the encyclopédistes showed in general is exemplified in a more substantial article entitled "Covenant" (4:161, 4 column). It comes from the pen of Abbé Mallet (1713-1754), a theologian who had served as curé near Melun and as professor of theology at the Collège de Navarre from 1751 to 1754. Despite his short career as a contributor to the magnum opus, Mallet is known to be responsible for more than two thousand articles, mostly on theology and historical religion. No one, perhaps, could be better qualified to write on the subject.

"Covenant" is an example of the succinctness which characterises the whole Encyclopédie. Even on religious subjects no words are wasted. Referring to the confederation which united Scottish Protestants in 1638 and reaffirmed the intention of the reformers to throw off the papal yoke, Mallet finds it essential to reiterate the three principal aims of the confédérés who had hoped to foster the creation of a new liturgy for Scotland. The result, he states, was tension between the 'Catholic' Charles I and the confederates, and religio-political enmity separating supporters and opponents of Catholicism. Presbyterians then dominating the English parliament supported the Protestant alliance, consolidating anti-Catholic sentiment in England, Scotland and Ireland. Charles II's accession to the Scottish throne brought the Episcopalian faction back into prominence, thus voiding the concessions which his predecessor accepted under pressure.
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Intentional or not, there is an unmistakable, if subtle, criticism of Catholic kings who wish to impose religious dogma on their subjects. Mallet's presentation of the basic facts shows a clear bias toward the Covenanters in their struggle to maintain freedom of conviction.

The Chevalier de Jaucourt, indefatigable compiler of material and justifiably viewed as Diderot's right hand man in editing the *Encyclopédie*, contributed an article also dealing with the Scottish religio-political problems of the seventeenth century (4:324, .4 column). Bearing a title identical with that of Mallet's article (except for a minor spelling change), Jaucourt's contribution is evidently on the same subject matter. The difference lies in the placing of emphasis. While Mallet stresses the terms of the agreement and the fact that a Catholic king (Charles II) refused to meet the terms of a pact agreed to by his predecessor, Jaucourt is interested in two aspects that are more theoretical in nature. The first is the inviolability of an agreement signed by James VI and later ratified by a constitutionally formed body of people. He maintains, secondly, that Charles I was in no way threatened by the league or covenant. All Presbyterians sought were guarantees that an imposed king would not suppress their rights through political abuse. The king's refusal to keep faith resulted in a polarisation if Episcopalians and Presbyterians. The "tristes brouilleries", which followed the eventual triumph of the latter group and the execution of Charles I, Jaucourt blames on the king's adamant and foolhardy attempts to force a foreign code of worship upon his subjects.

Volume 5 of the *Encyclopédie* contains the first direct comment on Scotland as a country. Once again, Jaucourt is the contributor, and the article, entitled "Écosse" (5:351), though necessarily succinct, is of rather disappointing length: a mere two paragraphs occupying roughly .7 column.

Within these narrow limits, the writer gives a terse description of Scotland, outlining facts of interest to geographers and historians: the physical features of the land formerly called Caledonia; the rivers separating Scotland from England; the unusual length and shortness of day at the summer and winter solstices respectively; the land area; the numerous lakes, mountains and forests; the varied fauna and the mineral wealth. He spares time for just one short comment on a non-geographical matter — the dominant religion, which he equated
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with Calvinism. Indeed, Scotland, with its cantonal structure, bears more than superficial resemblance to Switzerland. He makes passing reference to James VI who in 1603 became James I of England, at the Union of the Crowns. It was, however, under Anne that constitutional unification was achieved (1707), Scotland's share of representation being "seize pairs et quarante-cinq membres" sitting in the House of Commons.

The article concludes on a note of regret. Scotland, with union, Jaucourt affirms, lost much of her cultural and political independence, not uncommonly the lot of a poor country which becomes closely associated with a rich one: "Elle a été redoutable tant qu'elle n'a pas été incorporée avec l'Angleterre; mais comme dit M. de Voltaire, un état pauvre, voisin d'un riche, devient vénel à la longue, et c'est aussi le malheur que l'Ecosse éprouve". Notwithstanding this personal reflection on the tyranny of historical determination, Jaucourt's remarks do show objectivity, if only because brevity demands the essential.

Scotland's contribution to French military history receives brief mention in the course of a lengthy article entitled "Gendarmerie", written by Gaspard Michel (better known as LeBlond, 1736-1809). Academician, archeologist, librarian and later member of the Institut, LeBlond is well qualified to present one of France's oldest institutions.

In one short paragraph, he traces to the times of Charles VII the origins of the appellation "Gendarmes écossais", a misnomer in 1757, since the military corps it designates includes no Scotsmen. It is nevertheless true, says LeBlond, that the regiment bearing this name continues to enjoy certain traditional privileges of protocol given to the Scottish soldiers from whom it derives its title. For example, members of the "Gendarmes écossais" take precedence over the two musketeer companies and also "monte la garde à cheval chez le roi ... lorsque sa majesté est à l'armée ou en voyage".

It would be highly unfair to treat as a mere historical curiosity the military cooperation which formerly brought Scotland and France together. At mid-century, Franco-Scottish friendship was still fresh in the public memory and evocations of this kind, though brief, would doubtlessly warm the hearts of military enthusiasts and Scottish emigrants living in France.³

Another rather brief comment which must have interested
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readers takes the title "Highlanders" (8: 207, .2 column). A further contribution by Jaucourt, this article describes the legendary bravado and strength of the Scottish montagnards, descendants of the ancient Caledonians. In contrast to the "Lowlanders", Highlanders have preserved their racial integrity virtually intact. According to the writer, their cultural distinctiveness is still very much in evidence. Jaucourt ends with an enthusiastic invitation to his readers further to research the subject in the works of Boece and Buchanan: "Il faut lire la description que Boece et Buchanan font des anciennes moeurs, de la force et de la bravoure de ces gens-là". These authors might well be his principal sources of information.4

A substantial article entitled "lac" (9: 150-151, 2.4 columns) devotes a fair sized paragraph to the Scottish lakes. It contains mostly technical data on the formation of lakes and lake basins, and on the peculiar characteristics of inland bodies of water. Certain Scottish lakes, the writer states, are of special interest to physicists since they show unusual resistance to freezing during even the most severe winters. A subsequent article in the same volume carrying the title "Logh", signed by Jaucourt, shows a preference for the local terminology to the French "Lac".

The subject of lakes and their peculiarities receives further attention in volume 9 (9: 105-106, .5 column), where Jaucourt makes some interesting remarks about Loch Ness. After a brief word on its location ("dans la province de Murray"), he proceeds to describe that quality of its water ("Ce lac est un grand réservoir d'eau douce"), gives its dimensions, and comments on its channel-like shape. The centre of his interest lies, nevertheless, in an aspect of scientific importance: the fact that this fresh-water lake does not freeze in winter. The theory he offers as an explanation of this geographical phenomenon is a deduction based on research which has shown that, from December to April, the waters of Loch Ness maintains a temperature comparable to that of the open sea of similar depth. The maintenance of fluidity, he therefore concludes, must be mainly attributable to the great depth of the lake. Another factor responsible for this peculiarity, he thinks, is the perpetual restlessness of the surface water, due to incessant wind action:

Le vent soufflant toujours d'un bout à l'autre, y fait une ondulation assez considérable pour empêcher que l'eau qui est

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His conclusion, he assures us, derives from direct observation "qu'on fait communément dans le voisinage".

This entry strikes us as an original contribution by Jaucourt who, it has been shown elsewhere, often used his sources verbatim. A valuable clue is provided by the appearance of the first person, a very rare occurrence in the articles examined. We get this distinct impression that he has become more than superficially involved with current geographical research in Scotland; that it is the scientist speaking rather than the reporter; that this is "tourist" information of interest to the scholar rather than to the layman.

By its very nature, this article brings Scotland into the realm of eighteenth-century scientific discussions. Herein lies its main significance. We may also note with interest the refreshing absence of emphasis on the historical past and of myths and legends surrounding the Scottish lakes. Jaucourt's characteristic deductive style is here easily recognisable as well as in all entries bearing his signature.

"Pentland Firth" is the title of a short article (12: 318-319, .4 column) describing the mis-named fjord-like see passage separating the Orkney Islands from mainland Scotland. The principal paragraph is rather concerned with a traditional story told of the circumstances under which this well-known geographical formation received its name and the nautical skill required to navigate its treacherous waters.

Jaucourt provides, in this highly condensed entry, a graphic description of the physical character of this natural moat which, according to tradition, served as valuable protection to the 'Cathnuf' dwellers against the Pictish invaders. The reader also gets a glimpse of the rocky coastline of northern Scotland.

Another facet of the ancient history of Scotland shows up in the article entitled "Les Pictes", contributed by Jaucourt (12: 551-552, 1.1 columns). In concise, factual language, he talks about the various campaigns undertaken by the Romans against this warlike people, their determined resistance to foreign intrusion, and their ultimate annihilation by 'Kneth'. The legendary conqueror, comments Jaucourt, is viewed by Scotsmen as one of the founding fathers of the nation. The length of the article, the attention paid to detail, and the
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fervour which marks the treatment of this subject are all indicative of the author's universality of taste and interest. The account is forceful, accurate, and not without touches of realism. Mention of important towns such as Edinburgh under their modern designation in no way detracts from its ancient flavour, its atmosphere of feuding tribes.

Volume 14 contains three entries of varying length which make reference to Scotland. The first, "Scotes" (14: 810, 1 column), unsigned and categorised as ancient history, gives a brief description of an ancient tribe which, during the Roman occupation, inhabited what is now known as Scotland. The writer limits himself to three facts: the 'Scotes' were a bellicose people which made frequent incursions into the northern provinces of Roman England, harassing Bretons as well as Romans: they constitute the ancestors of the modern Scots: they were finally subdued during the Julian régime. The chief aim here is to provide military and anthropological information.

"Scoti", signed by Jaucourt and of more substance and length (14: 810-811, 1.4 columns), immediately follows. This entry comprises various data on human geography and history. Not surprisingly, its Latin title embraces all the tribes occupying northern Great Britain (not merely one tribe, as is the case with "Scotes").

Speculating boldly on the origin of these ancient inhabitants, Jaucourt quotes twice from Claudian7 in support of the widespread eighteenth-century belief that the Bretons, originally from Galicia in Spain, became the earliest "Scots"; that the Picts followed them, and finally the Scots, who migrated from Ireland. How did the Irish immigrants get their names? Jaucourt admits that available information on this matter is still speculative. If the word is Teutonic in origin, Scots and Scythians are like to have a common ancestry. According to popular belief, the appellation "Scots" derives from scutten (archer), and was assigned to this ethnic group by those who admired them for their masterly handling of bows and arrows. The Scoti, declares Jaucourt, showed exceptional endurance and a bellicose temperament, qualities which they shared with the Bretons of England. This fact supports the theory of their common origin. His word picture, compressed into a single composite sentence, is worth quoting:

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Au reste, les moeurs de ces peuples n'étaient pas fort différentes de celles des Bretons d'Angleterre: c'était de part et d'autre une barbarie égale, un grand amour pour les armes et pour tous les exercices violents, une éducation dure, une grande habitude à supporter les fatigues les plus rudes, toutes les incommodes de la guerre, toutes les injures de l'air, une grande sobriété, une grande simplicité, et beaucoup de bravoure et de courage, même dans les femmes qui allaient à la guerre avec leurs maris (I4: 810-811).

The account is not, however, devoted exclusively to military aspects of ancient Scottish history. Equal importance is given to social and cultural life: reference to hieroglyphics and monuments which attest to a well developed system of writing; pastimes and amusements of the early Scottish tribes; their ability to manufacture intoxicants from local herbs; their manner of eradicating sickness through emasculation, constraints against marriage, and quarantine. Jaucourt notes, in conclusion, the mispronunciation which produced the French appellation "Ecosse".

One of the more interesting articles on Scotland, "Scoti" is supplementary to, rather than a repetition of, the article "Ecosse" (5: 351). also written by Jaucourt. His French readers would be particularly attracted to his remarks on the Spartan fortitude and culture of the ancient Scots, and to his speculation on their Spanish origins.

"Scotistes", the third article in volume I4 (811, .4 column), deals only marginally with Scotland as a possible birthplace of Jean Scotus. Its main subject, treated in three paragraphs, is the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century theological controversy between Franciscans and Thomists over the soul and the immaculate conception. No signature is attached to this entry.

Classified under the rubric Histoire moderne, the unsigned "Union d'Ecosse avec l'Angleterre" (17: 385-386, .8 column) is the last article to be found in the seventeen volumes of text published between 1751 and 1765.

The author presents the two significant moments in the historical drama which culminated in the union of 1707: firstly, attempts by the monarchy to unify England and Scotland and the religio-political obstacles encountered; secondly, the various stages
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of the negotiations which preceded final ratification of the agreement to unite. He takes care to emphasize the fact that union was achieved by peaceful means, and shows great pleasure at this accomplishment: "Cette union si salutaire, souvent projetée et souvent manquée, réussit en 1707". His carefully chosen words indicate an obvious attempt to point out that the resulting political situation is one of cooperation between equals; that the general will of the Scottish people prevailed. A political merger of this type pays not the slightest homage to tyranny:

Le parlement d'Ecosse a été supprimé, ou pour mieux dire réuni (my emphasis) à celui d'Angleterre; de sorte que les deux n'en font qu'un, sous le titre de parlement de la Grande Bretagne (17: 386).

Evidently, the author has only praise for the union which he considers both a political and an economic success. Scotland, he believes, has adequate representation in the supreme legislative body, not in theory but in reality.8

For the reader bent on justifying the inclusion of Scotland in the Encyclopédie on the basis of that country's impact on eighteenth-century history, this article is of particular importance. The impression that, in the French dictionary, Scotland is portrayed as a historical or cultural curiosity becomes weakened, mainly because of this entry which serves to bridge the gap between antiquity and the age of the philosophes. Yet there is the temptation to ask why the entries dealing with Scotland's past outnumber to such a degree those devoted to her role in the march of eighteenth-century events. Part of the answer to this question probably lies in the firm belief prevalent among the encyclopédistes that history, rightly presented, has great corrective potential, which augments its usefulness for human progress.9

"Union de l'Ecosse avec l'Angleterre", the only article outlining political change in eighteenth-century Scotland, is important for what I would call a shift of perspective in France, vis-à-vis affairs on the other side of the Channel. My suggestion is that, after the union of 1707, French intellectuals ceased to view Scotland as a separate entity, notwithstanding earlier events which often brought France and her Scottish neighbours together in opposition to England.10
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Claude Courtépée (1721-81), cleric and geographer of note, contributed the last article of any significance on Scotland (Supplément, 4: 755-756, 1.2 columns). The publication date is given as 1777. Categorised as Géographie ancienne et du moyen âge, "Scotia" deals, inter alia, with geographical landmarks of early Scotland, usually associated with the Roman conquest. Familiar names appear: Picts, Caledonians, Kenneth, king of Scots, and William the Conqueror whom the writer holds partly responsible for Anglo-Saxon influence in remote areas of the northern kingdom. In a final note, Courtépée refers nostalgically to the long friendship which brought France and Scotland together since the days of Charles V and even suggests that the accession of Queen Anne to the Scottish throne facilitated the transition toward union with England.

Several questions arise from our study of these Scottish articles, in themselves not particularly noteworthy from a literary standpoint. Historically, emphasis is on the past, with relatively little that can be called contemporary, and nothing whatsoever on eighteenth-century Scottish intellectuals. A notable such as Hume, for instance, has received no mention, despite the fact that his political writings are available in French as early as 1754. Another regrettable omission is that of the name of Michael Ramsay. As a whole, there is very little on Scotland's contribution to modern thought; this is remarkable when one considers that the intellectual awakening of that country predates 1750.11 The apparent de-emphasis of ideological content important to the intellectual movement behind the compilation must be attributed to the contributors who, partly because of authoritarian constraints, partly through personal interest, gave what they considered a reasonably accurate picture of Scotland. It may also be true to state that subscribers' tastes compelled the editors to keep a balance between matters of historical import and propaganda for the mouvement philosophique. Such a conclusion might lead to the assumption that, apart from the official and the officious watchings of public morals, the number of readers who scanned the monumental work in search of heterodox opinions was comparatively small. Undoubtedly, Le Breton, as a professional publisher, was on the lookout not only to save his establishment and keep himself out of prison, but also to ensure that the project was a financial success.

The repetitious nature of listings also deserves comment. Why,
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for instance, is Scotland's past treated under four different headings? A probable answer to this question can be found in the editors' concern to ensure comprehensiveness of information. Compared with present-day layouts for similar works, the method used by Diderot and his collaborators appears pedantic and tiresome; twentieth-century editors would most likely opt for a single article (subdivided to preserve clarity) by an expert, which purports to tell the busy reader all the important things he needs to know about Scotland.

Plurality of authorship does, however, have certain advantages. It has been noted that "Ecosse" and "Scotia" are contributed by two different authors. In this connection, two points are worth observing. The first has to do with the word "contributed", significant for any discussion of the manner in which the Encyclopédie was composed. Its theme being universality of knowledge, it contained many unsolicited articles. Secondly, the editors evidently felt that accuracy would be ensured through a variety of sampling, particularly in historical articles. On the other hand, we cannot rule out the possibility that haste, negligence, and lack of adequate revision were responsible for some of the duplication found in a compendium of this magnitude.¹²

In view of Scotland's former close friendship with France, it can be argued that she receives rather brief mention in the Encyclopédie (a mere 9.4 columns). The tendency to play down the separateness of England's northern neighbour however, to indicate a shift in the political perspective of eighteenth-century French observers who, if anything, show a willingness to recognise the union established in 1707.

I should be remiss if I did not comment on the propagandistic content of the articles under review. The reader interested solely in polemic materials would be generally disappointed, since controversy is not the purpose here. It is however not surprising to find elements of what scholars have come to regard as Enlightenment ideology. Advocates of universal peace and international cooperation, the philosophes anathematised territorial expansion by conquest and looked with pleasure at peaceful political union. The Anglo-Scottish example is indirectly hailed as a possible alternative for rulers afflicted with the madness of war. The idea of a chancellor who could commute harsh sentences would obviously get the support of
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intellectuals theorising on the abolition of the death penalty. Reference to the triumph of religious dissenters over suppression by a Catholic king is also worthy of note, and brings to mind Voltaire’s repeated exhortations in the name of tolerance. Scientific empiricism also makes it appearance in Jaucourts’ article on Loch Ness. Indeed, eighteenth-century progressive ideas are present in miniature.

If we assume that these were original articles, we cannot at the same time doubt that their subject matter is an indication of the contributors’ personal concerns and the subscribers’ general interest; it would be unfair to use a twentieth-century slide-rule to measure the relevance of the information provided. Admittedly, the twelve articles examined tell us little about Scotland in the eighteenth century. And yet, we cannot but agree that the Encyclopédie, despite its politico-historical bias, its portrayal of Scotland as a British province, its apparent neglect of Scottish intellectuals, its failure to update information on Scottish society and culture, was nevertheless instrumental in clearing away some of the mystery which made the land of the Scots “a kind of terra incognita, which men thought of as a half mythical country, where strange things might exist”.

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1 Diderot, d’Alembert et al., Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers, par une Société des Gens des Lettres, 35 vols. (Paris 1751-1780). I have used for purposes of this study the Frommann reprint (1966) of the first or Paris Folio Edition.


3 The standard work on Franco-Scottish relations from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the nineteenth century is F. Michel, Les Écossais en France et les Français en Ecosse (London 1862).

4 Hector Boece (c.1465-1556), Scottish humanist and historian, was the author of Scotorum Historiae a Prima Gentis Origine (Paris 1527), translated into French by Nicolas d’Arfeville. This work formed the basis of French opinion on Scotland for a long time. George Buchanan (1506-1582), Scottish poet and historian, wrote the Historia Rerum Scoticarum (1582).


6 It has been argued that the surge of French curiosity with respect to the Scottish
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Highlands coincides with the rise of interest in Romantic exoticism in France around 1770. See M. Bain, Les Voyageurs Français en Ecosse (1770-1830) et leurs Curiosités Intellectuelles (Paris 1831).

7 Claudius Claudianus (c. 370-c. 404), Roman statesman, poet and historian.

8 It would be useful to compare the attitudes of the philosophes toward territorial annexation and political unification by conquest. The most vocal exponents, such as Voltaire and Montesquieu, were evidently opposed to violence and hence to military expansion. Mutual aid, friendly negotiations and economic cooperation seemed a better way to settle international inequities, theoretically speaking. Examples of union, like the Anglo-Scottish one, were rare indeed. Of course, French intellectuals either were ignorant of the existing pockets of protest in Scotland, or they considered these to be mere growing pains. Their idealism may also have led them to eliminate unfavourable propaganda.

9 See Voltaire’s article entitled “Histoire”, Encyclopédie, 8, 220-225.

10 See P.H. Brown, Early Travellers in Scotland (Edinburgh 1891), 9-15 et passim.

11 This is the central argument in W.L. Mathieson, The Awakening of Scotland (Glasgow 1910). According to Mathieson, the period of awakening spans the years 1747 to 1797.

12 However, Courtépée oversimplifies in stating that ‘Covenant’, 4:161 and ‘Covenant’ 4:324 ‘font le même article inutilement doublé’ (Supplément, 4 vols., 2:587)

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