# References to the past in nationalist political discourse

## *The place and the role of history in the Scottish National Party's case for independence*

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22.05.2017

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# Abstract

Hobsbawn explains the rise of nationalism in Western Europe as a reaction to the collapse of larger hopes and aspirations, and to the (real or apparent) crisis of macro-national state power.[1] But in the case of Scotland, the situation appears different. In my study, I show how the political nationalist discourse in Scotland seems to deviate more and more from the main theories regarding the conceptualisation, underlying explanations and practice of nationalism at the political level. By analysing how and how often the Scottish National Party (SNP) employs references to the past and the shared history of the nation in its pro-independence rhetoric, I demonstrate how indeed Scottish nationalism can be said to present a unique case of political nationalism in contemporary Western Europe. By insisting on cultural specificities, I also explain to what extent it follows the traditional theory, primarily regarding the connection of the past to national identity and nationalist discourse. In the end, my main conclusion is that the SNP strategically employs a rhetoric turned towards the future and deliberately minimise the allusions to the past in order to fit its nationalist discourse and present ideology, presenting himself as an inclusive, very modern and viable governmental option for Scotland, but still refuses to abandon historical references all-together.

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[1] Hobsbawn, 1990:178.

# Preface

When I started studying history, I was suddenly fascinated to discover what a wonderful resource it could be if applied with tact and discernment to other fields and especially to rhetoric. The more I learned the more I discover of the many usages of history in political discourses. I found it fascinating to understand politician's references and little by little to begin to see to what end those references where made, and what effects they had. I felt like I could see the underlying mechanics of the discourse, like a clockmaker opening a watch. As I continue through my curriculum, I started to get more involved with contemporary Western history, and then with nationalism, and then with nationalism in the British Isles. When came the time to consider a research question for the present thesis, I was returning from holidays in Scotland and had been marked by the context of the independence referendum. Naturally, all those interests and questions of mine merged into a gradually more precise idea, and soon my research topic was found: the place and role of history in the Scottish nationalist discourse.

I was lucky enough to found a supervisor in the person of Véronique Pouillard who shared my enthusiasm for my project, and even more so to found someone able to advise me and put up with my particular working schedule. It was indeed impossible for me to complete this thesis in the initial expected timeframe because I had to work full-time and also had to complete other projects first. Eventually, I found a bit of time there and then to advance, and after two years, I was able to achieve the present thesis.

Despite those not so optimal conditions, I am proud to have finally completed this project, and I must say that I have very much enjoyed researching it, getting familiar with an incredible amount of theoretical work (although the part about discourse theory and French philosophers was quite strenuous at times), and at last, analysing the SNP's discourse like a clockmaker stripping down a watch. And in the end, the most difficult task was certainly to not let myself be distracted by all the new possibilities and questions that my research was bringing.

I hope you will enjoy reading my work and that maybe it will help see you differently the way the SNP expresses itself in the next independence referendum, which seem to be about to happen far sooner than we all could have expected.

*Flora Strand*

*Oslo, 04.05.2017*

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# Introduction

# 1. Presentation

War is often said to have shaped European history for a very long time. Ever since 1945, Western European states have enjoyed a rather peaceful period and war within their borders has become quite unlikely. However, in the 1990s, the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia has revived some ancient nationalist claims on the European continent and renewed interest in topics related to national and regional identities. For instance, regional nationalist causes have reaffirmed themselves in Flanders, Catalonia, Basque Country, Corsica, Scotland, Belgium, and to some extent in French Brittany, Wales and Northern Italy, giving rise to new political tensions and possible causes of conflict. At the exception of some occasional terrorist attacks perpetuated by armed factions of Basque, Northern Irish and Corsican nationalist movements, regional nationalisms in Western Europe express themselves rather peacefully through the means of the law, democratic processes and institutions. Nonetheless, despite the improbability of armed conflict and civil war, the risk of state fragmentation remains real, as proven by the Scottish referendum on independence in September 2014.

The 2014 referendum, made possible after the stunning rise of the Scottish National Party (SNP), was formulated through the straightforward question "Should Scotland be an independent country?" and definitively constituted an important moment in British and European political history mediatized internationally. Despite the victory of the 'no' side by 55%, meaning that Scotland will remain in the United Kingdom, the vote has attracted a lot of attention and mobilise politicians significantly. The debate during the referendum campaign was centred on economic questions, but the referendum has also instigated cogitation and afterthoughts on the historical dimension of the union of Scotland and England, signed in 1707. Actually, 300 years after, historians, politicians, but also concerned citizens wonder if the considerations that brought the two countries together in 1707 still matter today.[2] There is a strong relation between nationalism and history. Nationalist movements are often a product of history, but also they are fuelled by their own history: history shapes the national identity and acts a unifying force. Hobsbawn argues that in order to 'reinvent the past' nationalists select specific moments from the past that they decide to remember or use in their discourses. This manipulation of history as a tool to nationalism is defended in such terms:

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[2] Whatley, 2014: x.

"For historians are to nationalism what poppy-growers in Pakistan are to heroin addicts: we supply the essential raw material for the market. Nations without a past are contradictions in terms. What makes a nation *is* the past; what justifies one nation against others is the past and historians are the people who produce it."[3]

History had been used before in Scottish political discourse as a potent force: for example, during the 2007 legislative elections, historical arguments and references were omnipresent, as for instance in the SNP's slogan: *1707, no right to choose; 2007 the right to choose.* The use of such historical references in nationalist rhetoric is generally considered a given. Nevertheless, a quick glance at what the media reported shows that the historical record was definitively not at the core of the pre-referendum discussions, somehow considered irrelevant in the overall debate revolving around more practical future economic concerns.

Thus, in regards to this particular context and the apparent shift of focus from the relevance of historical and cultural identity to economic viability in the potential making of a new nation-state, we are left to wonder if in an increasingly globalised and multi-cultural capitalist world, there is still room for history in the political expression of Western European regional nationalisms. The Scottish independence referendum encouraged me to wonder on how historical references can be used to mobilise voters to a cause like achieving independence.

In short, **what is the place and the role of the history rationale in the SNP political discourse and its argumentation for an independent Scotland?**

## 2. Research questions

This main question raises several other research questions. Firstly, regarding the available theory of history in nationalist discourse:  What should be expected in regards to the place and role of history in political discourse in general and in the SNP's discourse? Secondly, regarding the practice: What is actually observed in Scotland? And thirdly, regarding the practice of the SNP when interpreted in the light of the existing theory: Can the SNP's discursive and rhetorical employs and mentions of the past  be described and qualified within the limits of existing theoretical framework? How and to what extent?

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[3] Hobsbawm, 1992:23.

My primary aim is to conduct a case study of the Scottish road to independence through an analysis of the attitudes of the SNP towards historical references, insisting on its discourse during the referendum campaign. Through this specific case, confronted with existing theories derived from different fields such as political science, nationalism, history, historiography, sociology and communication, I intend to submit a new appreciation of the place of the history rationale in the democratic expression of modern western European regional nationalisms.

My early research and readings on the topic have allowed me to formulate the following thesis: in many regards, the recent shift in the expression of Scottish nationalism does not really seem to fit the classical theory on nationalism and its taxonomy. Whereas classical theorists emphasise the role of cultural identity, and thus history, as a factor of cohesion in nationalist movements, it appears that the Scottish nationalist, political discourse has resorted often to historical plea in its rhetorical practice. Based on the theory underscoring the links between history and both nation-building and nationalism in the West, doubled by the intrinsically historical nature of the debate (the endurance of a 300-year-old political union between two formerly independent kingdoms), one could have expected to find historical references aplenty in the official political discourse defending independence. However, such references are abnormally infrequent. Is this scarcity a deliberate choice? I will assume so. Then what motivated such a choice? What effect did this choice have?

Although I am strongly aware of the qualitative nature of my research question, in a final section of my study, I would like to briefly address the broader following question: What can we learn from the case of Scottish nationalism about the place and role of the history rationale in the regional nationalist political discourse of other Western European democratic states?

## 3. Research design, sources and methodology

Although the case of Scottish nationalism presents many specificities in regard to the existing theory that renders it quite different from other forms of Western regional nationalisms, I still think that is particularly interesting for conducting a study about the place and role of history in contemporary political discourse due to the deep historical foundation of the Scottish fight for independence and for its state of current affairs. Scotland presents a promising environment in which relevant material can be found in quantity. Moreover, the recent rise of the SNP and

the independence debate has brought the question on the spotlight and defines a limited and distinct political space of analysis.

In order to assess how, how often and to what effects the SNP resorts to historical references in its pro-independence discourse, I will need first and foremost to define a theoretical framework that will enable me to formulate some hypothesis regarding what to expect to find in the analysis of my main source and to establish a methodological framework through which to proceed to said analysis. My project here relies heavily on the theory available, but to my knowledge, there is no previous theoretical or empirical study that focuses on the rhetorical employs of historical references in Western nationalist political discourses. Therefore, I will need to use the available theory to develop my own theoretical framework regarding strategic employs of history in the pro-independence discourse of the SNP before proceeding to the analysis of my main primary source. But because of this complex theoretical layered construction and the study of only excerpts of markers and expressions of the SNP's discourse, I am conscious that my work contains a relative degree of subjectivity and that my overall analysis can be biased.

My work is built on existing literature covering general theories of nationalism, historiography and political discourse on the one hand, and analysis, studies and essays about Scotland specifically on the other hand. Before focusing on the specific case of the Scottish nationalist discourse, I will need to establish a theoretical framework regarding the place and role of history in nationalist movements. Here I will strongly rely on the seminal works on the notion of nationalism of eminent scholars such as Ernest Gellner, Anthony D. Smith, Benedict Anderson, Alain Dieckhoff, Miroslav Hroch and Eric Hobsbawm who consider history, (alongside ethnicity, language and religion), as a core marker of national identity, as well as a key argument to regional nationalist claims. For the theory regarding the links between history, memory and nationalism, I will rely primarily on the works of John Breuilly, David Carr, Pierre Nora and Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. Regarding political communication in general, I will grant special attention to the works of Jacques Ellule who has theorised political communication in modern Western democracies. Regarding political discourse, I can cite among others Michel Foucault, Norman Fairclough, and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe,. I will complete the aforementioned literature with more empirical studies or case studies that can appear relevant for my work.

The literature discussing the endurance and the specifics of Scottish nationalism through history is abundant, with several main works considered as references in the field. Although the subject of Scottish independence has benefited from considerable attention since the election of the SNP in Scottish government, it has received relatively little research attention.[4] The debate about independence has shed a lot of ink along journalists and essayist however, and many scholars have also addressed the implications of the referendum and later discussed its result. The 300-year anniversary of the Union in 2007 led to several historical research projects (and publications) about the position of Scotland in the U.K. However, these projects were conducted before the referendum, and as they cast new light on the history of the union, they fail to discuss the role of history in the present political debate about independence. In all the available literature, the historical rationale of Scottish political discourse is very seldom mentioned and certainly never discussed fully; it is by filling primarily this specific gap in the research regarding the use of historical arguments in today's Western European nationalist discourses that I hope to contribute to the existing literature.

My primary sources are literary ones. My whole corpus can be differentiated into three groups based on the use I will make of them: one that will consist of all the diverse historical references, allusions or evocation of pat events or figures found in the official elocutions of SNP members and SNP manifestos, another one that will consist of the official text regarding the reform of the history school curriculum and the visitor's text of the Bannockburn Visitor Centre, and a last one that will consist of SNP manifestos, and especially the independence white-paper *Scotland's Future*. *Scotland's Future* is my most important source and occupies a central place in my study. I have decided to centre my argumentation around this document because it is the unique official document presenting the case for independence published by the SNP government and addressed to the voters, and because a s a party manifesto, it can be considered as "rhetorical constructions of political realities".[5] It should then constitute a great opportunity to get an insight in the party's attitude towards its nationalist project of independence. Those sources have been analysed following traditional methods of text analysis mainly and the principle of triangulation, by combining approaches from the fields of history, linguistic, sociology and political science, as well as, to some extent, anthropology. For the manifestos and the white-paper, I have proceeded to a more thorough analysis of the rhetoric. My analysis of the SNP's discourse relies on rhetoric rather than linguistics because it aims to

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[4] Prentice, 2010:411.
[5] Smith & Smith, 2000:457.

identify its discursive ideology rather than the linguistic articulation of the discourse. Rhetorical analysis allows to access a text in its specificity and to approach nationalist ideology methodologically.[6] By looking at occurrences of historical arguments and references to the past, I believe it is possible to identify a discursive strategy adopted by the SNP to mobilise around independence. In order to contextualise the results of my analysis and interpret them in regard to the environment that produced and received them, I resorted to critical discourse analysis (CDA). I have chosen the CDA approach because, in by considering discourse and institutions as two distinct social phenomena, it shows  the researcher how discourse interact with and establishes set conditions for social relations.

For analysing *Scotland's Future*, I have used a mixed method to explore the use of historical references and measure the weight of the past in the discursive practices of the SNP. I have proceeded to a traditional qualitative textual analysis of the document, done manually and relying on CDA, as said, but I have also applied the quantitative method of CDA automated tagging using the software Wmatrix developed by the University of Lancaster. I expect that by combining both methods, I will be able not only to obtain more detailed and accurate results, but also to minimize some of the bias.

To support or illustrates some point in my argumentation, I have also used sporadically secondary sources such as surveys and interviews of voters published by British press agencies and quantitative studies produced by the Scottish Election Study 2011, the Scottish Referendum Study, Ipsos Moris and the UK Census.


## 4. Limitations

The first and most important limitation of my work regards the fact that I have decided to focus exclusively on the 'yes' side of the campaign, and even more exclusively to the pro-independence discourse of the SNP, while other political parties were involved in the 'yes' campaign.

Although the SNP has been arguing for independence since 1934, I will restrict myself to a far more recent period, starting with the arrival of the SNP in power in 2007 and to the

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[6] Sutherland, 2005:185, 197.

year of the referendum, I will pay even more attention to the year of campaign following the referendum.

The question of the referendum has also produced an abundance of literature, mostly in the form of essays and vulgarized works more or less politically engaged destined to the general public. This literature body constitute a fascinating source as of how the referendum was perceived and what issues and arguments were brought to the heart of the debate. However, the empirical material will be selected from official political discourse only. This decision is of a pragmatic nature, in the sense that the campaign has involved many journalists and has been taken over on social media. Such a corpus will be too complicated and time-consuming to consider. At last, my case study being rather exploratory, I think it wiser to confine it to the realms of official public sources only. Yet, I do not intend to give an exhaustive analysis of the SNP discourse in the pre-referendum period, because the party's ideology is expressed through a nigh infinite amount of different sources.

When analysing the historical arguments and claims made by politicians, I will not dwell on assessing the truth in them, unless it is necessary to my demonstration. My focus will be primarily on the pursuit of the desired effect of the argument and on commenting about the choice of the event of historical figure selected. However, an analysis of historical references or pleas implies that I must present the historical event or personality mentioned in order to give a more thorough explanation of its used in a modern context. In such presentations, I would appeal to secondary sources in the form of studies made by specialists.

History and historical understanding shading into myth are among the main constantly shifting factors that combine to form national identity, but this aspect will be directly included in my punctual analysis of historical references when worth mentioning, and the topic of the mythicisation of history will not be directly discussed in my essay.

Finally, my work is a case study and as such is not made primarily for generalisation. However, I hope to provide through it an example of how aspects of contemporary Western nationalism can be understood through discourse and how the Scottish case accounts for the great variety of contemporary nationalisms.

# 5. The following chapters

In this master thesis, I mainly propose to study how references to national history and the shared past of the nation has been brought up and used the SNP's discourse mostly through the campaign of the 2014 independence referendum, but in the previous years, and then to assess the place. In that purpose, I will conduct a demonstration divided into five chapters. The three first chapters present the framework that I have built from existing theory, empirical studies and some small case studies in order to analyse my main source regarding the SNP's employs of references to the past during the independence referendum campaign. Chapter 1 briefly focuses on the political and cultural definitions of nationalism and presents the specifics of Scottish nationalism. Chapter 2 presents the connections between history on the one hand and nationalism, national identity and nation-building on the other hand. It also includes two small sub-case studies, one about how national history is portrayed and used in a Scottish heritage site and another one about the introduction of national history in the school curriculum. Chapter 3 links the employs of the history rationale to nationalist discourse and rhetoric in politics and contains an overview of the references to the past and national, cultural identity in the SNP's discourse in the time preceding the referendum. At last, chapter 4 analyses the references to the past made in the SNP's manifesto supporting independence during the referendum campaign and confront them with the theory and replace them in the context established in the previous chapters. And finally, in chapter 5, I share some of my concluding thoughts regarding the SNP's attitudes towards resorting to historical references to mobilise around the independence cause and attempt to replace them in a more general, new explanatory context.

# Chapter 1

# Characterisation of Scottish nationalism

Despite the abundance of literature on nationalism and the many attempts to provide a universal and academic definition of 'nationalism', there seems to be a consensus regarding the notion as being relatively modern (more or less controversially dated back to the eighteenth century) and generally tied to European culture (before being later exported and transposed worldwide). What transpires from the points of view expressed by the leading theorists of nationalism, which will be presented imminently, is that it refers to the cultural and/or political attachment to the nation. In this chapter, I intend to follow this cultural and the political distinction to first explain the concept of nationalism so to provide a workable definition establish the necessary theoretical framework through which I will, in a second part, present Scottish nationalism.

# 1. Nationalism in theory: political and cultural definitions

## 1.1. Nationalism as a political principle

Czech philosopher and social anthropologist Ernest Gellner developed a new approach of nationalism that broke with previously established traditions, first in the chapter 'Nationalism' in *Thought and Change* (1964), and later in his seminal book *Nations and Nationalism* (1983). His approach is generally used to define the concept of nationalism in its great lines. For Gellner, "nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent", which makes of nationalism "a theory of political legitimacy" for nations wishing to achieve sovereignty. Based on this definition, he can then say that nationalist sentiment is "the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment" and that a nationalist movement is one "acuted by a sentiment of this kind".[7]

Previously, I have talked about 'regional nationalisms' to refer to nationalist movements developed within existing boundaries of European states. A region can refer to a geographical area at different levels (global, administrative, local level, and so on). So when I mention 'regional nationalism', I refer to a sub-national nationalist movement attached to a restricted territory within which people present considerable culturally internal similarities and consider their identity as significantly different from the one of the sovereign state whose authority they are placed under. Scottish nationalism qualifies as regional nationalism because it is attached and confined to the limits of a given territory within the UK. In the case of Western

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[7] Gellner, [1983] 2006:1.

Europe, all nationalisms are regional. Nevertheless, not all expressions of regionalisms qualify as nationalisms. Regionalism is different from nationalism in that it seeks only to reach a certain degree of recognition, for example the right to teach a regional language in schools. When acknowledgement of a special regional identity by the state is not enough, regional nationalist aspirations can increase to the point of demanding full sovereignty. When a regional nationalist movement aspires to greater autonomy, it often defines its ultimate goal as the establishment of a referent geopolitical unit in agreement with Gellner's political principle of nationalism: the nation-state. In its strictest definition, a nation-state occurs when a nation achieve sovereignty in the form of a state whose sovereign and territorial boundaries coincide with the geographical area of influence of said nation.[8] For a long time, the nation-state has been considered the quintessential form of the national construction for it appears ideal to conciliate national identity and sentiment with territorial boundaries and political legitimacy. Though the concept of nation-state is becoming increasingly controversial among theorists today, it remains an ideal to attain for stateless nationalisms. In the case of Scottish nationalism, the ultimate nationalist project encompasses secession from the UK and the (re)establishment a Scottish nation-state.

So, considering the importance of territory, nationalism can also be understood as a doctrine supporting that ideally, each state should coincide with one nation.[9] Although this doctrine morally legitimises independence aspirations, a world of nation-states only would produce too many non-viable states. "In a world with at least three times as many nations as states, what are the limits of legitimate nation-building?" Norman Wayne wonders.[10] The viability and legitimacy of the creation of a Scottish nation-state is never seriously questioned, it is generally taken for granted, leaving the debate to focus rather on the chances of higher prosperity under independence and the true necessity of independence to achieve greater political autonomy. From this approach, nationalism can also be interpreted as a theory about how a sovereign state should be constituted and organised. Within the defined territory occupied by the members of the nation, the modern nation-state is sovereign; it has autonomous institutions and the authority to speak and act for the whole group, as well as the obligation to maintain order within and protect from external threat.[11]

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[8] Less than ten percent of existing states meet these criteria.
Smith, 1995:86.
[9] Parekh, 1995:35.
[10] Norman, 2006.
[11] Parekh, 1995:30.

This conception leads to the approach of nationalism as a political programme where nationalism serves as an instrument for politicians to mobilise, unite and legitimise the population's divergent interests and aspirations.[12] This type of attitude, regarding nationalism as "a special and successful form of modern politics, used by elites to capture state power in opposition to ruling classes", is quite common among the new generations of historians of nationalism.[13] But for this type of politicisation of nationalism, to which I will come in Chapter 3, another aspect of nationalism deserves our attention: the cultural one.

## 1.2. Cultural aspect of nationalism

Another major contribution of Gellner that induced a renewed interest for nationalism studies and offered new approaches distinct from the traditional ones formulated by political scientists and historians, is that he regarded nationalism as a specifically modern concept, and nations as the result of nationalism rather than the other way around.[14] This particular perspective on nationalism and conception of modernity can be linked to his background in anthropology and philosophy, which encouraged him to reject an evolutionary approach, understanding current society as shaped by earlier practices that survived into the present.[15] But the great novelty of Gellner's analysis was that he saw nationalism as a sociological condition (or function) produced by modernity. He defined modernity as a distinctive form of social organisation and culture, characterised by the societal consequences of the transition from pre-industrial to industrial times. This focus on the transitional shock echoes French philosopher and sociologist Emile Durkheim's concept of *anomie*, which states that abrupt transition to modernity induces social dislocation. I will come back to this emphasis on the break of history and the relationship modernity/nationalism when discussing how modern historiographers link this context to the change observed in the role and status of history in modern society.

To explain the emergence of nationalisms, Gellner relies on the distinction between *structure* and *culture* drawn from anthropology. *Structure* is the distinct roles people play in society and the relationship between these roles, whereas *culture* refers to the representations people make of themselves to others, notably through dress and rituals. *Structure* establishes identity because it refers to the way people define themselves in face-to-face, pre-industrial

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[12] Hobsbawm & Kertzer, 1992:4; Breuilly, 1982.
[13] Smith, 1991:356.
[14] Gellner, [1983] 2006:56.
[15] Breuilly, 1983:xx.

societies where they all knew each other's roles and social positions. But in bigger pre-industrial societies, people form groups of distinct identities expressed through class and transcending political boundaries. Gellner concludes that nationalism cannot exist in pre-industrial societies for this setting does not enable a sense of belonging to a common group with a bounded territory. However, in large-scale industrial societies with unfixed occupational structures and constantly changing roles and positions, *culture* takes over the role previously played by *structure*. *Culture* acquires new modern functions of identification. To satisfy modern economy and society's new positions, as well as mobility on a large scale, people must acquire new specialized skills, mostly through a standardized literacy to engage in a "context-free communication"[16]. Through this process, a standard culture emerges alongside the written vernacular and common education implemented by the state, and produces *nations*.[17] In that sense, the nation is the cultural concept that holds a community together and prevents its fragmentation or disintegration.

If Gellner's understanding of the transition from *structure* to *culture* can explain the emergence of nationalisms and nations independently of the state, we are left to wonder which culture becomes the national, dominant one. Nationalism appears rather as the product of conflict and rupture than unification.[18] Industrialisation happens unevenly, so in communities that are late in the process, the elites catch up with the national culture, whereas the lower classes hold on to their own non-standardised culture. Nationalism arises from this heterogeneity. Gellner mostly understands the emergence of a national culture in terms of ethnicity and language, and supports that they can also stem from pre-existing high cultures, such as in France and Britain, where the written vernacular is linked to a powerful state which acts to extend this culture to all strata of society. But there are also other groups lacking high-cultures or states of their own. Nationalism then constructs and transforms a 'folk culture' into a high culture by standardizing its written vernacular, manufacturing national histories and traditions. Ultimately, such cultures develop a claim to create a state of their own.[19]

At last, a cultural definition of nationalism emerges. "Nationalism is, essentially, the general imposition of a high culture on society, where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority (...) of the population."[20] For two individuals to identify as belonging to

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[16] Breuilly, 1983:xxiv.
[17] Gellner, [1983] 2006:39.
[18] Gellner, [1983] 2006:54.
[19] Breuilly, 1983:xxviii, xliv.
[20] Gellner, [1983] 2006:57.

the same nation, according to Gellner, they must accept that they share a common culture, understanding and meanings, as well as acknowledge each other as fellow nationals and recognise mutual rights and duties to each other.[21]

Benedict Anderson, British historian and student of Gellner at the London School of Economics (LSE), builds up on the dichotomy between face-to-face agrarian societies and large-scale industrialized societies to develop further the notions of identity and sense of belonging into what he called 'imagined communities'. Inspired by Marxist tradition, he observed first that "nation-ness" and nationalism are "cultural artefacts of a particular kind" which commands, "profound emotional legitimacy".[22] He defines the nation as an inherently limited and sovereign imagined political community, because he considers that any community larger than primordial relies on imagination and creation, since not all members can actually know each other, but yet they consider themselves as part of one group. This group is *limited* in the sense that it has finite boundaries and acknowledges the existence of other communities beyond their own, and is *sovereign* because nations dream of reaching freedom in the form of a sovereign state.[23]

Furthermore, Anderson considers that the imagined community emerged at the confluence of the printing press, capitalism and vernacular languages in an intellectual revolution of shared consciousness: once the market of Latin readers was saturated, capitalist printers, motivated by profit, developed a literature in vernaculars that contributed to the rise of national consciousness and the decline of the imagined community of Christendom. Without interacting with each other, readers were able to develop a similar culture and feel closer.[24] This developing similar culture anchored in vernaculars and collective imagination with a shared imaginary ultimately created a sense of common identity with boundaries, although not yet attached to a specific territory. What emerges from Anderson's reflexion is that the nation can be compared to a text and nationalism to a form of political discourse, rather than an ideology.

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[21] Gellner, [1983] 2006:7.
[22] Anderson, 1991:4.
[23] Anderson, 1991:6-7.
[24] Anderson, 1991:37-46.

## 2. Nationalism in practice: the Scottish case

Now that nationalism has been defined both as a political and cultural principle, I will present a very brief historical account of Scottish nationalism and then I will focus on how Scottish nationalism managed to achieve a broad political representation able to form the majority government that requested the independence referendum of 2014.

### *2.1. A very brief history of Scottish nationalist sentiment*

The literature about the origins of Scottish nationalism is abundant and unanimous. I will only states here very succinctly the great lines of its history in order to demonstrate its endurance to this date and demonstrate that it had a rich and long history that can be used for discursive strategy. It will also allow for contextualisation of some of the historical events and people mentioned later in relation to contemporary political discourse. Although Scottish-Celtic antiquity was revived at a later date and presented as the point of origin of a Scottish nation, the true origins of a primitive Scottish nationalist sentiment date back to the late medieval period and the wars of independence against England.

On 24 June 1314, Scottish king Robert the Bruce won the battle of Bannockburn over the English forces of King Edward II, and soon invaded English controlled territories. Yet, neither England nor the pope recognised Bruce as King of the Scots. On behalf of the barons and community of the realm of Scotland, a letter in support of King Robert the Bruce and an independent Scotland was written to the pope. This letter is known as the Declaration of Arbroath and is regarded as a spirited statement of a nation's claim to freedom.[25] Despite the eloquence of the case made for the acknowledgement of a Scottish kingdom, the demands of the Scots were not met before 1328, when Robert the Bruce threaten to annex England, who was then forced to recognise Bruce's kingship and Scotland's independence. Regardless of the importance of those later events, historians agree to say that the foundations of Scottish nationalism were laid on the field of Bannockburn and forged through the Declaration of Arbroath.[26] Those events and its heroes, Bruce and William Wallace, were long celebrated, sung and remembered.

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[25] National Archives of Scotland, 2009.
[26] Whatley, 2014:xi.

Scotland remained independent until the Acts of Union of 1706-1707. Since 1603, Scotland and England had already been united under the same crown, when James VI of Scotland, son of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, succeeded to Elizabeth I as James I on the throne of England. Both independent kingdoms of Scotland and England moved from regal union to parliamentary union in 1707, thus establishing the United Kingdom. Suspicion and mistrust between the two countries had prevented the parliamentary union for a century, but when it happened, it was actually not unpopular. The unpopularity of the union rather came later, in retrospect, as proven by the considerable historical research conducted by Whatley and Patrick.[27] Even during the Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745, the Union was not questioned; it was first and foremost a matter of restoring a Catholic king to the throne. And once again, the heroic depiction of Bonnie Prince Charlie, the second Jacobite pretender, resisting the English oppressor came later — in a process of rehabilitation of the past in which the novels of Sir Walter Scott played a significant role.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Scotland experienced its first real wave of nationalist sentiment in the wake of a cultural, national movement. It was at this time that Scotland established most of its national symbols and traditions through a process that scholars called 'the invention of tradition', which will be discussed later. During this period, Scotland affirmed certain cultural specificities and the representation of the typical, distinct Scottish culture thus created rapidly spread among the majority of Scots, and acquired recognition in England and beyound. Benefitting from the Romantic Movement, the cultural nationalist movement of Scotland continued to grow and spread through the rest of the 19th century, not only geographically, but through different fields too (art, literature, etc.). By the end of the century and the beginning of the next, this cultural awakening of sorts found a new resonance in politics among minority groups supporting the Home Rule movement, a movement asking for greater Scottish autonomy and inspired by the situation in Ireland. Nonetheless, the Home Rule movement was of no real consequences and never managed to acquire significant support. But this was only the start of the politicisation of Scottish nationalism. Indeed, Hobsbawn identifies a specific phase of the politicisation of nationalism after the Great War, when nationalism expresses itself in a political form rather than a primarily cultural one.[28] In 1928, Scotland acquired its first nationalist political party, the short-lived, centre-left National Party of Scotland, and in 1932, another nationalist party appeared, the centre-right Scottish Party. By

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[27] Whatley & Patrick, 2015.
[28] Hobsbawn, 1990:139.

1934, both merged into a unique party committed to restore Scottish independence: the Scottish National Party (SNP).

## 2.2. The SNP, Scotland's unique nationalist political party

The SNP has been Scotland's one and only nationalist political party since 1934. Its history illustrate well how Scottish nationalism and the independence question evolved in the last decades from a marginal party to achieving governmental majority (in Scotland) by 2011 (and maintaining it to this date). Once again, studies of all types retracing the history of the SNP abounds, so I will be very concise here and I will pay special attention to linking its evolution to the theoretical framework of political nationalism. My aim is to provide an explanatory context to the phase following the 'rise of the SNP', which will prove particularly relevant to my later analysis of the use of history in the SNP political discourse.

*From a struggling marginal party to the reopening of parliament*

In the early decades of its existence, the rapid changes in memberships and electoral support of the SNP led to a recurrent political instability. The support for independence itself was also subject to significant fluctuations. Hobsbawn remarks that "parties specifically committed to a 'nationalist' programme, mostly separatist, are likely to be the expression of sectional or minority interests, or to be politically fluctuating and unstable."[29] He ascribes the lack of success of such parties to the fact that "such parties (…) like to equate themselves with the sense of collective separateness, hostility to 'them' and the 'imagined community' which may be almost universally felt in their 'nation', but they are very unlikely to be the only expressions of such national consensus."[30] Indeed, the party's support in the early years appear to be dependent of ideological elements other than the core independence question.

Scottish nationalism was expressed in other parties as well, in general through the major all-UK opposition parties, especially the Liberals at the beginning, and then Labour.[31] Therefore, in the late 1970s, the disbandment of the first Scottish Labour party brought new left-wing voters to the SNP and led to the creation of The 79 group, a group within the SNP set up in 1979 committed to move the SNP leftward ideologically in an effort to gain more voters

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[29] Hobsbawn, 1990:169.
[30] Hobsbawn, 1990:169-170.
[31] Hobsbawn, 1990:125.

from the heavily industrialized and populated central belt. The short-lived breakthroughs recorded in the 1967 and 1974 elections, and the discovery of oil in Scotland in hard economic times, had made it possible to fathom the idea of the creation of a devolved deliberative Scottish assembly through a referendum.[32] The referendum was regulated by the Scotland Act of 1978 and held on 1 March 1979, at a time when support for independence was at its lowest *(see figure 1)*. Moreover, an amendment to this Act stated that in order to pass, more than 40% of the total electorate should vote 'YES' in the referendum. So despite a small majority of 51.6% for the yes, the proposal was repealed.[33] After the referendum failed, the core idea of the proposal was not entirely abandoned but was relegated to the distant future. During the next decade, the party lost most seats acquired and entered a period of stagnation and internal conflicts.
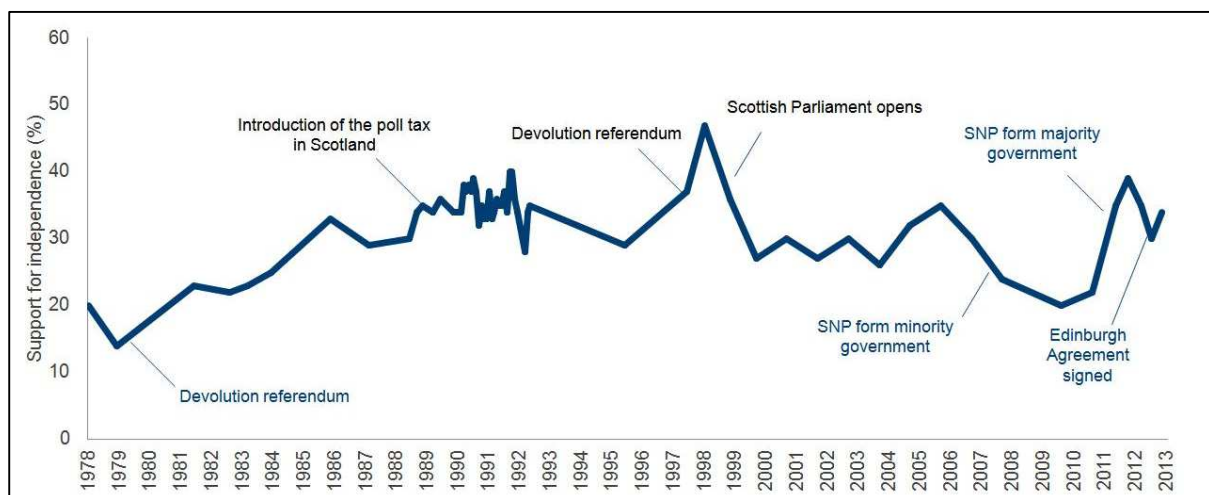


*Figure 1. Support for independence — long term trend. (Ipsos MORI)..*

From 1990, when Alex Salmond became leader of the SNP, the party acquired a more obvious social democratic status. It gained the clearer ideological profile that it lacked before, offering a credible alternative to the Labour party, though independence remained it's *raison d'être*. The party appeared to take off again at that time, yet it did not make any breakthrough at the 1992 UK General Election. However, the support for independence increased considerably in the second half of the decade. A new referendum was held in 1997 to endorse plans for the re-establishment of a Scottish Parliament. This time, the proposal p²assed. When faced to Scottish "mounting regional pressure",[34] the British government decided to give in to

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[32] Macwhirter, 2013:196, 198.

[33] With a turnout of 64% of the total registered electorate, the *yes* majority only represented 32.9% of the Scottish electorate.

[34] Hueglin & Fenna, 2006:22.

some of the demands that accompanied the revival of Scottish identity ardour by granting Scotland devolution, through the re-instauration of the Scottish parliament in Holyrood, Edinburgh, in charge of voting laws regarding internal matters (education, transportation, culture, health, etc.). This achievement contributed to decrease support for independence for a time but did not prove sufficient however. Westminster thought devolution would provide a framework where Scottish politicians could be patriotic without demanding independence, buy the independence debate persisted and the SNP experienced a tremendous rise in the following years.

On 12 May 1999, the new Scottish Parliament met for the first time. SNP Member of Scottish Parliament Winifred "Winnie" Ewing opened its first session, with a ceremonial announcement heavy with meaning:

"The Scottish Parliament, adjourned on the 25th March 1707, is hereby re-convened".[35]

Those spirited words, meant to stress the continuity with before the Union, underlines the vision of nationalists as it re-echoes much older arguments about cultural and political authority. The new Scottish Parliament is quite different from the old one, and this reflects the vision of a minority, because both in theory and practice, the reestablishment of *a* Parliament did not mean the continuation of the old one.[36] The opening of the Scottish Parliament occurred when the support for independence was still high (over 30%) but declining fast. This trend can be explained by the fact that rather than supporting independence and the SNP, the 1997 referendum did actually bring out a new possible solution to self-rule by devolution only, without secession from Britain. The Scottish Social Attitudes Survey notes that between 1999 and 2012, there has not been any major departure from the long term pattern of public preferences for how Scotland should be governed, with an average of 28% of the respondents supporting independence and 55% in favour of more devolution.[37] The consistency of those results show the indubitable will of the Scots to be granted more autonomy vis-à-vis London, but also illustrate the ideological conflict regarding constitutional preferences.

*The rise of the SNP*

After the poor results of 2003, Salmond returned as a leader in 2004 and helped build a strong campaign. He reoriented the focus of the party towards fiscal freedom for the Scottish parliament as a stepping-stone towards self-government. By May 2007, the SNP achieved

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[35] Quoted in Bell, 1999:1.
[36] Crawford, 1992:310.
[37] Curtis, 2013:2.

governmental status for the first time with a breakthrough of 32,7%. Simultaneously, the SNP became the largest party in Scotland, and when Salmond became First Minister, it became the party of Government, albeit it was still a minority administration. By the next Scottish elections in 2011, the SNP formed the majority government, marking a turning point in its own history and the history of Scottish politics: this status enabled the new Scottish government to legislate for what came to be the independence referendum of 18 September 2014.

Even after the victory of the "NO" with 55.3% at the independence referendum, the SNP continued to rise. Then, the party had 25 642 members. Within the next year, this number more than quadrupled, reaching 112 208 members, whereas for the same period, most UK parties have lost members.[38] At the general UK election in May 2015, the SNP achieved an historic landslide and became the third largest UK party. To this date, the SNP is still the largest political party in Scotland in memberships, gathering more than 2% of the population. This success can appear difficult to interpret if we focus only on the independence question. While SNP support has more than doubled between 2003 and 2011, support for Scottish independence has flatlined.[39] This means that SNP voters do not necessarily support independence and that its success is based on other factors. Quantitative studies have shown that the rise in popularity of the SNP is explained mostly by its reputation for competence and delivery on its promises.[40]

To explain the lack of mass support (and low success at elections) of nationalist parties, Hobsbawn draws from Hroch's three-phase model of nation-forming.[41] He suggests that, by the time he was writing (1990), Scottish nationalism had just entered phase B of its evolution[42] — that is the phase where 'patriots' try to spread national awareness and start making social, cultural, and/or political demands on behalf of the nation-to-be, following the purely cultural, folkloric and literary phase A. But as of today's situation and in view of the SNP political success, Scotland has entered phase C, the phase reached when a large majority identify with the nation and a nationalist political program (for autonomy or independence) is formulated. But there are also other explanations that diverge from the traditional theoretical framework. The recent rise of the SNP confronted with the results of the referendum can also mean that fear of independence, which used to be a major deterrent to voting SNP, is no longer relevant for many voters. Since the SNP has not given up on independence, the cause for support may

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[38] SNP official website.
[39] Scottish Election Study, 2011.
[40] Scottish Election Study, 2011.
[41] Hroch, 2015.
[42] Hobsbawn, 1990:139.

certainly be found in a shift of strategy to gather support. This will be one of my argument in my later analyses of SNP's discourse. Scholars generally name two main explanations to the rise of Scottish nationalism other than a sudden interest of the population for expressing its Scottish political identity: first, the appeal of the very civic form of nationalism practiced by the SNP,[43] and secondly, the opportunity created by a nationalist political platform to ensure that certain British policies cannot be imposed to the Scottish electorate.[44] Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention now to the current ideology and programme of the party.

*Ideology: nationalist claims and political programme*

The SNP defines its vision on the official website as such: "The SNP is committed to making Scotland the nation we know it can be. (…) And our vision is of Scotland as an independent country - equal to the very best."[45] This vision thus conveys a very gellnerian definition of the nationalist project. However, if independence is the common goal for the party, not all members agree on the means of acquisition. There is a cleavage between fundamentalists, who wish for immediate secession from the UK, and gradualist home rulers. Today, gradualists who wish for a gradual process towards independence that embraces devolution and self-government, are dominant.[46] Also, the type of nationalism supported by the SNP is often referred to as 'civic' for it is particularly inclusive, democratic and institutionalised. It defines Scottish nationhood by common citizenship and accepts all current residents regardless of their ethnicity, religion, heritage or language. It is democratic because it vests sovereignty in all of the people and claims self-governing rights and rights for its citizens vis-à-vis other nation-states.

Beyond its *raison d'être*, the SNP's main objective today is to establish its credentials as a party capable of governing Scotland in order to not be considered only a perennial campaigning party.[47] The SNP has, along the years, doted itself with a clearer ideology that goes beyond nationalistic preoccupations and that is traditionally closer to the British social-democrats. Most of its current ideology was developed under the leadership of Salmond. In the multi-party landscape of Scottish politics, the SNP is rather situated in the centre-left and viewed as progressive in the mainstream European tradition. The SNP today is notably committed to same-sex marriage, reducing the voting age to 16, unilateral nuclear

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[43] Harvie, [1994] 2004:217-218.
[44] Cairney & McGarvey, 2008:44.
[45] SNP official website.
[46] Cairney & McGarvey, 2008:50.
[47] Cairney & McGarvey, 2008:51.

disarmament, progressive personal taxation, the eradication of poverty, the building of affordable social housing, government subsidized higher education, opposition to the building of new nuclear power plants, investment in renewable energy, etc.[48] Since 2014, under the new leadership of Nicola Sturgeon, the SNP has adopted a markedly feminist profile and has become even more pro-European.


## Conclusion chapter 1

In this chapter, to describe Scottish nationalism, we have considered the general theory qualifying nationalism both as a political principle and a cultural concept. As a political principle, Scottish nationalist aspiration for independence can be perceived as a legitimacy theory for the establishment of nation-state to gather the nation geographically within one independent, sovereign state. Gellner strictly affirms that nationalism predates the nation and that cultural or political, "nationalism is one mode of belonging".[49] Most theorists agree to see the emergence of national consciousness as a result of a sense of belonging to a specific group and the identification of other individuals as strangers. Without entering the debate whereas Scottish nationalism predates the idea of a Scottish nation, I can nevertheless affirm that in, Scottish nationalism is indeed a mode of belonging in Scotland and within the UK. Though only the SNP has truly held to the idea of achieving independence for the nation, many Scottish political parties have used both political and cultural aspects of nationalism to mobilise voters. Indeed, political and cultural aspects of nationalism meet in the most obvious fashion when politicians decide to build their programme on nationalist ideology. In this case, they will often have to rely heavily on cultural nationalism, as a marker of identity. After reviewing how the cultural expression of Scottish nationalism lead to its politicisation, we have established that the SNP, after several struggling decades, has experienced a significant rise in the last twenty years, not only as a pro-independence party, but also as a socio-democratic party. Despite an incontestable nationalist attachment, it is very different from most of the other contemporary nationalist political parties in Europe, which tends to be more associated with the populist right. We will see later how this position on the classical spectrum of politics expresses itself in the SNP's discourse and rhetoric, and what effects it has on the use of historical references.

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[48] SNP official website.
[49] Mountz, 2009:277.

# Chapter 2

# History, identity and (Scottish) nationalism

Joseph Stalin insists on the nation being a "historically constituted community of people (…) on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture".[50] He insists that this 'psychological make-up' is developed through several generations and is synonymous to a form of 'national character'. This 'national character' has the particularity of not being fixed and can evolve in time, but because it exists continuously, as the nation, it leaves an impression that cannot be ignored. Stalin's cultural approach of nationalism underlines the role of history as one of the most reliable and powerful of the underlying forces of group cohesion, because it provides a common culture and establishes a continuity between the past and the present generations. On the other hand, the political approach of nationalism suggests that nationalist sentiment can be manipulated to accommodate state cohesion and (re)construction through nationalist political programmes. In this configuration too, history has played a significant role. As we have seen, nationalism, even in its modern form, is a result of a process anchored in history. Many historians have turned to the study of nationalism because an historical background appears as a natural methodological framework to analyse its different characteristics and expressions in society. If history helps understand better the concept of nationalism, it is also a discipline fundamentally attached to it for it has fuelled its sentiment. The relationship of history and nationalism is complex and manifold.

In this chapter, I will pay particular attention to the broad notion of history and its links with nationalism so to be able to question the relevance of historical references in the SNP's discourse later. To begin with, I will appraise the notion of national identity and present the main characteristics of the Scottish one. Then, I will discuss the role of history in shaping nationalist sentiment and finally I will provide relevant Scottish examples of how history can be employed strategically to 'build' a nationalist sentiment.

# 1. Nationalism and identity

## 1.1. Understanding national identity

Before broaching the place of history and the sense of past in national identity, it is necessary to understand the underlying mechanics of national identity. A personal identity is what sets a person apart from others, whereas a social (or collective) identity defines the individual as a

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[50] Stalin, [1913] 1994:18-19.

member of a group, based on what he or she has in common with the other members. As such, it involves self-categorisation as well as accept from the other members of the group, the two conditions posed by Gellner. For this to happen, the individual must fulfil the membership criteria specific to the group considered.

Smith has established a model organised in seven concentric circles to conceptualise the different layers of an individual's identity: the first, inner circle regards home and family, then comes kin, clan and surname, followed by locality, nationality, state, empire and supranational identity.[51] Some layers can overlap in their content and meaning, or have lost in significance in recent times such as kin, clan and surname in Western societies. What is particularly interesting in this model is that it provides a hierarchy through which we can place national identity to understand better the relationship between nationalism and identity. It is also interesting to see that Smith distinguishes national identity from state identity. By state identity, he refers to the one provided by public institutions as different and autonomous from other social institutions and as having a monopoly of coercion and extraction within its political boundaries, and by national identity, he refers to the bonds uniting in a single community all who share an historic culture and homeland.[52] It is in the nineteenth century that national identity became the primary identity for more and more groups of the society.[53]

McCrone has applied Smith's model directly to Scotland and explains the distinction between national identity and state identity through example. He supports that there is no such thing as a British identity, but only a multi-national British state, that includes the Irish, Welsh and Scottish nations. Therefore, the Scottish identity is the sole national identity of Scotland, and British identity occurs at the level of the state identity.[54] Because they exist at different levels, they are not conflicting, and a Scot can feel both Scottish and British at once. Conversely, in the case of the English, the distinction between British and English identity is almost non-existent because they both exist at the same level.

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[51] Smith, 1981:91.
[52] Smith, 1981:24-25.
[53] Lawrence, 2013:716.
[54] McCrone, [1992] 2001:149-174.

## 1.2. Scottish identity

*Scottish vs. British*

In the last UK census of 2011, 62% of the total population stated their identity was 'Scottish only' (varying from 71% among 10-14 year olds to 57% among 30-40 year olds), 18% were 'Scottish and British only' (with the highest score of 25% among 65-74 year olds), and 8% said they were 'British only' (with a highest 10% among 50-64 year olds).[55] These numbers compared with those of previous years show that there is actually a decline in 'British' or 'Scottish and British' identity and a progress in 'Scottish' identity. In 1999, 17% felt 'British', and 27% felt 'as British as Scottish'.[56] Based on surveys, there appear to be a trend among the population of Scotland to identify gradually more as Scottish only. This trend leads to more and more scholars and politicians to interpret the increase in the cultural expression of Scottish national identity among the population as a more general reactionist phenomenon of the peripheral Celtic fringe against British centralisation and as a substitute to declining imperial identity.[57]

Linda Colley, English historian of the British Empire and nationalism, sees the "*rise* in Scottish nationalism, as the emergence of a different *kind* of Scottish nationalism" to fill the gap left by the decline of formerly powerful British identity.[58] She notes how she felt a significant change when visiting Scotland recently regarding the attitude of Scots towards England. She reports that more than ever, she heard complains about being 'colonised' by London. The term 'colonised' holds a very strong meaning for Scotland was never a colony. Such an assertion is thus "a way of arguing that Britishness is no longer a useful vehicle — an older form of Scottish expression — but rather an encumbrance and an oppression".[59] However, Ruth Davidson, leader of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party observed the opposite. In 2013, in a TEDx talk, she confessed having never noticed so much expression of support for the Union among Scots as in the last few years.[60] She quotes as an example how Scots broadly supported British celebrations such as the Diamond Jubilee or the royal wedding and births, and how she had never seen so many union flags in Scotland before. She thinks that Scots are more relaxed than any other nation of the Commonwealth, including England, to show support for the Union and its symbols because they are indeed so particularly engaged with their nationality and

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[55] Scotland's Census website.
[56] McCrone, [1992] 2001:31-53.
[57] Mohan, 1999:161.
[58] Colley, 2014:93.
[59] Colley, 2014:93.
[60] TED, 2013.

culture, but that this relaxation stems from cultural consequences of nationalism and does definitely not equate to support for political nationalism and independence.

Although Scotland did not retain statehood after the Acts of Union, it was allowed to preserve and enhance certain political and structural specificities, such as its legal system, its local government organisation, its own educational system and its own Church. This flexibility helps to explain why the Union has endured despite the everlasting nationalist sentiment. Indeed, Scotland has successfully retained a nationalist sentiment and has managed to even develop further some elements that can be perceived as unifying forces for the group, as seen in chapter 1. Though there were examples of resistance against British rule, especially in the Highlands, as Hobsbawn notes, the Scots not merely resisted the imposition of a modern British state, but of *any* state.[61] Nevertheless, ever since 1707, a great number of Scots have benefited significantly of the Union. History has recorded several examples of Scots who participated actively in Imperial Britain's affairs, achieving economic, political and/or social status.[62]

Beyond the assumption that Scottish nationalism has taken over the void left by a former, strong imperial British identity, one can wonder then what has made it possible for Scots to hold on to their nationalism even during the imperial period. Simply enough, Scottish nationalism finds its legitimacy against English/British nationalism in its cultural and historical specificities. English writer Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) already complained in his time about how different Scotland looked from England just past the border. The Scottish identity was then the predominant one, even in an Anglicized society, and remained so. Britishness came as a complement, as what we can now call 'state identity', with a content of identity rather completing than overlapping with Scottish markers of identity.

*The markers of Scottish identity*

Among scholars of nationalism, some supports a primordialist view of nationalism. That is, a view that supposes that nationalism predates the modern era and is inherent. They focus on ethnicity or descent, religion, language, custom, culture and shared history as markers of collective identity. Opposed to this view is the instrumentalist or constructivist one, which considers national identity as a flexible, processual and non-static created sentiment, based on social, political and cultural resources often mobilised by the modern state.[63] In modern era, national identity appears as more durable than other types of identity and seems strong enough

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[61] Hobsbawn, 1990:64.
[62] Whatley & Patrick, 2015.
[63] Comaroff, 1996.

for the members to accept to die for defending it.[64] This strength and the willingness to die for it can be linked to the fact that the self-categorisation of a person as a member of the nation through collective identity is only meaningful as long as it is broadly shared with the rest of the members. In order to identify with the rest of the group, a measure of similarity must be found, constructed from diverse elements differing from those of other groups.

Usually, the main elements marking cultural specificities are language, ethnicity and religion, as well as a shared past. A national language is not only a mean of communication, but it is also a mean of expression for national identity.[65] We have previously mentioned how Gellner and Anderson for instance placed the role of vernacular languages in the heart of their interpretation of the nascent nation. Language is also an element of cohesion, or a unifying factor, for the nation. But in the case of Scotland, the national language(s) cannot act as such a force. English is the dominant language of Scotland, although spoken with a distinctive accent and with local lexical variants, and has been at least since the sixteenth century. In 2011, 98.6% of all Scotland's inhabitants reported speaking English and 93% reported using only English at home.[66] There is also a part of the population who speaks Scots. Scots is dialectal form of English mostly used orally whose comprehension does not require special training.[67] The other national language is Gaelic. Very different from English, it does require special training. 57 375 Scots reported speaking abilities in Gaelic (around 1% of the population over three years old), and only a bit more than half of them could read and write the language. Gaelic speakers are mostly found in the Western Isles, and have slowly decreased over the years. The SNP is committed to promote awareness and usage of the Scots and Gaelic language, but never associates officially those languages with Scottish identity in opposition to English.[68]

Despite the existence of a Church of Scotland (Presbyterianism), religion does not appear either as a truly important unifying force in Scotland. In the past, religion was actually a factor of conflict and divide between Catholic and Protestant Scots. In the 2011 census, 37% of the population stated having no religion, which marks a significant increase of 11% since the last census in 2001. Over half of the population declare themselves as Christian, and among them, 32.5% belong to the Church of Scotland and 16% are Roman Catholic. This shows that

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[64] Mandler, 2006:272.
[65] Parekh, 1995:34.
[66] Those numbers, and all the following cited in this section comes from the 2011 Census. For more details, see Scotland's Census website.
[67] 64% of Scotland's adult population "don't really think of Scots as a language" and 67% states that they "*probably do use Scots, but [are] not really aware of it*". The Scottish Government, 2010b.
[68] The Scottish Government, 2010b.

there is no dominant religion able to act as a factor of cohesion. Moreover, as most Western European nations, Scotland and the UK have adopted a secular view a long time ago and encourage tolerance and freedom of religion.

Although Scottish ethnicity is dominant (84% of the population), in a modern, multicultural society such as Scotland, ethnicity does not play a significant role anymore, and recognising people one does not know personally as being of Scottish descent or not has become nigh impossible, rendering it harder to consider ethnicity a strong marker of national identity. Moreover, the government prefers to play the card of inclusion, considering as Scots all residents of Scotland willing to see themselves as such.

## 2. History and national identity

"Nationalism has always been intimately connected to a sense of the past".[69] In a case like Scotland where language, religion and ethnicity cannot act as forces of recognition as a nation, the common culture and shared past gain considerably in significance. For French philosopher, philologist and historian Ernest Renan, the nation is a spiritual principle only held together by the past, which provides a common, rich legacy of remembrances, and the present, which is the actual consent to live together. The cohesion of the nation rests on a social principle made of a heroic past because it reminds the present members of the nation of what they have accomplished together and make them wish to do so again.[70] Nevertheless, the relationship between past and nationalism, or in other words, between history and collective identity, is more complex and takes different forms. The plurality this relationship also explains the endurance of the relevance of history in the nationalist discourse. According to Smith, history is of particular importance for collective identity because it acts at three main levels by providing 1) a sense of continuity between the experiences of succeeding generations, 2) shared memories of specific events and personages that constitute the basis for collective history, and 3) a sense of common destiny based on those common experiences.[71]

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[69] Lawrence, 2013:713.
[70] Renan, [1882] 1994:17.
[71] Smith, 1990:179.

## 2.1. History and continuity

A sense of its own history appears as a prerequisite condition for a nation to exist. European nation are the product of a long and complicated of historical development,[72] and Scotland, as seen, claims a national sentiment born in medieval times, which has since then undergone several changes and has accumulated a rich historical baggage. Smith, all through his career, has argued that nations always share common myths and memories. Even for those such as Gellner who see nationalism as a purely modern process (the 'navel theory'), the sense of common history and a shared past remain relevant. History allows the nation to maintain links with its ethnic past.

To explain how this continuity is established, I rely on American phenomenology scholar David Carr's explanation as to why people have a very different relation to history than historians and other professionals of history.[73] Ordinary people have a connection to history as an awareness of the past rather than a cognitive interest. This connection to history acts at all levels of human experience and acts as a background to how ordinary people experience and interpret the present. They need a frame of reference, and history offers it. This history is not the same as the one of historians because it is a set of narratives anchoring the past in the present. Carr supports that all experiences of human life are 'storied', made into narratives; even going to the supermarket becomes a narrative. But all those narratives are configured for humans in temporal sequences ordered according to the basic model past – present – future. But Carr also perceives a whole life as a temporal narrative, and all those lives together through time create an historical narrative, and individuals are therefore connected to the historical narrative of the group they are born into. Historical narratives of the group are excerpts of the life narratives of some past individuals, and when considered as such, history brings a compelling form of narrative structure to the national discourse.

In periods of rapid change or after a rupture, the role of those historical narratives is further enhanced to preserve a sense of belonging and continuity with a past that appears far more distant than it actually is.[74] But, as we have seen, a breaking point in history also fuels nationalism, in a sort of positive feedback.

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[72] Hroch, 1996:79.
[73] Carr, 1986.
[74] Lawrence, 2013:723.

## 2.2. History and collective memory

Nations do not only require a geographical space, but a historical one too in order to forge their unique identity and delimitate their boundaries in time and space.[75] So history acts as an agent establishing a link between the present and the past. Without the continuity that history provides, individuals and groups would fail to view their past as something they share, and something that is theirs. But when it comes to forging identity, history takes the form of a subjective narrative. This implies that history need not be fixed, accurate or consistent with facts and reality. As such, history equates to the vaguer notion of shared past rather than the academic discipline. Indeed, nationalism is often based on inaccurate interpretations of the past and distorted, if not mythologised, historical events.

Durkheimian sociologist Maurice Halbwachs was the first to try to distinguish memory, which can be reshaped according to the context and distorts the past, from history, which, since the historiographical turn of the 20th century, needs to be objective and turned towards knowledge rather than legitimisation of the new regime.[76] Yet, history and memory are co-dependent: without memory, history would have nothing to relate, but without history, there would not be a need for memory. History distances itself from the present, whereas memory anchors itself in the present and relies upon the present interpretation of the past. But for this work of reconstruction of the past to hold meaning in the present, it must be accepted and shared by the whole group. And when history and traditions are adopted by the whole group, even in their partial and subjective versions acquired through a transformative and constructive process, they become canon.[77] They become more than history, they become collective memory. 'Collective memory' is defined as the selective remembrance of past events considered important for the members of the group, which in turn results in the establishment of a subjective discursive construction that establishes continuity between past and present.[78]

## 2.3. History and national destiny

Because collective history is central to the construction of national identity, it can also help individuals define norms and values for the group, and decide upon collective goals and

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[75] Smith, 1991:360: Parekh, 1995:35.
[76] Hutton, 2000:534.
[77] Hobsbawn & Ranger, 1983.
[78] Halbwachs, 1950:6-7.

destinies.[79] It can help the nation define how to relate to other groups and how to react to present challenges. We can see this phenomenon in action when different nations are confronted with the same challenge: they may decide to act entirely differently even if their interests are common.[80]

The memory of past events, remembered as outstanding heroic acts or total fiascos, are more than just collective memories. They can be used to define a role for the group, such as defender of democratic values, or protector of peace, and to legitimize its actions, for instance getting involved in a conflict or supporting a specific cause. In that sense, cultural myths become societal charters informally accepted. Those charters are normative in that they have a quasi-legal status, are unquestionable and define the do's and don'ts of the nation.[81]

From the perspective of the nationalist, history has a vital role to play in terms of providing the necessary link between the past, present and the future of the nation which 'naturally' existed from the time immemorial. Thus, history serves as a book of guidance from which the glories of the national past can be relived and manipulated to tailor a path for the future or warn the next generations about threats.[82] Smith adds that nationalist elites and politicians can mobilise the nation for future projects "by reminding their co-nationals (...) of their common history and destiny".[83] Since it is incumbent upon nationalist discourse to build this relationship between the past and the present, nationalism offers a framework through which this politicised relationship would be imagined, interpreted or invented. Consequently, it is necessary to analyse the narration of the past in relation to its connection to nationalism as a political doctrine, which brings up now the dimension of history as a driver for nation-building.

## 3. History as a driver for nation-building and national homogeneity

Nation-building is a concept developed mostly in the post-war years by scholars such as Karl Deutsch and Charles Tilly to describe primarily the state-induced processes strategically deployed to construct or structure modern nations.[84] But more generally, 'nation-building' can

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[79] Smith, 1991:358.
[80] Liu. & Hilton, 2005:1.
[81] Liu. & Hilton, 2005:3.
[82] Smith, 1994:18.
[83] Smith, 1991:356.
[84] Deutsch & Foltz, 1963 ; Tilly, 1975.

be used to describe any "organised and rational political programme fundamentally processual in the making of the nation".[85] Therefore, when I use the term nation-building, I am also talking about present processes employed by the government that affect national identity.

Nation-building can take many forms, from the eradication of a minority culture through genocide to the celebration of a national day, via development of the communication network or national historiography. Of course, the type of regime can greatly influence which processes will be privileged to harmonise the national culture and foster nationalist sentiment. I have decided to focus on some processes that are particularly pertinent to the study of Scottish nationalism and the later analysis of the SNP's rhetorical employs of history. Namely, the invention of tradition, the creation of commemorative sites (or *lieux de mémoire*) and school curriculum.

## *3.1. The invention of tradition*

In the 1980s, a new generation of scholars including Anderson and Hobsbawn challenged the modernist position and Gellner's theory by asserting that if nationalisms and nations were indeed a product of industrialisation and modernity, they were also a manufactured result of a multifaceted construction.[86] This view supports that national sentiment can be crafted when developing a new type of connection to collective history, by inventing traditions claiming to be old (albeit often quite recent). It was particularly developed by Hobsbawn and Ranger in the eponymous book *The Invention of Tradition* (1983). 'Inventing tradition' is a type of social engineering presenting a novel recombination, re-appropriation and re-interpretation of pre-existing elements.[87] In order to acquire public resonance and have a lasting success, the invented traditions must retain certain elements of truth and cannot be taken from another nation. In this regard, the Highland culture of Scotland presented earlier constitutes a textbook case study.

The traditional Scottish costume of the woollen kilt exhibiting clan patterns with specific accessories and weapons, as well as bagpipes, are in fact a modern construction developed long after the Union as a retrospective invention, and in a sense as, a protest to English cultural influence. Historically, this apparatus was actually regarded as barbaric and as

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[85] Smith, 1991:353.
[86] Lawrence, 2013:723.
[87] Smith, 1991:359.

"a threat to civilized, historic Scotland".[88] The distinct image of the Highland culture, which has still endured to this date as part of the Scottish folklore, spread through a three-phase process which started when Scotland launched a cultural revolt against Ireland by claiming to be the 'mother-nation' of the Celtic culture.[89] This idea was further heightened by Scottish writer and collector James Macpherson (1736-1796) who invented in the early 1760's a new antiquity history for Scotland by forging the translation of the works of Ossian, a sort of imaginary Scottish Homer. The content of those epics acquired the status of historical works and continued to maintain influence long after having been exposed as fakes.

The second phase consisted in the creation of an artificial Highland culture presented as "ancient, traditional and distinctive".[90] Writer and antiquity amateur Walter Scott (1771-1832) claimed the use of tartan to date back to the third century A.D. (We know today that tartans probably came from Flanders and spread in Scotland through the Lowlands and, as the traditional dress of Highlanders, were a pure invention of an Englishman). Factually, Highlanders used to wear a pinned plaid which was banned after the Jacobite rising of 1715. Though the ban was never applied, it was enough to make the kilt popular and worth mentioning as the Scottish dress in the ban following the second Jacobite raising of 1745. Plaids and kilts gained popularity among the richest and most Anglicized Scottish peers who started to wear them publicly when the ban was lifted in 1782, consequently to the efforts of the Highland Society, established four years prior… in London. This phenomena can be explained by the romantic European movement that spread the myth of the noble savage (Highlanders were then seen since their demise from predatory barbarians or dangerous rebels as a poor, primitive people endangered of extinction as the civilization spread up North).[91]

During the third phase, this new culture spread to lowland Scotland. Scott's *Waverley Novels* reinforced durably the interest and fashion for kilts, plaids and tartans all-over the European continent. Historical novels constitute a formidable way to promote a new vision of the past and Scott's showed that it was possible to glorify the past through a different way than mythologies and epics.[92] Historical novels set in Scotland, to this date, continue to wrongly

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[88] Trevor-Roper, 1992:15.
[89] Trevor-Roper, 1992:15.
[90] Trevor-Roper, 1992:16.
[91] Another explanation is the formation of Highland regiments in the British imperial forces who were exempted of the ban. They adopted the kilt rather than the plaid for practical reasons, and it is probably back to the regiments that can be traced the idea of associating patterns of tartan to clans, as the Highlands regiments were multiplied, they felt a need to differentiate their dress. Kilt and tartans spread, and rapidly, their defenders convinced themselves of it being the national dress of Scotland since time immemorial.
[92] Thiesse, 1999:135-136.

dress their heroes in tartan kilts with clan patterns. By 1822, Colonel David Stewart of Garth published a study on the history of the Highlands regiments, life and traditions and took for granted that the kilt was Scottish, and that patterns had always been associated with different clans. Two years prior, the Celtic Society of Edinburgh was established to promote the Highland dress as believed to be in its ancient form, with lowlander Walter Scott as president. When George IV visited Scotland, he wore the kilt and asked for a Celtic pageant with authentic clansmen. The pageant, described as "a bizarre travesty of Scottish history, Scottish reality"[93] was a success; the kilt makers rebranded their different patterns with clan names.

With invented traditions as one of the pillars of emergent nationalism, the role of history and historians seems quite apparent. American academic Carlton Hayes identified three phases in the process by which nationalism spread: first it required to be elaborated by a group of influential intellectuals, then the new doctrine would be adopted by political elites, and finally spread to the rest of the population.[94] In such a process, history writing places itself at the centre. This three phase model is found again in Hroch's conception of nationalism as a three phase process, with phase a purely cultural, literary and folkloric A, with no ties to politics, then a phase B in which the ideas from phase A are adopted by militants of the national idea at a political level. Phase C happens when mass support is acquired.[95] The invented tradition of Scotland seems indeed to fit these models. It succeeded in shaping a national Scottish identity by providing a community not always so unified in that time (the Highlands were rather poor and turned towards agricultural activities whereas the Lowlands were more Anglicized and urbanised) with an 'imagined history', leading to an 'imagined common identity'. It is 'imagined' in Anderson's sense of the term. But this 'imagined history' needs to be transmitted from a generation to another in order to maintain the sense of shared culture and national identity. This sends us back to the notion of history as a provider of continuity. But through the process of continuity happens also a process of selection. Nations, by choosing what to remember and how, and what to forget, not only create continuity, but also transforms history into memory, and create *lieux de mémoire.*

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[93] Trevor-Roper, 1992:30.
[94] Hayes, [1960] 2016.
[95] Hroch, 1996:61-62.

## 3.2. Exemples of Scottish lieux de mémoire

We have seen earlier the difference between history and memory. I propose now to analyse further the concept of memory to show how it can create sites for the nation to not only remember but learn about its past and strengthen its nationalist sentiment, and how such sites are used in Scotland.

*Transforming history into* lieux de mémoire

In certain works, such as those of French historian Pierre Nora and German-born philosopher and historian Peter Munz, memory is conceptualized spatially (memory is attached to the site) and opposed to the temporality of history (history is attached to the event). Formerly synonymous, now opposed, history and memory share a complex relationship that has evolved drastically in the last century. Historicists had always considered history and memory intrinsically connected in the simplest way.[96] However, the post-modernist tradition emphasized the question of why the past is conceptualized as it is. The 'linguistic turn' redirected focus on the narrative of history. By the 1980s, a new historiographical shift occurred, when historical scholarship went beyond the effort to evaluate the legitimacy of memory and attempted to discover the processes through which memory was constructed. Central in the debate was Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire*. Initially drawing from the newly rediscovered work of Halbwachs, Nora suggested analysing the relationship history/memory in a reverse fashion. He suggested that modern history was written under the pressure of collective memories, which sought to compensate social changes and the fear of the future by valorising a past that was until then not lived as such.[97] For Nora, the great changes of the twentieth century resulted in the substitution of the nation-state by the society, and the legitimisation by the past (thus, history) became the legitimisation by the future.[98] As a result, the three terms —nation, history and memory—regained their autonomy, marking the end of what he calls the memory-nation.

But memory produces *lieux de mémoire*. *Lieux de mémoire* can be tangible, materialised in space, or abstract and intellectually constructed; they are *lieux* in the three senses of the term: material, symbolic and functional.[99] They can be monuments, museums,

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[96] Hutton, 2000:535.
[97] Hutton, 2000:538.
[98] Nora, 1989:11.
[99] Nora, 1989:18-19.

commemorative signs, a costume, an anniversary, a holiday, a song, a dance, archives, etc. An object becomes *lieu de mémoire* when it is remembered and when a community reinvest this object with a certain emotional and historical value. As such, *lieux de memoire* are defined by and for collective history, and begin with a very clear intent to remember an excerpt of history. *Lieux de memoire,* as sites of memory, have appeared because there are no longer *milieux de memoire*, real environments of memory.[100] So the emergence of *lieux de mémoires* has to be thought as a turn in a particular historical moment, when a conscious rupture with the past occurs and a community feels a compelling need to not forget, it creates an artificial way of remembering.

*Scotland's heritage sites*

As with invented tradition, nationalism has also a tendency to rewrite the narrative associated with the place to shape it better to its own discourse. The people of Scotland can learn about a doctored past through a very prolific and rich heritage industry. Wherever you find yourself in Scotland, there is a bit of history to discover. Even tiny villages have historical museums; ruins and castles open to visitors are countless, and even when you think that you are lost in the middle of a no-man's-land, you will find a memorial or a sign reminding you of a historical event which happened in this glen, this mountain or around that lock.  And what is even more impressive about the narratives of those many sites is how the visitor's texts almost never fail to find a way to link it to one of the national heroic figures of Wallace and Bruce, Mary Stuart or Bonnie Prince Charlie, who have all in common to have fought, not always successfully, against English rule. Nations need not remember a literally glorious past, it can also encompasses national sorrows, defeats and tragedies. Sad happenings still provide examples of great men and remain powerful in the present because they 'impose common obligations and demand a common effort'.[101] This explains why many of the glorified moments of Scottish history selected for school curriculums, celebrated through heritage sites and often referenced by politicians are actually dramatic episodes.

True enough, in the course of history, Scotland has mostly had England as a recurrent enemy, making it even easier to promote an anti-English sentiment through the narratives presented in today's museums and heritage sites. Nonetheless, Scotland has been threatened or occupied by different groups (the Romans, ancient local tribes, warring clans, Scottish religious

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[100] Nora, 1989:7.
[101] Renan, [1882] 1994:17.

factions, and so on). From my own experience of several of Scotland's heritage sites, those groups tend to be more united as the people of Scotland reflecting the diversity of today's Scottish society against the eternal English enemy. For instance, I have noticed on my visit to Scotland that guides recounting historical events opposing Scots against Scots tended to always choose as the dominant narrative the one from the group who fought the English, even if it was the side of the losers, and tended to always portray negatively Scots who had sought to ally themselves with the English, even if they were motivated by the greater good for Scotland too. This personal impression is in accordance with what others have experienced. Examples are abundant, but I find the following one particularly pertinent:

> "At the Archeolink centre near Aberdeen, (…) a powerful introductory video portrays Pictish peoples being assaulted by Agricola's Roman Legions. The Picts speak in Scottish accents; the Roman in accents derived from the English public school system. (…) Identity that is essentially oppositional and anti-English pervades both in media and in many heritage sites".[102]

*Study case: Bannockburn visitor centre*

Another example that I have been able to explore myself concerns the new Bannockburn visitor centre. Managed by the National Trust for Scotland and Historic Scotland, the new Bannockburn Visitor Centre in Stirling is, with the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Ayrshire opened in December 2010, one of the two important *lieux de mémoire* the SNP has created since in power. It opened in February 2014 upon the 700th anniversary of the battle of Bannockburn whose circumstances have already been presented, and replaced a more sober heritage site from the 1960's. Within the first year of operation, the new centre attracted 65 000 visitors, almost three times more than the annual average of the old one, and school visits are usually sold out months before the end of the school year, attesting of its very broad reach among the local population rather than tourists.[103] The centre is built in the region of Bannockburn, but the emplacement of the Battlefield has never been confirmed by any archaeological evidence, and there is then no real historical artefacts exhibited in this centre. There is, however, an iconic statue of the Scottish victor, Robert the Bruce, and other commemorative monuments right outside. Inside the centre, the history of the battle and its aftermath are imparted with state-of-the-art 3D technology that allows visitors to choose a side

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[102] Wood, 2003.
[103] BBC, 2015.

(English or Scottish) and virtually re-enact the battle. Once the simulation game ends, the true story of the battle is displayed.

I have analysed the account of the battle based on the content of the visitor's texts collected during my own visit and available on the website.[104] I have found that despite a laudable intention to be as historically accurate as possible (and despite the absence of archaeological evidence), the narrative, through the choice of words and emphasised elements, tended to glorify the Scottish victory. The discourse available to visitors underlines the bloody and brutal character of the battle, and repeatedly describes the battle as a "crucial event in Scottish history" or insists on how it changed "the history of Scotland as a nation forever". The English are not directly depicted negatively, nor is their reason to fight Scottish forces downgraded (actually, it is barely mentioned; the visitor is left to believe that they were just there to conquer because that is what they do). On the contrary, the anti-English discourse is very much avoided and the superiority of Edward's army strongly emphasised with phrases such as "retaining the stronghold", "huge army", "huge force", etc. This contributes to present the Scottish victory as even more warranted, as a victory of the oppressed against a mighty enemy. The victory of the less important Scottish forces is explained in terms of "Scots stubborn resistance", and by implying that Robert the Bruce truly outwitted the English king rather than having put to good use the tactical advantage due to the effect of surprise and the terrain. Instead of insisting on what a big victory it was for Scotland, the texts talk about "an unprecedented rout of King Edward's army".

On the National Trust for Scotland's website, the battle is presented so:

"The Battle of Bannockburn in June 1314 was one of the most important battles in Scottish history. King Robert the Bruce gathered his men to oppose the English army of King Edward II. His cunning tactics changed the path of Scotland's history, for victory on the battlefield led to freedom from English rule."[105]

This text too, as all others I have encountered on touristic websites or managing authorities and partners of the centre, highlights the high stakes that the outcome of the battle represented for Scotland's independent future and praises the tactical superiority Bruce.

I found the overall tone very propagandist. Without even entering the debate of the centre opening the same year as the referendum for independence (yet), I was left after my visit

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[104] Bannockburn visitor centre's website.
[105] National Trust for Scotland's website.

with the sentiment that the experience offered to visitors not only intended to educate and inform about a key event of Scottish history, but also was meant to have a strong resonance with the current situation of Scotland's claims to independence and the electoral fight of the SNP.

## 3.3. The history school curriculum, another type of driver for nation-building

What transpires from the distinction between history and memory, and Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* is that the leadership of the nation has the power to resort to different means to guarantee that the members of the nation remember their past. To reinforce national sentiment, they can put a spin to national history narratives. I would like now to illustrate this point through a case-study of the SNP's reform of the social studies school curriculum.

Schools are central in the identity construction system. Not only they offer a forum where national language, history and geography are taught, but also a place where the next generations are taught how to behave and think as members of the nation (and democratic system). This moral aspect of the national education is today commonly integrated in school curriculums. Social studies in particular reinforce identity and promote inclusion to the national community. It is thus a fine place for a government, especially a nationalist one, to deploy its own national narrative. The mandatory history school curriculum for pupils up to 16 years old in the UK states that "it should contribute to the development of pupils' sense of identity through knowledge and understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural heritages of Britain's diverse society and of the local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions of their lives".[106] Nonetheless, the British history curriculum has repeatedly been described as focused on England and reflecting the cultural dominance of the English in the UK, with very few direct references to the histories of the other British nations.[107] Ever since the Education Act of 1872, Scottish school have had a reformed system similar to the English one, where Gaelic instruction and speaking was prohibited until 2005. History became a school subject in itself in Scotland in 1886, but has never been given any special place in schools.

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[106] UK Department for Education, 1999:11.
[107] Ethnicity, Nationalism, and National Identity Network (ENNIN), 2014.

With little time to cover the rich history of the British Isles, Scottish history was indeed easily dismissed in favour of British and English history.

For the SNP, the exclusion of statutory references to Scottish history in the UK national curriculum accounts for a greater focus on the English aspect of Britishness in the identity building of Scotland's young minds and has thus been something they have long wished to reform. In August 2010, the government of Scotland replaced the national curriculum in Scotland by the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). The SNP describes the CfE as, among other things, focused on building confidence and citizenship. The citizenship mentioned here can be understood as almost synonymous to a purely Scottish one in view of the many instances of emphasis on Scottish national identity. When considering the CfE for social sciences, the documents open with the following lines:

> "Through social studies, children and young people develop their understanding of the world by learning about other people and their values, in different times, places and circumstances; they also develop their understanding of their environment and of how it has been shaped. As they mature, children and young people's experiences will be broadened using Scottish, British, European and wider contexts for learning, while maintaining a focus on the historical, social, geographic, economic and political changes that have shaped Scotland."[108]

Lower on the same page, there is a list stating the outcomes and experiences of pupils through this new curriculum, and the first point is formulated as such:

> "Children and young people as they participate in experiences and outcomes in social studies will develop their understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland, and an appreciation of their local and national heritage within the world".[109]

These statements, and their salient place on the opening lines of the texts, constitutes proof of the SNP's intent to grant more room and importance to Scottish history in the educational training of Scottish pupils. Furthermore, at the time of the reform, SNP politician Fiona Hyslop, who was then Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning in the Scottish government, said that there should be more emphasis on Scottish history and that Scotland's young people must reclaim the past and understand the nation's history.[110]

The SNP has never been shy to hide its goal to reclaim and promote Scottish history. The way heritage and history are often used in Scotland to spread a certain vision of historical

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[108] Scottish Government, 2010b:1.
[109] Scottish Government, 210b:1.
[110] Quoted in Hillis, 2010:144.

truths helps us fathom how they can actually be un-historical in their method, and how, to borrow from David Lowenthal,[111] historical narratives become weapons, especially when they are successfully disseminated among the population. Noteworthy enough, all topics of Scottish history chosen for school curriculums by the SNP can all be read as examples of Scottish resistance to the English or Unionism (the independence wars, Mary Stuart, the Jacobite risings, etc.). For a look at the exact content, see Annex 1.

In definitive, the SNP government has actively worked on defining a comprehensive narrative of the Scottish nation to present to its people through what could be described as a cultural restorationist agenda. The deployed narrative endeavours to glorify certain aspects of the past, making present generations proud of their Scottish heritage, and have a tendency to portray the English as the 'auld enemy'. Those narratives, spread inside and outside of the classroom, through history curriculum or on heritage sites, are a form of political discourse because they serve a certain purpose defined by politicians.


## Conclusion chapter 2

Collective identity is a symbolic representation of 'commonness' based on symbolic representations. For the individual member of the group, a collective identity appears as self-ascribed or ascribed by others. It provides a frame for individuals to develop a feeling of belonging. National identity can define itself in opposition to an 'Other', in the case of Scotland, the English, but mostly relies on specific markers of identity. In the case of the Scottish nation, those markers are prominently cultural. Yet, language, ethnicity and religion play almost no role due to historical developments and a present secular society open to globalisation and multiculturalism. History then becomes a paramount force capable of fostering nation-building, for instance by inventing traditions, by cultivating memories and/or through education. Because of its intrinsic and manifold connections with national identity, politicians — especially nationalist ones — can use history to mobilise and rally the nation to a project such as achieving independence. So next, I propose to see how history is employed in political discourse to achieve specific goals.

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[111] Lowenthal, 1998.

# Chapter 3

# History in nationalist political discourse and rhetoric

Despite the status of history as an academic, professional and objective discipline, modern societies continue to generate myths. Myths generally occur when history is used for pragmatic purposes: historians and politic scientists produce impartial historical facts and then politicians and opinion leaders reuse them in a doctored form with the aim to manipulate public opinion.[112] Because masses are literate and more educated today, they are directed towards mass media, and through the media and subsequent discussions, the manipulated historical facts anchor themselves in the discourse and perpetuate themselves in this form, through what Nora calls *lieux de mémoire* (schoolbooks, monuments, national holydays, etc.), as seen in the previous chapter.

In this chapter, I will tackle the particular aspect of how history, through discourse and rhetoric, can be used as a pragmatic tool, a means for politicians to mobilise voters, and more particularly for the SNP in its independence campaign. To that purpose, I will primarily focus on the tacit rules influencing political discourse in democracies. Then I will enter the crux of the question by discussing the use of history firstly in political discourse and secondly in contemporary rhetoric. In a last section, I will map the SNP's general attitudes towards discursive and rhetorical resort to history.

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[112] Liu & Hilton, 2005:5.

# 1. Independence campaigns: popular consultation, democratic propaganda and mass communication in politics

It is particularly important to understand the extent to which a referendum (about devolution or independence, in the case of Scotland) holds legal authority. Since the French revolution, about 40 democratically credible referendums on nationalist questions have taken place, and only twice their outcomes were not honoured.[113] So generally, referendum results are taken into consideration: in the case of a majority for independence, independence happens.[114] But as proven in the Balkans and in the Baltic lands, when they are ignored by the state, nations tend to secede anyway. Furthermore, a national conflict can be definitively solved and abandoned if an independence referendum democratically administered produces a vast majority against, as proven with the Schleswig region. So in modern democracies like Scotland, the true choice for independence truly falls upon the voters. And for this reason, independence referendums mobilise greatly politicians who rely on strong and relentless campaigns to influence the outcome not only of a vote, but of a major and determinant political decision for the future course of the nation.

The national question in Scotland is highly democratic. Devolution and independence have each time been treated as potential courses for the nation only if supported by a majority after public consultation. The Scottish parliament does have a democratic mandate, but whether it has the right to hold an independence referendum is disputable. Technically, a referendum is beyond the competence of the Scottish parliament and the outcome could affect the whole UK, not only Scotland. However, there was, since the beginning, very little chance that Westminster would oppose it. First, it would have aggravated the political autonomy claims and have increased resentment against the UK. Secondly, there had been a precedent in 2011 when the British Supreme Court, refusing to declare an act of the Scottish parliament void, had conceded to the Scottish parliament the right to legislate despite that right being beyond its powers.[115]

As Scottish nationalism attempts to achieve independence democratically through a consultative (but authoritative) vote, there are many implied tacit rules that apply. For instance, both sides will be allowed to campaign and the electorate has a guaranteed right to impartial information. The SNP government (who favours independence itself) organising the

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[113] Once in 1933 the Imperial parliament dismissed the independence vote for Western Australia, and once in 1946, Denmark ignored the referendum of the Faroe Islands.
[114] Qvortrup, 2012:2.
[115] Qvortrup, 2012:3.

referendum, has actively campaigned in the year prior to gather support. This campaign happened through mass communication and almost all types of media and communication supports in use (printed press, online newspapers, radio, television, billposting, social media, and any arena of public speech).

But there are underlying principles about how the campaign and the dissemination of the information must occur in a democracy. French sociologist Jacques Ellul refers to this phenomenon as 'democratic propaganda'. He reminds that the right to information is a prerequisite to democracy and that information brought by the state must be believable for the masses to have an effect.[116] Indeed, as seen today in the debate about fake news and fact-checking, democratic information is a means of reason, rather than passion, and as such, must be truthful; the masses are more incline to support a fact they do not like but is true than a pleasing falseness, and if the erroneous information is used, it leads to a loss of credibility. Nowadays, citizens are exposed to abundant news; so much actually that they do not have the capacity to keep up with all that is happening, to remember everything and often to analyse it pertinently. Thus, the masses expect the state to present a synthesis of all information available that they will accept if it seems reliable, understandable and inscribed in a consistent narrative.[117] However, information can still be manipulated and undergo a subjective selective process. In this context, dissemination of information in democracy can be said to be first and foremost a form of psychological manipulation. Through the dissemination of information, different parties and actors spin the facts to their advantage and use them competitively to support a specific political discourse.

Those norms and tacit rules grants a kind of uniformity in how politicians carry out a campaign. When they express themselves, some processes are actually naturally embedded in the discourse. Some rhetorical strategies are so entangled in everyday discourse at all levels that they appeal to the masses unconsciously. To a certain degree, nationalism is omnipresent in all forms of discourse. Michael Billig calls it 'banal nationalism'. He supports that nationalism is embedded in contemporary life and discourse to such an extent that parts of its attributes are banal, always 'near the surface'.[118] This 'banality' stems from a consensus acquired through constant repetition of unnoticed traces repressed from consciousness, appearing especially in the media.[119] Although Billig's work revolves around journalistic

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[116] Ellul, 1952:481.
[117] Ellul, 1952:494.
[118] Billig, 1995:93.
[119] Law, 2001:302.

language, his observations also fit political discourse. Speaker and listener understand each other because they agree on the meaning of words in a given context. For example, 'we' in nationalist discourse is automatically understood as referring to the members of the nation, including the speaker and the listener in this group, instead of being understood in its primary sense of 'you' and 'I'. Similarly, 'they' is understood as the 'other'. This idea applies to the place as well. 'The nation' refers to the local one and only others must be specified by name. If Salmond says 'the nation', the recipient will unconsciously hear 'Scotland'. Similarly, the 'we' used in the press and in most discourses in Scotland is always Scottish and not British. Rhetorically, a part of nationalism is expressed almost subliminally. This long tradition of internalisation of nationhood thus constitutes a basis for nationalist politicians' goal to mobilise further.

## 2. History and nationalist political discourse

### 2.1. From nationalist ideology to political discourse

Nationalism is a distinct ideology in contemporary politics whose core principle is to prioritise the nation.[120] Despite strong variations, contemporary political nationalisms all base themselves on the principle of transferring a feeling of national belonging unto the fields of politics, relying on another core principle: self-determination.[121] It is often this core principle that makes them identifiable as nationalist indeed. When nationalism becomes politicised, the ideology, the goals set for the nation and the strategy in place to achieve them will appear through political discourse.

In social sciences, there is no canon definition of discourse. Discourse is rather a vague concept first discerned by French philosopher Michel Foucault to understand how language relate to things. The traditional analytical frame to understand the transposition of nationalist mobilisation into speech relies on two main approaches: instrumentalism and constructivism.[122] Instrumentalism considers nationalism as something social and political elites can manipulate to gain popular support. Constructivists assume that individuals construct basic assumptions produced and reproduced through language, and shaped by a specific context. They consider contemporary nationalist movements as an ideological construct and

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[120] For a thorough demonstration of this assumption, see Freeden, 1998:765.
[121] Sutherland, 2001:12-14.
[122] Levinger, 2001:175.

emphasise adaptability of national identity to any political and social contexts, stemming from a process of "communal imagination".[123] Based on discourse and criteria of belonging to the nation, constructivists can categorise nationalisms in different types, often reduced to the dichotomy of ethnic nationalism versus civic nationalism, where Scotland represent the textbook case of civic nationalism.

Post-Marxist political theorists Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe departed from Foucault's work to explain how all social phenomena can be understood as discursive constructions. They focused on the "central role to words and meanings as indicators of power relations" and focused on the "syntax of hegemony".[124] All political parties use ideology to justify their claims for power, and in a democratic system, those parties consequently have competing ideologies. They need to gather more and more support to hegemonise their own view.[125] Hegemony echoes Ellul's view on history in democracies, where politicians have the power to decide of what becomes national history. History is considered as the truth, yet it remains a truth decided by propaganda, because if a fact is not known massively, it remains irrelevant, despite having real, material consequences. A fact must go through a democratic process of massification to become widely accepted, because a fact is real only if it possesses a collective reality. But facing the plurality and the complexity of existing facts, facts need to be strengthened by something stronger only achieved through propaganda, or in other words, through discourse.[126]

So discourse consists of infinite floating signifiers that politicians compete to mould into meaningful configurations.[127] In the case of Scotland, nationalist politicians argue in favour of "an alternative national construct to the one in place".[128] Thus, the nation-state appears to be the hegemonic nationalist construct embodied through political discourse. Through discourse, nationalists can challenge what is common sense (meaning an ideology that has already achieved hegemony) and rearticulate social realities so they would serve their nationalistic project. Mannheim makes an important distinction between two types of nationalistic projects: 'ideologies', consisting of a set of ideas which can co-exist with the

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[123] Levinger, 2001:176.
[124] Sutherland, 2005:186.
[125] Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:120.
[126] Ellul, 1952:479.
[127] Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:16.
[128] Sutherland, 2005:193.

established order, and 'utopia', which can only been achieve outside of the established orders.[129] The SNP's independence project is therefore a utopia.

If discourse can shape nation-building, the opposite is also true: nation-building can transpire through discourse when it becomes a platform for politicians to draw support by calling to the nationalist sentiment of the group. The linguistic expression of hegemony applied to nationalist discourse helps identifying the main antagonisms and understanding how the 'other' is perceived.[130] The discursive concept of 'other' allows nationalists to delimit the nation; the identification of antagonistic ideologies allows them to identify resistance. Discourse also empowers them to list the conditions for being part of the nation. In the case of Scottish nationalism, this delimitation is very broad and territory-based: any person residing in Scotland is Scottish. No need for Scottish ancestry or a shared culture. Nevertheless, even such a broad definition implies that there is an 'other' to justofy the need for an alternative national construct to the one in place. In that case, the 'other' is of course the English/British. Scottish nationalism, in regard to the theory, is a minority nationalist movement struggling against the hegemonic discourse of the British nation-state construct.

## 2.2. History as a mobilising tool in political discourse

Political discourse provide a frame for generating opinions and arguments whose effects can be steered by history. We have seen previously that one of the main appeal to history in politics consists in playing on the connection between the past and identity to intensify national sentiment. Even once historical references have served their purpose of unifying a nation, they can still be used as a reminder in political discourse for emphasis effect and to rally more supporters to a cause. The mention of shared history reinforces community bonds and helps the nation forget other internal divides and see itself as united. But there are many other ways to use history in contemporary political discourses.

In order to integrate nationalism to their discourse, political elites must "deploy narratives about the nation".[131] Often, nationalism relies on a discursive formation that aims to appeal to a common national consciousness.[132] This discursive aspect of nationalism a driver

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129 Mannheim, 1940:195.
130 Sutherland, 2005:190-1.
131 Levinger & Lytle, 2001:176.
132 Smith, 1956:174-208.

for political mobilisation has remained relatively the same since the nineteenth century, emphasising who belongs to the nation and who is excluded, and most of all, underlining a historical continuity from which results a certain legitimacy.[133] History (as the narratives politicians use to connect their national movement to the past) is thus a key element of nationalist political discourse to mobilise.

History is particularly attractive to public speakers as an instrument of persuasive construction because it appeals simultaneously to the community and to the individuals. As a discourse, it can be adapted to serve a specific purpose. History is indeed relative, malleable and offers different positions and possible interpretations, all the while arousing a widely shared emotional resonance for people: because a group's representation of its history acts as a factor of cohesion in the present, it serves certain functions and can be renegotiated over time to reflect changing circumstances.[134] The participants of history are long dead, they cannot speak and their words or actions can be reused pragmatically. This setting justify why all types of politicians, not only nationalist ones, resort to historical references. Moreover, history, for all the reasons already exposed, holds a strong emotive power that a nationalist cause factually presented may lack. Politicians can use this emotive power to establish a strong connection between nationalism as a cultural sentiments and nationalism as a political principle.[135] But all those appeal to history in political discourse happens at the rhetorical level.

## 3. The weight of the past in contemporary nationalist rhetoric

Rhetoric refers to the underlying processes of articulating a discourse linguistically. Without entering through long definitions and the historical evolution of rhetoric since Aristotle, I will simply define rhetoric as "an informative and persuasive expression of ideology".[136] Rhetoric can be studied through the style, the form and the content of the language employed by the speaker/writer in order to mobilise around his ideology, vision or project. It implies that nothing in the discourse of the rhetorician is left to chance. What is included and is left out, the choice of words, the narrative structure, the grammar and the style, the way ideas are presented and

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[133] Levinger & Lytle, 2001:177.
[134] Liu & Hilton, 2005:2.
[135] Lawrence, 2013:724.
[136] Sutherland, 2005:197.

arguments are organised account for a thorough and deliberate choice made to convince the recipient.

## 3.1. The 'past-present-future' structure of nationalist rhetoric

Theorists Levinger and Lytle suggests that nationalist rhetoric articulates itself around a time-sequence 'past-present-future'. They call it the triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric and support that it shapes all nationalist discourses.[137] It works as an analytical device to nationalist politicians' speech to identify the connection between political mobilisation and nationalist narratives.[138] Sometimes, the past is quoted by politicians as an example to follow or to avoid. More often, the past mentioned is idealised and referred to as a long lost age of prosperity and freedom, contrasting with the present state, described as degraded or declining. The past is often brought back in contemporary discourse because its re-appropriated version offers a model for the future.[139] Supporting such claims in the political discourse helps mobilise the population around the need to act for the future, to change path radically, for instance through achieving independence, and reach a new golden age. The narrative of a lost golden age and the need to take action to revive it is not modern at all, and certainly does not belong exclusively to nationalism. It is a staple prophetic myth in many primitive religions and Christianity with the narrative of fall and redemption.[140] Yet, during the modern era, this idea has become a rhetoric tool for political mobilisation.[141]

The glorious past refers to the state when the nation existed independently, pure, unified and prospering. It is also referred to as 'the antiquity of the nation',[142] and scholars have found that all national narratives possess one of those glorious past.[143] For Smith, "the task of the nationalist is simply to remind his compatriots of their glorious past, so that they can recreate and relive those glories."[144] The 'glories' in question to recreate and relive are of particular importance when studying nationalist discourse for they are elements that the politician has carefully chosen. They can be one or many, about militaristic advantages of the society, or its high cultural and artistic production, or even its agrarian system, but in the end, they provide

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[137] Levinger & Lytle, 2001:186.
[138] Levinger & Lytle, 2001:190.
[139] Smith, 1999:11.
[140] Smith, 1986.
[141] Levinger & Lytle, 2001:177.
[142] Smith, 1959:192
[143] Levinger & Lytle, 2001:178.
[144] Smith, 1994:18.

clues as to the direction in which the discourse will steer and which elements are hoped to be achieved once again. Similarly, the emphasis on particular qualities of the nation from the past helps understand what nationalists consider necessary to recover through collective struggle. So having a glorious past helps articulate the revival program of the present, but also strengthen the legitimacy and appeal of the movement. The past, the more glorious the more attractive, may mobilise masses who find pride in claiming to belong (if not descend) from such a nation.

The degraded present refers to the present state of the nation, which stands less unified and/or oppressed, in a far less attractive position than before. This situation is often attributed to a series of traumatic events that have undermined the rights of the community or the integrity of the nation, like a conquest by another or strong immigration. "The diagnosis of loss invariably occupies the central position in nationalist mobilisation rhetoric".[145] The delimitation of what is implied by loss, for example loss of political independence or territory, loss of any marker of national identity (culture, language, ethnicity, etc.), gives the direction of the discourse. What was lost is what need to be regained. Often, another nation is held responsible in the political rhetoric for the loss in question.

The future is the project of a national rebirth. It is the promise of an amelioration of the present situation through the reversal of the conditions that have led to the decaying present situation to reconstitute the ideal nation, for example, through independence or greater autonomy, or through the expulsion of foreigners. Discursively, this utopian future involves primarily the "harmonious integration of the community" into the coming time when the nation will prosper again.[146]

Opposing the glorious past to the decaying present and mentioning the prospect of a prosperous future creates tension. From the opposition between the past and the present, politicians can diagnose a cause to present decline and identify a responsible party. This identification motivates action and defines the collective struggle for the community. It allows nationalist politicians to propose a solution, to prescribe a course of action to follow, in order to move on towards the desired future.

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[145] Levinger & Lytle, 2001:181.
[146] Levinger & Lytle, 2001:184-185.
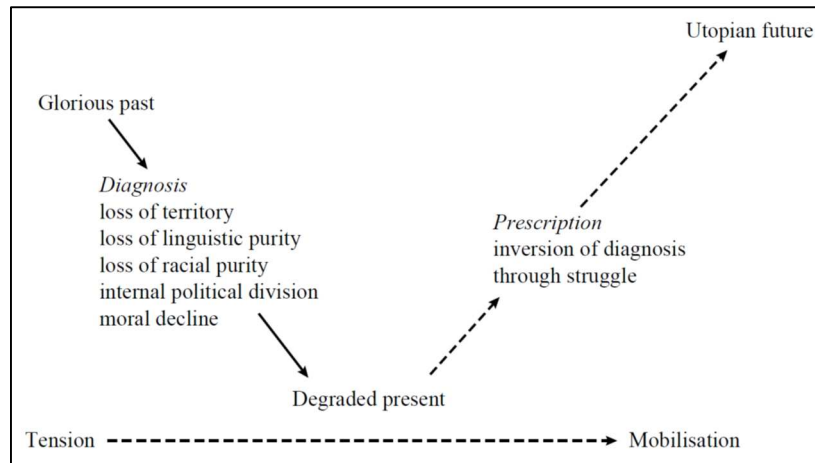
Figure 2. "The triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric", (LEVINGER & LYTLE, 2001:186).


## *3.2. Historical analogies*

British professor of philosophy David Cooper, on his part, identifies four main rhetorical features in nationalist discourse: "the deployment of tropes, like metaphor and metonymy", "the deployment of persuasive techniques other than 'straight' logical argument", "unity of style and content", and "the deferral of reference".[147] By deferral of reference, he means references to the real world that are indirect because they are refracted through the personal representation of the speaker. Indeed, "discourses not only represent the world as it is (or rather is seen to be), they are also projective, imaginaries, representing possible worlds which are different from the actual world, and tied in to projects to change the world in particular directions".[148]

As seen previously, several ways to use historical references in political discourse occurs through rhetorical technique listed by Cooper. The way politicians (choose to) view the world and how they use history to explain this view create deferrals of references. For instance in the perception of the 'other'. In the Scottish nationalist discourse, there are examples (although more rare today) of how the English have been oppressing Scotland. Because of its emotive power, history can also provide alternative means to logical arguments. By simply mentioning this shared history or by reminding the recipients of a collective historical happening, a politician can steer opinions. This strategy appears regularly on American

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[147] Cooper, 1993:198.
[148] Fairclough, 2003:124.

political rhetoric, regarding 9/11, for example. Tragedies work as reminder to generate particular feelings that can be tactically linked to other arguments and ultimately mobilise.

The deployment of tropes is certainly the most recurrent and effective feature. History offers indeed a very large repertoire of stories, people and events available for comparison, metaphor and analogy in the present.[149] Metonymy and synecdoche allow to allude to certain notions already embedded in the masses' mind and open up certain questions without engaging with complex and volatile topics.[150] The most common in the SNP discourse is the use of Scotland to refer to the people of Scotland. It alludes the question of who belongs to the nation, yet, it still has the effect of appealing to Scottish identity. Scottish nationalists, especially Salmond, often limit historical references in their speeches to events or people that hold a strong potential for analogy with the present. In this regard, it was a happy coincidence that the campaign for independence was launched during the year 2014, which was rich in national celebrations, the main ones being Glasgow's proud hosting of the Commonwealth Games, the 200th anniversary of Walter Scott's *Waverley*, the centenary of the outbreak of World War I and, most important of all, the 700th anniversary of the Scots' victory at the Battle of Bannockburn. Thus, we can wonder if the choice of the year 2014 to hold such an historic political referendum was deliberately chosen to be metonymically inscribed in this context of celebrated national pride.

Historians agree to say that the foundations of Scottish nationalism were laid on the field of Bannockburn. There were even talks among SNP politicians to hold the referendum on the very date of the anniversary of the battle. Although it did not happen in the end, the timing had been enough to launch the pro-independence slogan 'Bannockburns 2014', reinforcing the parallel between the independence won over England then and the upcoming opportunity to win it back.[151] Professor of Modern Scottish Literature Robert Crawford published a book called *Bannockburns*. Though Crawford admits that the concept of Scottish independence does not held the same meaning in 2014 as it did in 1314, he used the plural to establish a comparison between the two fights for independence, but also to underline the plurality of the posterity of the initial battle through literary discourse.[152]

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[149] Liu & Hilton, 2005:13.
[150] Arnott & Ozga, 2010a:340.
[151] Whatley, 2014.
[152] Crawford, 2014.

# 4. SNP's general attitude towards the historical plea

## 4.1. The great variations of the SNP's discourse

For having read and heard a significant amount of excerpts of the SNP's political discourse, I can say that the attitude of the SNP towards history presents variations that can be extreme depending on the medium (speech, pamphlet, manifesto, etc.), the speaker/writer, and the context of dissemination and the audience. At first, I noticed a definitive lack of consistence in rhetorical appeals to history or the national past. But a closer look has actually allowed me to distinguish a pattern and identify particular speakers/authors who employs frequently historical references, and others who do not. As a rule, documents supposed to represent the unanimous voice of the party avoid mentioning the past (or their notion of past does not stretch further than three decades ago). The broader the audience, the least historical the references. Also, there are more references orally than in written discourse. When speaking in panels, SNP politicians tend to minimise historical references too. Manifestos and official printed documents signed by the party (not naming any writer) present the least historical references. They are of particular interest because they represent the discourse of the party as a whole addressed to the greatest number. When speaking in their own name, or when speaking on behalf of the party but obviously using their own personal identity, SNP politicians tend to use a more spontaneous language with more historical references punctuating the discourse. Alex Salmond is the politician who relies on history the most. In his elocutions, historical references are omnipresent, albeit limited to very few figures and events.

Although I have chosen to conduct my rhetorical analysis on the white-paper for independence, which enters the first mentioned categories of 'anonymous' SNP's manifestos, I would like to take some time to describe more precisely through some selected examples the relationship of Alex Salmond with collective history in his public elocutions preceding the referendum. It will enable me to construct a frame of reference through which to place and qualify the results from the white-paper analysis later.

## 4.2. SNP's historical references: general examples and recurring references

For a sample of excerpts of discourses mentioning history and the past that I have considered to draw the following overview, I invite you to consult Annex 2.

Salmond is well versed in the studies of medieval Scotland, Bruce, Bannockburn and Arbroath.[153] Yet, those references have tended to disappear during the referendum campaign, as if he purposely tried to steer away from the 'coincidence' of the anniversary of Bannockburn happening the same year as the referendum. The SNP has indeed been accused pre-emptively by the media of having the intention to benefit of this anniversary to advertise the independence cause.[154] However, Salmond has made several indirect allusions to the events of the Scottish wars of independence by quoting verses of Burns mentioning them. Robert Burns (1759-1796) can safely be said to be the favourite historical Scot for Salmond to mention. National poet (or 'Bard') Burns was a precursor of Romanticism. Not only did he write poems in plain Scots and about his native region (Ayrshire), but he also found inspiration in national history and old folkloric songs. Burns' life too is celebrated, and in the years following his death, an authentic cult around his persona emerged, perpetuated to this date; he has become a national symbol for Scotland worldwide. His most celebrated site of Scottish patriotism comes indeed in his engagement with Wallace and Bruce and the fights against the English. Salmond regularly quotes in his elocutions Burn's "Scots Wha Hae", relating Bruce's address to his troupes, which praises Scottish fighting spirits, bravery and love of freedom against English tyranny, and which was known to have been written as a parallel with the situation of Scotland under English rule in the 1790's. Burn's historical and rousing works offers a formidable rhetorical source of inspiration for Salmond, but beyond quotations, Burn's name is sufficient enough to evoke the century-old tradition of Scottish patriotism and steer national feeling and arouse Scottish pride. The same logic is at play when he quotes (more rarely) the other national poet, Hugh MacDiarmid (1892-1978).

The relationship between Salmond and Burns is actually a very intense one that spread beyond the scope of nationalist politics. Salmond has recorded several readings of Burns' work and given lectures about him in Scotland and abroad. He says that his "admiration for him lies in the descriptive, artistic phrasing that encapsulates Scottish identity – our creativity, pride and confidence – but also in his portrayal of love and a true humanitarian ethos."[155] But when he mentions Burns in politics, it still has a mobilising and emotive purpose. Salmond used Burns' words from "To a mouse" to provoke Westminster and spur David Cameron, then Prime Minister, to accept to debate publicly on independence, calling him "a cowran tim'rous beastie"

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[153] Crawford, 2014:183.
[154] Johnson, 2013; Johnson, 2014. Salmond had already hijacked an anniversary: he launched his 2005 electoral campaign on Robert Burns' birthday.
[155] Salmond, 2014.

with a "panic on thy breastie". Not only the humour and provocation of the quotation stimulated Scottish audience, but also they invoked Burns and subsequently roused a sense of pride of being Scots among the population.[156] These tactical references can be seen too when Salmond quotes for instance the very anti-English "Such a Parcel of Rogues", in which Burns accuses of treachery those who sold Scotland for English gold, and when he claims that Burns (among other long-dead Scots) would have backed up independence if alive now. Salmond presented several proves from both Burns' published and personal writings, but his opponents accused him to use Burns in a desperate endeavour to appropriate the national hero to the SNP and bolster support for independence.[157] Burns is truly believed to be the most patriotic of all Scots, and this can be seen every time Scotland's discusses which song should be its national anthem, and each time several of Burns' texts are proposed. Burns has often been linked to the SNP in the last years: "A Man's a Man for A' That" was recited at the opening of the Scottish parliament in 1999.[158]

Nicola Sturgeon is far more reluctant than Salmond to use historical or literary references. Ever since the beginning of the negotiations about the referendum with Westminster, she has been emphasising on the aspect of political freedom for Scotland.[159] During the public local meetings held to defend the case for independence and answer voters' questions, Sturgeon took however a few steps back on her view and mentioned historical arguments. She never referred to specific events like Salmond, but simply appealed to general history to reassure concerned citizens about continuity. Therefore, it appears that history still represent a source of inspiration for individual members of the SNP and that through the years, there has been an intent to link specific past figures and events to the party.

## 4.3. A brief account of the place of cultural nationalism in the SNP's discourse through time

Finally, to finish this overview of the SNP's general attitude towards history, I will give a brief account of historical and cultural references in SNP's manifestos in the period preceding the referendum, based on the works of Scottish researcher on nationalism and national identity

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[156] Edward, 2014.
[157] Whitaker, 2013.
[158] Salmond, 2014.
[159] Brady & Chorley, 2012.

Murray Stewart Leith between 1970 and 2005,[160] and my own analysis up to 2011. Leith's analysis regarding the evolution of the place granted to Scottishness and Scotland in the official discourse of the SNP based on the language identifies a trend in which I can replace my own findings: he highlights a clear shift between an exclusive/inclusive nationalist tone and a more open and broadly inclusive direction. He notices that until the party's breakthrough in the first decade of the 2000's, the question of identity and belonging was at the political fore.[161]

In 1970, the issue of independence was the central element of the party's manifesto and Scotland was described as being among 'the oldest nations of Europe'.[162] Despite this appeal to a long national history, the manifesto fails to clearly define Scottishness and the many calls to the people remain vague in who they refer too. In the 1974 manifesto, Scottishness was not developed any further, but there was a significant rhetorical presence of Scotland as a territory, which served the purpose of appealing to more individuals than during the previous campaign.[163] They were however a few more attempts to define who is Scottish by specifying who is not. This manifesto focuses more on 'the other', consistently portraying everything English as negative, accusing the British government of having failed Scotland, condemning the Anglicisation of the educational system and claiming that Scottish children had to engage more with their own heritage.[164]

The first real attempt to define who is part of the Scottish nation in political terms came in the manifestos of the 1980's. The 1983 manifesto, focusing heavily on independence and even having it mentioned overtly in its subhead, stated that:

> "The right to Scottish citizenship for all those resident in Scotland upon independence, or born
> (with a parent born) in Scotland, and to such others as the Scottish Parliament may decide."[165]

In 1983, there was not yet such a thing as a Scottish Parliament. Such an institution was part of the political plan of the SNP for the constitutional organisation of an independent Scotland. This definition of Scottishness is therefore a projection in the future, but is simultaneously a promise to a broader number of citizens to be included in the SNP's discourse: are Scottish all individuals residing in Scotland regardless of their ethnicity or descent, and those living abroad born of a Scottish parent. Once the matter of Scottishness settled, the party moves on to present

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[160] Leith, 2008:83-92; Leith & Soule, 2011.
[161] Leith, 2008:85.
[162] SNP, 1970:5.
[163] Leith, 2008:86; SNP, 1974.
[164] SNP, 1974:28.
[165] SNP, 1983:3.

a programme aiming to safeguard Scotland's identity, way of life, thought and expression, as well as to underline and preserve the status of Scotland as an historic and distinctive nation, and defend the right of its people against non-residents.[166] The 1987 manifesto focuses once again heavily on independence, uses the exact same definition regarding who would become a Scottish citizen in case of independence, and mentions the same intent to safeguard Scottish identity and defend the interest of the Scots against those of foreigners. However, this time, the anti-English tone has been turned down, albeit still present through general attacks of the British system.[167] Leith identifies there the beginning of the long-term trend aiming to downplay the negative portraying of everything British or English and also notices a significant decrease in the use of claims for Scotland's future building on its past and images of Scotland based on its historical character.[168]

In the 1992 manifesto, the sense of history was given even less attention. There was a clear shift from a focus on the past to a focus on the future, expressed through a new terminology such as 'new Scotland' and the association of Scotland with the adjectives 'modern' and 'progressive', and emphasis on Scotland as a multicultural society open to the world.[169] The reservation about mentioning the past and the prominence of Scottish diversity accounts for a new focus on the territory as a basis for identity rather than descent and heritage, and this focus is even more obvious in the next manifesto. In the 1997 manifesto, the SNP abandoned all negative portrayal of outside influences and foreigners and decided to focus instead on the legal and constitutional position of Scotland.[170] This campaign had for immediate effects to widen the audience of the party, and prove successful not so much in the General election results but on the outcome of the devolution referendum held the same year resulting in the (re)establishment of the Scottish parliament.

Past the turn of the twenty-first century, this very broad, open and inclusive conceptualisation of Scottishness continued, in an attempt to mobilise broader support. Rhetorically, in the 2001 manifesto, this phenomenon was noticeable through a softening of the nationalist tone, with emphasis on Scotland rather than Scottishness, announcing that the "[SNP] stands for the people — all the people — who live in our rich country".[171] The

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[166] SNP, 1983:12.
[167] SNP, 1987.
[168] Leith, 2008:88.
[169] Leith, 2008: 88 ; SNP, 1992.
[170] Leith, 2008:88 ; SNP, 1997.
[171] SNP, 2001:2.

remaining attacks on the British system were directed toward the political establishment only and the topic of ethnic identity was carefully avoided.[172] By the time of the 2005 manifesto, the language was according even more importance to Scotland as a place rather than the people of Scotland and their identity. Indeed, there was no appeal to any sense of Scottishness or the Scottish nation, and the population was referred to as 'Scottsih taxpayers'.[173]

Leith's comparative approach of the representation of Scottishness in SNP manifestos from 1970 to 2005 reveals that the SNP has continually reinforced the notion of Scotland as a place rather than as an ethnic group or an old nation and has opted to define who is Scottish in a much more inclusive manner based on territoriality. Scottishness has thus become a more and more open concept. When the party appeals to a sense of identity, it does so through a very civic definition of the nation. The other trend identified concerns the anti-British sentiment and the Anglicisation of Scotland. Both have almost disappeared entirely through the years, substituted by more direct attacks toward specific aspects of the British system, policies or political parties.

Based on my own analysis in the following period, I notes that the 2007 manifesto continues within the line of the identified trends: less English or British attacks, more focus on political and economic matters, and still this very inclusive definition of Scottishness based on residence and free-will rather than cultural heritage. Independence remains at the core of the program. Attaining sovereignty is presented as a solution to present political and social problems, and as a great economic opportunity. The quest for independence is still turned towards the future rather than the past, with one notable exception:

> "The 300-year old Union is no longer fit for purpose. It was never designed for the 21st century world. It is well past its sell by date and is holding Scotland back. The SNP believe Scotland and England should be equal nations—friends and partners—both free to make our own choices (…) With independence Scotland will be free to flourish and grow. We can give our nation a competitive edge.[174]

History is used here in a rare example to stress the out-datedness of the present system. It is contrasted with the present, and Unionism is judged a hindrance to Scottish positive development. It is used as a means to criticise the system without attacking Westminster directly, and without opening-up the notion of shared past and cultural identity.

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[172] Leith, 2008:89 ; SNP, 2001.
[173] Leith, 2008:89 ; SNP, 2005.
[174] SNP, 2007:7.

The 2011 manifesto differs from the others but retain the main tendency observed before. It is a re-election manifesto. Therefore, it focuses on all that the SNP has achieved in regards to their previous promises during their first governmental term. They use the extended metaphor of a journey to describe the direction taken by Scotland since 2007, and insist, from the first page on, on the continuation of this journey to reach the best future possible for "the people of Scotland".[175] The expression "people of Scotland", used consistently to describe the recipients is a new expression that also follows the trend observed by Leith, defining Scottishness as those residing in Scotland, and not those of Scottish descent. More than ever, the future is present in the document: the program is presented through a description of a better future in which Scotland stands stronger and more successful.[176] Scottish independence is treated in its own section, but is also presented as the fulfilment of all the previously mentioned visions for the future. Scotland's independence is not a distant dream in itself anymore, it has become a means to achieve the bigger dream of a better Scotland. Yet, the SNP insists on how independence must be "the choice of the people of Scotland for Scotland's future".[177] Otherwise, the manifesto does not linger at whole on cultural nationalism. (There are however an incredible amount of pictures featuring the saltire, the Scottish national flag). The only reference made of Scottish cultural identity is a very brief paragraph stipulating that the SNP wish to reform school curriculum to include Scottish studies and create "a distinct strand of learning focused on Scotland and incorporating Scottish History, Scottish Literature, the Scots and Gaelic Languages, wider Scottish culture and Scottish current affairs".[178]

The analysis of these two last manifestos allows me to confirm Leith's conclusions that the SNP is more and more concerned with the future than the past. By describing the future in glowing terms (and promising to bring Scotland to a forefront place in the world), the SNP complies with the triadic structure of nationalist discourses. Overall, this discursive and rhetorical evolution has served well the SNP. It has indeed doubled its MPs in the period covered by the study[179] and since then, has gone from forming a minority government in 2007 to a majority government in 2011, still in power to this date.

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[175] SNP, 2011:cover.
[176] SNP, 2011:7.
[177] SNP, 2011:28.
[178] SNP, 2011: 24.
[179] Leith, 2008:90.

# Conclusion chapter 3

To be disseminated, a nationalist ideology must be transposed into the realm of language in a discursive form. Politicians manipulate the language and its effects on the masses strategically through rhetoric. In this setting, historical references become a discursive device that can be employed to construct national sameness, to unify the members of the nation around collective memory, but also to steer their reactions to a present situation and define the future course of the group. The evocation of images of the past holds a resonance in the present because they are understood in terms of temporal narratives (past-present-future) that can be used analogically to decide on how to act in the present. Historical images can be manipulated to serve as examples, but also to remind the people of a lost golden age that can be revive in the future. As such, history is a key element of political rhetoric in general, but because of its particular relevance to national identity, it is even more important for nationalist parties. We have also seen how the SNP politicians use history in a way limited to a small range of events and historical people. But if using history has such effects on nationalist discourse, not using it have some too, and employing historical references or not equates to a deliberate choice. We have seen in that regard that the SNP, in its manifestos, tends to avoid those references more and more. Those manifestos are rather traditional political programs than true nationalist pamphlets. So what can be expected regarding historical references when considering a document such as the referendum white paper, which is not really a political program, nor a full nationalist plea?

# Chapter 4

# Allusions to the past in the SNP's discourse during the referendum campaign

In this last chapter, I will proceed to analysing the SNP government's attitudes towards historical references in its discourse during the referendum campaign. My study is based on the rhetoric deployed in the white-paper *Scotland's Future: Your Guide to an Independent Scotland*, published by Salmond's government on 26 November 2013. This document was considered to be the one and only official manifesto of the referendum campaign published by the SNP and was available entirely freely, distributed all over Scotland in its printed form and downloadable online. It is a 670 page comprehensive guide setting out a framework for an independent Scotland. It starts with a preface written by Salmond himself (6 pages), followed by a two page list titled "Gains from independence", a short introduction about the guide itself (5 pages) and a 30 page summary of the entire content. Then the case for independence is laid out in ten thematic parts: The case for independence (32 pages), Scotland's finances (24 pages), Finance and the economy (42 pages), Health, wellbeing and social protection (48 pages), Education, skills and employment (21 pages), International relations and defence (49 pages), Justice, security and home affairs (19 pages), Environment, rural Scotland, energy and resources (37 pages), Culture, communications and digital (17 pages) and Building a modern democracy (37 pages). This ten-part presentation with several subparts accounts for about half of the total volume of the guide. The rest is made of a "questions and answers" section (209 pages) covering 650 points, plus an additional folder of five annexes of 29 pages, and endnotes.

There is a whole annex exclusively dedicated to history, titled "Scotland's Constitutional Journey". It sums up the joined history of Scotland and the UK over five pages in 18 points. The first point acknowledges the intertwined history of Scotland with that of the UK in such term "Scotland has a long history, both as an independent nation before the Treaty of Union, then within the United Kingdom as a recognised nation with our own institutions and legal system." (p. 584).

My first overall impression regarding the guide is that it is user-friendly. Each section can be read independently, allowing the reader to browse the guide selectively. The language is simple, sentences are generally short. This document does not offer any alternative point of view or arguments against independence. Through specific phrasing, footnotes or brief presentations, we can see that it addresses not only the supporters of the 'Yes side', but attempts to reach the broadest audience possible. Its simple yet elegant and colourful design makes it even more agreeable to read. It also uses many pictures and several infographic figures. The black of the text aside, blue is the dominant colour, and set on the white background is reminiscent of Scottish national colours and the saltire.

Firstly, I will present my basic assumptions regarding what I expect to find in my source regarding historical references, based on the theoretical framework and the tendencies established in previous chapters. Secondly, I will present my method of analysis. Then, I will interpret my results by confronting them with the theory.

# 1. Basic assumptions

Previously, while presenting the main characteristics of Scottish nationalism and the ideology and practice of the SNP, I have implied that the Scottish case, while presenting many features conforming to the theory or comparable to other cases, constituted a *sui generis* example of modern, Western nationalism. However, this has not deterred me in the slightest to decide to apply classical theory to analyse the SNP discursive approach to independence. This is indeed so because the party defines its *raison d'être* as to establish an independent Scotland on the model of a nation-state. This Scottish nation-state follows the gellnerian definition. Therefore, there should be in the political discourse a certain emphasis on Scottishness (who belongs to the nation). Additionally, Gellner's definition implies that individuals form a nation on two conditions: that they share the same culture and recognise themselves as part of the same group.[180] Shared history represent one of the most common ways to convey a sense of common culture, and as such should have a certain place in all nationalist discourses. The theories established based on the analysis of nationalist movements from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries naturally fail to take into consideration the context of the twenty-first century. Yet, those conditions, especially in Western societies, affect greatly the constructions of nationhood,[181] so I still expect historical references to be an important strategic device used by Scottish pro-independence politicians. The trend from SNP manifestos foreshadows an absence of such references, but the political reforms introduced by the SNP and the speech of some of its prominent members like then First Minister Salmond counteracts this trend, thus I believe there could still be a rhetorical resort to history to be found.

As seen previously, Scotland was independent until the Act of Union in 1707 and went through a profound phase of rediscovery and promotion of an idealised past during the Romantic period. Scotland has even continued to celebrate its victories over the English successive invasions ever since Bannockburn. So one should expect to find, if not direct

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[180] Gellner, [1983], 2006:6-7.
[181] Sutherland, 2005:186.

emphasis on a glorious past, at least references stating that Scotland has managed well once while independent, and could thus do better by itself once more. In addition to references to earlier independent times, I would expect to find other use of references to the past aiming to prove the out-datedness of the Union, as in the 2007 manifesto.

Levinger and Lytle assert that the triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric can be used to "predict the potential vectors of development of specific contemporary nationalist movements".[182] It is indeed very frequent to find in today's nationalist movements many occurrences of references to a glorious past; many modern nationalism in Europe tend to restore an idealised version of their past to support present claims and mobilise masses, like Macedonia very recently in an attempt to strengthen the national sentiment and present a new image regionally and internationally.[183] Therefore, expecting to find in the white-paper a confrontation between glorious past and utopian future seems to be a rational assumption. Regarding the present, one could expect to find statements attributing economic or social challenges to the Union. (Since the SNP has been in government already, thus accountable for the present state of things, it is doubtful that they will describe the present in a detrimental fashion.) I could also expect mentions of a loss and a responsible party, namely the loss of political independence to the British government. Finally, since Scotland seeks to secede from Westminster, it seems reasonable to assume that any mention of Unionism and UK/English politics would be derogatory.

# 2. Analysis of Scotland's future

## 2.1. Methods

As already announced in the introduction, I have applied a twofold method of analysis to my source. The first approach was a traditional qualitative text analysis, focusing on the main theme of historical references. My conception of historical references is quite broad and inclusive. I have primarily been looking out for any distinct mention of a historical event, time or figure, as well as any appeal to the shared past of the nation and the general notion of history and phenomenon rooted in the past. I have also paid attention to the definition of Scottishness in the document and of any element relating to the cultural aspect of national identity. The

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[182] Levinger & Lytle, 2011:177.
[183] Vangeli, 2011.

second approach was of a more quantitative nature and was made through a digital analysis of the same source. This method belongs to the field of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and is called automated semantic tagging, because it relies on a statistical research made by a software based on a pre-defined list of terms and elements connected to the specific notion under investigation — history and the past in my case. I used the program Wmatrix, developed and owned by the University of Lancaster, which itself relies on the semantic taggers USAS. The USAS taggers contains 21 discourse fields (each named by a letter), including one for 'Time' (T) *(see figures 3 to 5)*. The tags established for each category comes from an English semantic lexicon. The software generates the results in the form of a list of 'key semantic tags' (abnormally prominent notions in the source). It also gives an overview of the number of instances for each of the recurring terms for the type of discourse selected (Relative Query Term Relevance score) and has a concordance function which makes it possible to compare the use of the same term or notion based on its context of production. Examples of tables of concordances for 'history' have been reproduced in Annex 3.

USAS automated semantic tagging is an interesting approach because it enables to examine the grammatical tense employed dominantly in the source as well, and in a source of almost 700 pages like mine, this would have been utterly time-consuming. It also presents the advantage of having a wider and standardised set of terms to look for, which reduces the bias of manual coding. However, an automated tagset and a computerised analysis may lead to missing subtle distinctions in the use of history.  So in order to make my analysis as reliable as possible, I have based it on the confrontation of results produced by both approaches.

| A | B | C | E |
|---|---|---|---|
| General and abstract terms | The body and the individual | Arts and crafts | Emotional actions, states and processes |
| **F** Food and farming | **G** Government and the public domain | **H** Architecture, buildings, houses and the home | **I** Money and commerce |
| **K** Entertainment, sports and games | **L** Life and living things | **M** Movement, location, travel and transport | **N** Numbers and measurement |
| **O** Substance, materials, objects and equipment | **P** Education | **Q** Linguistic, actions, states and processes | **S** Social actions, states and processes |
| **T** Time | **W** The world and our environment | **X** Psychological actions, states and processes | **Y** Science and technology |
| **Z** Names and grammatical words | | | |

*Figure 3. The USAS tagset top-level domains. (Archer et al., 2004).*

| T TIME | T1 Time | T1.1 Time: General | T1.1.1 Time: Past | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | T1.1.2 Time: Present; simultaneous | T1.1.2- Time: Asynchronous |
| | | | T1.1.3 Time: Future | |
| | | T1.2 Time: Momentary | | |
| | | T1.3 Time: Period | T1.3+ Time period: long | |
| | | | T1.3- Time period: short | |
| | T2 Time: Beginning and ending | T2+ Time: Beginning | | |
| | | T2- Time: Ending | | |
| | T3 Time: Old, new and young; age | T3+ Time: Old; grown-up | | |
| | | T3- Time: New and young | | |
| | T4 Time: Early/Late | T4+ Time: Early | | |
| | | T4- Time: Late | | |

*Figure 4. The USAS tagger 'Time' and its sub-categories, (source: University of Lancaster,*

*http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/usas/semtags_subcategories.txt).*

| T1.1.1 Time: Past | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AD | backwardness | historically | pre-war | Saxon |
| ago | backwards | history | prehistoric | Saxon |
| already | Baroque | hitherto | prehistory | saxon |
| Ammonite | BC | immemorial | primaeval | saxons |
| anachronistic | bygone | istory | primeval | sometime |
| annal | cavalier | Jacobean | primordial | sometime |
| annals | caveman | mediaeval | quondam | Stalin |
| antediluvian | classicism | medieval | Raj | then |
| archaeological | Conquistadors | memorabilia | record | throw-back |
| atavistic | earlier | Mesolithic | records | throwback |
| Aztec | earlier | museum | regency | tradition |
| Aztecs | earliest | museum | regency | victorian |
| B.C. | early | museums | Regency | victorian |
| back | Edwardian | Napoleonic | regress | Victoriana |
| back-pedal | Edwardian | nostalgic | régression | Victoriana |
| back-pedalling | ex | once | renaissance | Victorians |
| back-timing | ex- | one-time | restoration | Viking |
| backcloth | foregone | originally | retro-active | viking |
| backdate | formerly | passed | retrospect | Vikings |
| backdated* | Georgian | past | retrospective | yesterday |
| backdated | heritage | past | retrospectively | yesterdays |
| background | historica | pedigree | Roman | yesteryear |
| backward | historical | period | royalist | |
| *Sometimes the same term appears several time because of different grammatical categories* | | | | |

*Figure 5. Example of terms associated with a sub-category, (source: University of Lancaster,*
*http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/usas/semtags_subcategories.txt).*

## 2.2. Lexical analysis

167 383 words of *Scotland's Future* have been automatically tagged by the USAS system and spread into 381 semantic categories. Based on the analysis tool Wmatrix, the most prominent topoi are the government (4 467 words), the future (3 468) and money and pay (2 319). Unsurprisingly, the topos of history does not appear as one of the prominent themes of the white-paper. Out of a total of 8 852 words tagged in the category 'Time', only 360 related to the past, whereas 947 related to the present, and the future reached an outstanding score of 3 468 words. Statistically, we can conclude that history is rarely invoked in the document (there are 0.21% of the words of the source relating to the past, against 2.07% for the future), but that there are still many occurrences of references to the past. For a more detailed presentation of the inquiries and results from Wmatrix, see annex 3.

The lexical analysis based on selected markers of the triadic structure (past-present-future) shows that quantitatively, the rhetoric is definitively turned towards the future *(see figure 6 and annex 4)*. Even the present occupies more room than the past. Allusions to the past represents only a fourth of all time-marked allusions. But the prominence of the future over the past in the discourse had been expected since the point of the studied document was to present a convincing case for an independent Scotland after the referendum. Furthermore, the document's title, *Scotland's Future*, as well as the first lines ("Scotland's referendum on 18 September 2014 is a choice between two futures") had already set the tone.

| | Terms used to refer to the past | | | … the present | | | … the future |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Past | History, historic, historically | Heritage | Present (adj.), at present, presently | Today | Now | |
| Number of occurrences | 23 | 89 | 44 | 68 | 31 | 102 | 241 |
| Total occurrences | 156 | | | 201 | | | 241 |
| Total in percent | 26% | | | 34% | | | 40% |

*Figure 6. Summary table regarding lexical occurrences referring directly to the past, present and future.*

However, there is still a significant number of references to the past and of Scotland's history and cultural heritage. Those references are not spread evenly thorough the document. For instance, many historical references are concentrated on the part of the manifesto written by Salmond himself, which does support what was evidenced in Chapter 3. Regarding historical events or figure, only one is mentioned: Robert the Bruce (p. 584), praised in the text for his role in laying the foundations of Scotland's constitutional journey to independence. Bannockburn is not mentioned. Surprisingly, Oliver Cromwell is the second historical figure named, in the same paragraph, regarding the commonwealth he founded within which Scotland was integrated for a brief period, marking a hiatus in his independence period preceding the Acts of Union. The parliamentary union of 1707 (not the crown union) is mentioned 16 times, albeit half occurs in the annex about Scotland's constitutional journey. In this part, the Jacobite rising of 1745 is also mentioned, as well as the Home Rule movement and the first world war, and all three events are said to have played a determinant role for the Scotland's present situation and path towards independence. Those events are used to set the present debate in a historical context, like the theory predicted, with the effects of granting a certain emotive power to the struggle for independence, but the fact that it is placed in an annex rather than in the core of the text attests of the deliberate will of the SNP not to link it directly and obviously to its

main argumentation for independence. By avoiding naming Bannockburn, Wallace and Arbroath, and even Burns, they take their distance with their more traditional references, and present a new, more neutral and thus palpable narrative to a broader audience.

The term 'past' appears 23 times, but often, it does not refer to more than four decades back in time. Although not mentioned often, the earlier past always bear a positive connotation, with one notable exception p. 221: "We will have the opportunity to design our overseas footprint based not on an imperial past or a desire for global power, but on what works for Scotland in the modern world." There the past is an example of what not to do. In this particular case, the past referred to is the imperial one, thus directly referring to the Union.

'History/historical/historically' appears 89 times, among which three times associated with the adjective 'proud', and three more with 'long'. History, except when used to describe the UK's debt, bears an overall positive meaning and is used to bolster the strength and resourcefulness of Scotland and its people. 'Scottish history' appears only once and 'history of Scotland' twice. The collocation 'our shared history' appears three times, but there are no mention of 'collective' or 'national history'. The notion of 'heritage' is often used as a synonym to collective history, but helps to better define the past as a cultural frame for the present, without opening up the identity question. The sentence "Our rich heritage gives Scotland its sense of place and underpins our understanding of our past, our present and our future" (p. 309) is a good example of this rhetorical technic.

'Heritage' appears 44 times in total, almost twice as much as the term 'past', and half as often as 'history/historic/historically'. 28 times, heritage is used loosely as a substitute too history and in association with Scottish inherited culture, and three more times specifically linked to the adjective 'Scottish'. This supports the trend identified by Nora, among others, about a shift from history to memory. 'Memory' however does not appear at all in the text.

The qualitative part of my analysis applied to the excerpts of text mentioning the past has allowed me to identify five main thematic employs of history. The first one concerns history in the making, with four instances, and insisting on the historical character of the referendum and the very special opportunity it represents to act now for what would become a milestone in future Scottish history. The second category regroups all positive employs of historical references, with nine instances, presenting history and tradition as a cultural resource, but also as an economical asset for the culture industry, as an example to follow for the future and as an example to support that Scotland succeeded in the past, and will again when

independent. The third type of employs use history to establish a continuity between the past and the future and appears on 10 instances. The fourth type consists of obvious link of history to national identity and cultural nationalism and contains example of insistence of the need to preserve and promote the inherited past (10 instances). The fifth and last one gather all depreciative and negative associations with history and counts 5 instances, and more than a dozen other instances where history is associated with the UK financial debt. For a more detailed accounts of the instances noted for each category, see annex 5.

## 2.3. Immediate observations and preliminary conclusions regarding historical references

References to the past are mostly used as a way to support further political and economic argument, by offering the reassurance of experience, tradition and practice. History is often used in constructions like "a long history of…" or "a proud history…" which appeals to the notion of history as tradition and emphasis the capacity and abilities of an independent Scotland. This type of references suggest that Scotland has already managed and succeeded in the concerned fields for some time, and would have no trouble continuing and eventually expanding it to other sectors. Continuity between the present and the independent future is extremely emphasised on almost every possible occasions and is often used to contrast with the implementation of a new system/institution meant to replace an existing one. Historical continuity is presented as a cultural referential that is simultaneously necessary for the consistency of the independence. The notion of continuity also promotes the image of a Scotland that has never ceased to be Scottish. It appeals to the particular Scottish identity, and thus supports independence without ever stating clearly that Scottish cultural nationalism counts among the reasons to support independence.

Continuity is advertised as opposed to rupture, in order to reassure the population and mitigate the effects of a disruption like independence, which is simultaneously emphasised as history in the making. It is quite interesting to note how the SNP alternates between points of view: there is a will to say that history is being made by independence, by taking an entirely new direction, breaking distinctly with the past, and yet there is a simultaneous attempt to insist on a smooth continuity between before and after independence. The SNP walks a median line, oscillating between rupture and continuity in its rhetoric, thus taking the safest bet on how to

speak to both sides of the debate: it suits those who want a break from the UK all the while reassuring those who fear the same break. This attitude is apparent with the opening for double citizenship (British and/or Scottish), page 497.

The UK is never antagonised and the past of Scotland within the UK is not ignored nor mitigated. The union is not explicitly described as out-dated (although the fact of always associating a date to the Union, as if there had been several, or calling it the "300-year-old Union" underlines its ancient character and could suggest out-datedness rather than praise its endurance). On several instances, British cultural identity is promoted and set on equal footing with Scottish identity. Other British nations and the UK in general are actually presented as the best allies and closest partners for an independent Scotland.

I find it fascinating to see what has been included and removed from the history annex: we have a history that goes back to the origins of the kingdom of Scotland, even if the "Constitutional Journey" of Scotland, as this annex is titled, should technically not start before the first attempts of Scotland to gain constitutional rights within the UK. We find without surprises all the main victories and milestone of the rise to power of the SNP, but also mentions of other movements supporting home rule in great details. Yet many important events have been left out. For instance, this annex states that Home Rule failed because of external circumstances, mostly the Great War, when in all truth, it was never largely supported and met opposition from within in Scotland. Page 585, Labour, the traditional opponent of the SNP in politics (and supporter of the 'No' side of the referendum), is directly accused of having "abandoned its support for Scottish Home Rule, although this remained an important issue in Scotland". In another paragraph, more parties supporting devolution are accused of having abandoned the cause, naming especially the Conservatives and how they campaigned for a 'No' vote in the referendum of 1997 while supporting the Scottish parliament once establish. History there is not truly rewritten but rather simplified to a point where certain important nuances are ignored, letting the reader believe of a far stronger and longer historical tradition supporting independence. It also reminds the reader of the position of the SNP in defending Scottish interests in front of the UK and its constant loyalty to the cause in comparison to other parties. The SNP and its own history are portrayed very positively: "In the 2007 Scottish general election, the SNP formed the single largest party ", "That Government restored free education for Scotland's students and introduced free prescription charges and the council tax freeze.", "In the 2011 general election the SNP Government was returned with an absolute majority, a rare achievement in a proportional voting system.", (p. 587). Under the cover of

history, it becomes then possible for the SNP to spread a narrative that would be otherwise not consistent with its ideology and practice. Whereas the independence is defended by the right to self-rule based on the promise of better economic success, this historical account legitimates independence by granting it a longer and stronger support tradition.

There are few but definitive instances where history and the shared past are said to be prominent markers of Scottish identity. However, when references to the past are used to support cultural arguments, they are distinctly made independently of the political ones. On the other hand, the historic environment of Scotland and its cultural and heritage industry are presented in connection with economic arguments, rather than linked to cultural identity. Indeed, the Scottish cultural and historical heritage is presented as an economic asset, able to attract more visitors and make profits.

# 3. Interpreting the results *Scotland's future'* analysis in regard to the theory of nationalist discourse and rhetoric

The first conclusion that can be drawn from the lack of references to the past and the preponderance of the future in the SNP's argumentation for Scottish independence is that Scotland does not demand independence "in order to defend a threatened ancestral culture" but instead choses independence as "the most effective way to promote the political agenda of the left in a neoliberal era".[184] Thorough the course of the last decades, the need for emancipation from the UK has increased each time London took a new political direction, mostly neoliberal restructuring, that Scotland's nationalists viewed as a threat to the interest of the Scottish nation. The economic aspect of Scottish independence has definitively taken precedence, both in political discourse, in the media and among the voters, over the identity question, turning the question "Should Scotland be independent" to "would an independent Scotland be an economically viable nation-state?". *The Telegraph* reported 20 interviews from 'yes' and 'no' voters from all over Scotland and from different socio-economic backgrounds a week after the vote, and only three of them mentioned that their vote had been motivated by the cultural, historical and identity aspect of Scottish nationalism, whereas seven evoked political reasons,

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[184] Jackson, 2014:50.

and ten economic ones.[185] So no matter the side the voters chose, this very limited sample of interviews shows that the past played very little role in the referendum outcome.

In the main, the analysis' results show both instances of divergence and compliance with the theoretical framework established, the trends identified through SNP's practice and the assumptions made beforehand.

## 3.1. The triadic structure of Scotland's Future and the prominence of the future

The overall discourse is very much articulated along a 'past-present-future' structure and seems to comply with Levinger and Lytle's triadic structure theory.[186] The past mentioned is on some occasions used as a model for the future, and an a few others used as a reminder of Scotland's greatness. It is often used to suggest that because of this past, Scotland will do good in the future, but it is not said to be a past to seek to revive in the future. The present is not described explicitly as decaying. This would be a huge mistake for the SNP since it has been in charge of the government in the seven years prior to the referendum, and criticising the present openly would result in accusing themselves of not having done well-enough, and thus not be a convincing model for governing an independent Scotland. Nevertheless, there is a 'prescription' made by the SNP regarding what the nation ought to do and how they should act to achieve the promise of a better future. History references are used to remind the nation about what it stands for and of this future being its common destiny, waiting to be fulfilled. The utopian future is of course an independent future, but not only. The white-paper provides a very detailed overview of this future, and this future is often portrayed as a continuation with elements from the past, especially regarding Scottish structures that are already independent from the UK (schools and university, international relations, judiciary system, etc.). Through the apparent compliance to the triadic structure theory, the SNP's discourse appears to present typical characteristics of nationalist political discourse and rhetoric. The past may be strongly outweighed by the present and the future, yet it is still present and used as a rhetorical device to convince voters of the legitimacy, soundness and merits of the independence project and the SNP's argumentation.

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[185] Sawer, 2014.
[186] Levinger & Lytle, 2001.

Rhetorical appeals to the past are far less important than in individual speeches of SNP's members, and even Salmond in his introduction to the white-paper has managed not to quote Burns and keep his history plea sober and limited. Despite the intent of the party to gather Burns to their cause during the campaign, there is not even a short inspirational quotation on an introductory blank page. The trend of being resolutely turned towards the future persists. However, the past is more present than what has been observed by Leith and myself in the manifestos from 1970 to the last elections before the referendum in 2011.

## 3.2. A limited and hesitant resort to an ambiguous past

The dominance of the future has to be replaced in the specific position of the SNP as more than a party for independence, as a true political party. More generally, the SNP's discursive priority, following its accession to government, has been to construct its own nationalist narrative in order to adapt its policy agenda to its new status, all the while maintaining an agenda for independence. The independence agenda implies a huge disruption with the present situation, and its discourse is now particularly relevant and scrutinised by the population. The narrative defined must therefore simultaneously present the government as competent in the present without shutting down the mobilisation for the utopian future they wish to achieve.[187] Because of the democratic context, forming a majority government is not enough for the SNP to declare secession. Independence needing to be achieved through a popular vote first, the SNP finds itself in the peculiar situation of having to appeal to voters who do not necessarily support the nationalist cause. And this transpires greatly in its rhetorical strategy through the preponderance of the future, but yet an attention to the past more important than usually. The SNP seems to be holding to some vestigial historical parallels and to alternate between using history as a positive force and as a negative one to mobilise to its cause.

Making general observations of the overall discourse of the SNP during the referendum campaign, Whatley comes to the following conclusion regarding historical references, with which I concur in light of my own analysis of *Scotland's Future*:

> "Subsequent to the launch of the present referendum process there has been surprisingly little
> appeal to history. No longer are nationalist politicians making the claim that Scotland was
> bullied into union with England in 1707. The allegation that the Scots had been 'bought and

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[187] Arnott & Ozga, 2010a:338.

sold for English gold' is still heard, but more often behind closed doors. Neither is the independence vote in September being presented as the opportunity for Scots to regain their country's long-lost freedom after three centuries of English hegemony."[188]

But not only are references to the past limited in *Scotland's Future*, they are also very vague, with very few concrete examples regarding specific events or figures. References to the past are dominated by the words 'history', 'historical' and 'historically', employed to imply either continuity or rupture. Terms like historical and historically are associated with other terms or phrases where they only seem to mean 'old' or 'ancient'. They are very ambiguous for they do not refer to a specific point in time. This ambiguity is further enhanced by the fact that in some cases, it is possible to date a notion qualified as 'historical' to either as pre-dating the Union, or to the 1980's.

## 3.3. From history to heritage, or how the SNP coaxes referendum voters

On several occasions, the terms '(sense of) past' and 'history' appear to have been replaced by 'heritage'. Heritage implies a form of history or past anchored in the present and relevant for the future. The transformation of past events into a modern day's heritage offers the SNP a strategic rhetorical approach to history that allows them to include people who do not necessarily feel in touch with the shared past of native Scots. It allows the party to present the shared past of the Scots as a strength to the future independent nation, but not as a basis to build a strong enough national sentiment upon to define individuals of Scottish descent only as today's Scottish citizenry concerned by the nationalist project. Heritage does indeed not have the same reach as history in nation-building. And it appears that the SNP intends to implement a program of nation-building through existing heritage sites and national collections and future ones. Additionally, the insistence on the fact that Scottish history is being made 'now', at the moment of the referendum, the party creates a *lieux de mémoire* for all Scottish residents, it attempts to provide them with a collective, unifying memory in which they have all a role to play.

Only to some extent, the language of *Scotland's Future* follows the trend revealed by Leith in the SNP manifestos from 1970 to 2005, for it partially attempts to separate the mention

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[188] Whatley, 2014:3.

of the past from any sense of Scottishness or definition of cultural identity.[189] But it also gives more attention to the safeguarding of the Scottish heritage and its potential use as a cultural strength and an economic asset, in comparison with the content of the previous manifestos. Far from being surprising, I understand this deviation from the trend primed since the 1970's as an attempt of the SNP to find the perfect rhetorical balance that will allow them to mobilise the greatest support. By stretching too much on the traditional boundaries of national identity, the party risks losing the electoral support of traditional voters favourable to Scottish independence. But satisfying those voters alone is not enough to guarantee enough support to achieve anything. Therefore, the SNP has decided in *Scotland's Future* to tune down the identity discourse while still maintaining some rather loose elements of it. This way, less recalcitrant supporters and people whore are not 'ethnic Scots' would not be afraid by a too nationalist discourse and would offer their vote in favour of independence.

## 3.4. A multilevel interpretation of nationalism

Hobsbawn claims that governments usually perceive nationalism differently than members of the civil society, and that masses stress more often than politicians socio-cultural features through which they identify as Scottish.[190] To some extent, I think that because of its intent to appeal to the masses more than ever during the referendum campaign, the SNP has altered its discourse and broken with its manifesto tradition of avoiding all references to the past to include only a few, which in the end gives the discourse the conflicted character discussed earlier. Rhetorical employs of history in *Scotland's Future* have somehow enabled the SNP to reconcile its own inclusive, territorial conception of Scottishness with the one of the voters. Indeed, before the referendum, the SNP's definition of Scottishness diverged from others, found not only among the population, but also among scholars and the media.

Through about 60 interviews of Scottish party representatives analysed qualitatively, and survey data collected among the population, Murray and Soule identify a very different conceptualisation of the Scottish nation between both samples. They remark that the civic elements of Scottish nationalism are of particular importance for the elite's construction of the Scottish nation, but not as much for the citizenry who is more concerned of defining nationalism/their Scottish identity in terms of ethnic elements (birth, descent, common culture,

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[189] Leith, 2008.
[190] Hobsbawn, 1990.

even physical aspect); often, in the population's discourse, the elements of civic Scottish nationalism are actually absent.[191] So for politicians, emphasis is made on the civic aspect of the nationalist movement and project, whereas the population holds on to a more traditional conceptualisation of nationalism. In terms of resort to historical references and arguments, this results in political elites deliberately avoiding them as much as necessary to guarantee the inclusiveness of their vision of the nation and to support the claim that anyone residing within Scottish borders is Scottish. Whereas for the rest of the members of the nation, the past is still important as a factor of their Scottish identity, but is also an important reminder of a time when Scotland was independent and is remembered to have, if not always prospered, at least managed well enough without the UK. This aspect of Scottish nationalism contradicts Smith consideration of reminding the members of the nation of their glorious past as the responsibility of the nation[192] since in the case of Scotland, it is in fact the people who like to remind themselves of their glorious past, rather than the politicians do.

There is also a clear distinction between the place of history in the scholarly analysis of the independence question in Scotland compared with political discourse. Scholars of nationalism often turn to the past to identify causes and processes of evolution able to explain the present situation, and naturally, their analysis of today's situation bears many marks of this attitude which gives a maybe far too disproportionate expectation of weight to the past in contemporary nationalist rhetoric. Most studies about Scottish independence published around the time of the referendum focused on the history of the Union and unionism ideology, whereas those elements are kept quiet in the political speech. This attests of the two levels at which Scottish nationalism operates: on one hand we have the scholarly analysis of Scottish nationalism that tries to tie it to the general theories of emergence of political nationalism (like Hroch three phase model), and on the other hand, we have the political argument that does not follow any known model of development.

The Scottish press is known for having a general unionist bias and is generally very critical of the SNP.[193] So maybe this could explain why the media covering the campaign of the independence referendum adopted a definition of the Scottish nation different from the inclusive one of the SNP. Or maybe the media only reflected the general definition adopted by its audience. Regardless of the reason, I have noticed that historical arguments to independence

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[191] Murray & Soule, 2012:99, 137.
[192] Smith, 1994:18.
[193] McGarvey & Cairney, 2008:41-42.

where more present in the press than they were in political discourse. When the SNP endeavoured to not link the anniversary of Bannockburn to the referendum, the press did.[194] Interviews of voters of both side tended to often support or oppose independence by mentioning historical arguments. The 'No' side insisted that the Union had worked for 300 hundred years, and so no reason to change things. The 'Yes' supporters saw Scotland as the historical land of the Scots and as such, as a land that ought to form its own state. They also used the 300 hundred year-old Union argument to claim that it was an out-dated model.[195]

## 3.5. The discursive 'other'

The trend regarding the reduction of anti-English sentiment identified in previous manifestos continues here. Attacks are very specifically targeted, mostly against the Labour party. The English and the British are the main 'other' identified in the text, but attacks against them are limited to the scope of politics. The animosity is rather directed to Westminster by defining the political party in power as the enemy, the 'other', rather than the British system itself. Culturally, the English are actually portrayed positively, as historical friends and neighbours. Britain is not perceived as a hindrance to Scottish cultural emancipation. Usually, the SNP has been strongly critical over the New Labour party strategy to resuscitate British national identity to fight anti-Unionism sentiments.[196] But on the contrary, in *Scotland's Future*, British history and the notion of the shared past of Scotland within the UK are described as a strength and as something that independence would not take away (p. 490, 497 and 500). British identity is not seen as competing, but as a complement to the Scottish one. By emphasising the historical bounds between Scottishness and Britishness, the SNP assures voters that an independent Scotland would not mean that they have to choose between two identities. It also proves that there is a clear distinction between political and cultural nationalism, and that both can work independently.

The notion of all residents of Scotland being Scottish is not as stressed as in previous manifestos, but it is still this definition that holds regarding who would be Scottish in case of independence. The SNP thus maintained his very civic and inclusive view, despite more mentions than ever of the role of cultural heritage in shaping national identity (p. ix, 215 and

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[194] Johnson, 2013 ; Johnson, 2014.
[195] Swanson, 2014.
[196] Mycock, 2012:53.

216). History and cultural heritage are presented as setting the Scottish nation apart from the rest of the UK and are used to steer nationalist pride among the voters. Nonetheless, there is not insistence on a shared past as a criteria of belonging to the nation. The SNP does not consider non-national people living within its borders as 'others'. On the contrary, the white-paper defends immigration and multiculturalism as a Scottish tradition, and most of all, a strength. This view is not new and is intrinsically linked to previous elocutions. Salmond supports indeed that "different traditions do not undermine [Scottish] culture; they enhance it" and that unlike other UK parties, his does not "see diversity as a threat".[197] The SNP tries to capitalise on multiculturalism and immigration to gather more support, and it has proven a successful strategy, for groups like the 'Asian Scots for Independence' and 'New Scots for Independence' have emerged.[198]

But the SNP also presents a plan in its white-paper to assimilate non-Scots by supporting the development and dissemination of Scottish identity. It suggests to actively support Gaelic culture and language, and has a whole plan for promoting Scottish history and culture through museum institutions and "to ensure that the people of Scotland gain the full benefit from our rich historic environment" (p. 314).

The SNP's ideology and its position on the centre-left in the traditional scope of British politics distinguish it from most other contemporary Western European nationalist parties. This position defines its conception of the nation and who belongs to it, which in turn influences the use of traditional nationalist strategies of mobilisation based on cultural identity. In definitive, because of its inclusive conceptualisation of Scottishness, the SNP has to constantly watch carefully its appeals to shared past and history.

## 3.6. A strategic reluctance to references to the past to promote inclusion

Mycock claims that "the SNP deploys a form of 'black sheep nationalism' that seeks to denigrate rival constructions of Scottish national identity whilst overlooking limitations in their own understanding of the Scottish nation and nationalism."[199] My own analysis concludes

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[197] SNP, 2006c.
[198] Mycock, 2012:57.
[199] Mycock, 2012:54.

similarly. I notice that the SNP voluntarily try to cut itself from a definition of a Scottish identity based on common experiences achieved through cultural and historical heritage in the first place, to adopt a more civic, modern, inclusive definition of Scottishness based on the attachment to the territory. However, in *Scotland's Future* too, the SNP overlook the limitation of its own understanding. Firstly, appeals to the common past are not entirely banned. Secondly, the preservation of the Scottish cultural heritage and historical landmarks, and the celebration of Scottish national *lieux de mémoire* occupies an important place. This attitude is contradictory at best, and is the reason why I concur with Mycock's statement. Moreover, there is a startling contrast between the detachment of the SNP with the shared past and history in its previous manifestos, Salmond's habit of using historical references in his elocutions, the SNP's practice and political reforms to enforce the dissemination of Scottish history and the ideology expressed in *Scotland's Future*. This lead me to perceive *Scotland's Future* as a rhetorical act aiming to mobilise as many voters as possible by satisfying simultaneously both those already convinced by the nationalist project and those still sceptical. My analysis of the place of history in the independence discourse of the SNP challenges this notion of civic nationalism. The ambiguity created by different attitudes towards history in previous discourses and practices reveals itself in on unique discursive place for the first time in *Scotland's Future*. It makes me wonder if what the SNP actually means when it says that anybody living in Scotland is Scottish, is not in reality that anybody residing in Scotland is entitled to become Scottish, and to do so must adopt Scottish culture and learn about the history of the nation.

After evidencing this conflicting situation, I have come to formulate the hypothesis that the SNP follows two distinct discursive strategies based on cultural identity that form a more holistic plan. This plan aims of course to achieve independence and is twofold: while there is a plan to achieve independence on the short term through a vote by the majority of the population, there is a sort of contingency, long-term strategy consisting in shaping the minds of the future voters. The short-term one aims to mobilise the majority of the population to the nationalist project by insisting on a favourable future for the nation, whereas the long-term one focuses on the past. The voters are encouraged to support independence through a very inclusive discourse that has abandoned the idea of Scottishness in favour of the idea of Scotland. But in the meantime, the youth are taught at school about Scottish history and culture, and Scottishness. The short-term strategy has failed so far, with the victory of the 'No' on the 2014 referendum, but the SNP has not yet given up and is already planning for a new referendum, probably in 2019. In 2014, already it had appeared that the 'yes' was dominant

among the youngest voters; based on a survey conducted immediately after the referendum, 71% of the 16-17 year-olds voted for independence, and 29% of them against, whereas the tendency was opposite among eldest voters (age 65+).[200] A similar phenomenon has been observed in the questions about identity in the 2011 census, with an equally high percentage of 71% among the 10-14 year olds who consider to be Scottish only and not British (against the national average of 62%), whereas the highest percentage of people considering themselves both Scottish *and* British was found among the eldest.[201] Could this be seen as a sign of a successful long-term strategy introduced through new history curriculum and heritage sites? In 2019, even more cohorts of former pupils trained according to the SNP's history curriculum reform will participate in the vote, and this could be determinant. On a final note, I would like to add that already, the inclusive strategy of the SNP seem to work:

> "34% of all minority ethnic groups felt they had some Scottish identity either on its own or in combination with another identity. The figure ranged from 60% for people from a mixed background and 50% for those from a Pakistani ethnic group, to 21% for those from an African ethnic group. This compared to 83% for all people in Scotland."[202]

## 3.7. A Scottish exception?

The previous points show that to a certain degree, the references to the past in *Scotland' Future* comply with the main aspect of the theory in their qualitative use, but that they also tend to present deviances and rupture, especially based on the quantitative use of such references. By not meeting some of the assumptions made based on this framework, the SNP's discourse and rhetoric in *Scotland's Future* can present a case supporting exceptionalism of Scottish nationalism already evidenced by other scholars. I think that instead of talking about 'Scottish exceptionalism', it would be more accurate, at least in what regards the rhetorical use of history in the nationalist political discourse, to talk about 'Scottish particularism'. It is true that Scottish nationalism does not fit all the traditional theory, but when replaced in an explanatory context, it all seems to make sense again, transforming what could be interpreted as in rupture with the theory into a simple deviance.

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[200] Lord Ashcroft Polls, 2014:3.
[201] Scotland's Census (website).
[202] Scotland's Census (website).

Historian of modern Britain Ben Jackson, for instance, draws from the account of British history of Anderson and Nairn to explain why Scottish nationalism is an exception.[203] Anderson and Nairn find in the industrial, economic, social and political development of nineteenth century England a situation favourable to the development of imperialism, and that it is this imperialism that allowed the British nations to benefit of a somewhat unique status of autonomy where no dominant culture was imposed over them. In the case of Scotland, they claim that the Union in imperial times was a highly satisfying arrangements both for England, Scotland and the Empire as a whole, and that it started only to be doubted as an optimal situation when "British imperialism was on its last leg" after the second world war.[204] Jackson states that the Anderson and Nairn historical analysis has remained the basis that informs Scottish nationalist discourse today, and that Scottish nationalists apply a particular care to establish a clear distinction between the Scots and the English, mostly by presenting Britain as an outdated model whose imperialist state has hampered Scotland. Although things have greatly changed since Anderson and Nairn's analysis, dating back to the 1960s and 1970s, "Scottish statehood is not so much about the expression of a national identity as an instrumental device for the realisation of a more egalitarian society."[205] This view, although maybe a bit reductionist, cast a new light on the exception that Scottish nationalism is. It suggests that Scottish independence is only a secondary factor, and that the SNP is a nationalist party in name only, capitalising on the nationalist mobilisation to create a concurrent party able to win over Labour voters. In that case, it should use rhetoric similar to the Labour narrative rather than traditional nationalistic ones. On the other side, the similarities in ideology between Labour and nationalist are quite complex and manifold. The Labour party was indeed the one who supported home rule for Scotland and provided many prominent politicians who later took to the SNP, such as Jim Sillars. The struggles against deindustrialisation in the 1970s and 1980s become a national one for Scotland who saw more and more of its staple activities closing (shipbuilding, coal mining, steel production and car manufacturing). Naturally, many ideas from Labour politics wear integrated to the Scottish nationalist thinking. And this situation ultimately led to the close connection between the working-class and the quest for home rule.[206]

The arguments put forward by Jackson, Nairn and Anderson and those supporting the thesis of Scottish exceptionalism transpire in the discourse of *Scotland's future*, which is utterly

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[203] Jackson, 2014.
[204] Jackson, 2014:51.
[205] Jackson, 2014:51-52.
[206] Jackson, 2014:53.

concerned by political independence and economic aspects of the question. Discursively, I think that Scottish nationalism is as much an exception as one is willing to see. The (glorious) past may not be so explicitly present in today's discourse, but it is indubitably this myth that has made it possible for Scottish identity to preserve itself through time, and to the idea of independence to endure, albeit it is not what drives independence today. Through time, the political agenda, and thus rhetoric of the SNP has evolved towards something independent of traditional models, focusing almost exclusively on a social and economic utopian future. Yet, the rhetorical structure employed by the SNP follows nationalist models, with the dichotomy 'negative present under British rule' versus 'utopian independent future', and it applies traditional strategies of nationalism by still defining an 'other' opposed to Scotland, although the animosity is more limited. Scottish nationalist have failed to update, voluntarily or not, the portrayal of British politics, which have lately gone through great lengths to better represent and integrate Scotland in Westminster.

The reference to the past as an argument in favour of independence is not a prerequisite of the discourse, but rather a rhetorical bonus to mobilise. In some cases, its use can have the opposite effect and demobilise some voters, who actually fear or feel threaten by cultural nationalism. Therefore, the absence of clear historical references does not necessarily mean a full divergence from the theory.

## Conclusion chapter 4

The theory reviewed in previous chapters and the overview of the SNP's attitudes towards historical references and the cultural definition of Scottishness have offered me a framework through which to interpret the immediate results of my analysis of the white-paper *Scotland's Future*. It appears that the discourse deployed through the rhetoric of *Scotland's Future* is to some extent conform with the theory. The history rationale is employed to unify the nation and appeals to its cultural identity, to establish a sense of continuity and to determine the destiny of the group. There is still a strong 'past-present-future' structure in the document, with an important amount of temporal markers. However, the amounts of references to the past is not as important as the theory would have suggested, albeit more prominent than in previous SNP's manifestos. Those already few instances of references to the past is further undermined by the outstanding weight of the future in the text. Also, the notion of past remains vague and ambiguous, with few concrete references to figures, events or even date, and there is a

contradictory use sometime of how they are deployed and to what end. This attests of the contentious attitude of the party regarding history and can be partly explained by the different conception of the nation and who belongs to it found among politicians and in the masses. Masses hold on to a definition closer to the theory, granting some importance to cultural identity, heritage and the shared past, whereas the SNP wants to promote a very civic and inclusive definition of Scottishness. The oscillation between those two conceptions in the document, along other incoherencies regarding the attitude towards history leads me to believe that through this document, the SNP does not know where it stands and is trying to strike a balance that will help it appeal to the greatest number of voters from all backgrounds and satisfy everybody's reason to support the independence. Finally, where some choose to see Scottish nationalism as a form of exceptionalism, I disagree and suggest to speak instead of particularism, for I believe that there is a rational reason as to why Scotland deviates from the theory which can be explained by paying more attention to the contemporary context.

# Chapter 5

# Concluding thoughts: the influence of the present-day context

The confrontation of the results of my analysis of *Scotland's Future* to the framework built on the existing theory and the empirical observations of previous SNP's practice and attitudes has produced some conclusions and interpretations regarding the use of rhetorical appeals to the past that I would like now to re-contextualise in a wider context. First, I will consider how the present times can challenge the importance of history and the past for nationalist discourse, then I will focus on how the notion of sovereignty is challenged today and how it may affect Scottish nationalism and the discursive practice of the SNP, and finally, I will broach the question of the future for the history rationale in post-nationalist political discourse.

# 1. History and nationalist discourse in (post)modern time

## 1.1. Less space available for historical references in politics

As things are today, Scotland's cultural identity is not threatened, and if anything, it is protected by current policies and British support schemes granted to museums and heritage institutions. Westminster has allowed Scotland to retain its markers of identity, and most of them have actually emerged after the Union. So Scottish nationalist claim for independence is actually hard to defend from a cultural perspective today,[207] and it may explain the reluctance of the SNP to emphasise too much on cultural aspect of nationalism, including the national past. This can also explain why support for independence varies so greatly, and even more so why, in order to mobilise for independence, the SNP has had to resort to other discursive strategies focusing on the financial and economic aspects. In definitive, Scottish nationalism has nothing to do with traditional national self-determination. In other words, the appeal of Scottish nationalism, as many nationalisms today, is the opposite of the nationalism that seeks to bond together people of common ethnicity, religion, culture, language and historical past.[208]

With the professionalisation of the historical professions appeared a new method inspired by a more scientific and objective approach relying on thorough investigation and critical thinking towards the source material. In Leopold von Ranke's own words, history should portray the past *wie es eigrntlich gewesen* ('as it actually was'). This new method and concern for historical accuracy gave written history a more prestigious and factually reliable status. History as a professional discipline thus became legitimate enough to be linked to

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[207] Mohan, 1999:161.
[208] Hobsbawn, 1990:171.

political and mostly nationalist discourses from the nineteenth century onwards, which saw several new states emerge. But today, history has become too much of a science to be crafted into new narratives to promote national cohesion. Furthermore, other competing point of view and national histories are also available, and if politicians are caught obviously distorting facts or presenting facts in a way that make the masses doubt them, they loss all credibility. In that sense, resort to history becomes more and more risky in today's society. The right of the public to reliable, impartial information and the responsibility of the government in providing such information,[209] doubled with the existence of written or other type of stored records challenges the opportunity for creating subjective historical narratives and nationalist myths. Because of the higher political literacy of the population, history always takes precedence over myth in modern societies. It becomes harder to mythicize history, invent traditions, or even to simply reinterpret certain elements or give them new meanings. The space for history in the nationalist political discourse has become significantly narrower and considerably more risky.

Quentin Skinner and his colleagues from the so-called Cambridge school of intellectual history have urged historians to situate historical events in their context of production and reception, because those episodes do not hold the same meaning anymore when they are reproduced, for example in political discourse.[210] Even events entirely set in the past with no disputable factuality can assume an underlying meaning in the present and become subject to the wrong type of interpretation.[211] Thus, history can only be used to some limited extent and with great caution. Technically, references to the past and national history still holds the capacity to unify, give a sense of continuity, a sense of common destiny and an emotional power. But politicians have to be very careful now, because in multicultural society, shared history could become a discursive factor of exclusion for some aspiring members of the nation, because they could also lose supporters by giving the impression of focusing on the past instead of the future and giving too much attention to elements that are not held in high regards anymore. There is also a risk of using the past in the present "for there are always multidirectional interactions that produce the meanings that emerge, or impede the ones that fail to emerge, from an event or episode."[212] So if the population understand the reference differently than intended and consider that politicians have misused historical facts, it could reflect poorly on their discourse and overall political agenda. For instance, in the context of the

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[209] Ellul, 1952.
[210] Skinner, 1988.
[211] Jay, 2011:559.
[212] Jay, 2011 :562.

rise of far-right populist parties in Europe who are considered as nationalist, could Scottish people see a establish a connection between them and the SNP, if the SNP pays to much attention to the history of the nation?

## *1.2. The production of national history in the contemporary context*

We have previously established that the salience of national history to nationalism is to help provide individuals with a powerful sense of identity in the present. This sense of cultural identity came (and can still come) to be very useful politically in binding populations to their states. National history arises as a response to the need for new forms of identity in a changing world, and then became politically useful. The emergence of national history was also a way for nationalist elites to construct an adaptive narrative for the nation in order to support their project and mobilise massively around it.

History emerged as an academic discipline in beginning of the nineteenth century, with the creation of university chairs in history, the emergence of historical societies to collect and disseminate historical documents and the increasing publication of historical professional journals.[213] However, historians then often confined themselves to research on their own countries or nations, and their work rapidly became undeniably connected to the political sphere. Historians of that time were very often also involved in politics, and they used their aura of scientific authority to defend the interests of the nation. Their works presented some subjective idealisation and consisted more often in bringing complying evidence to support a preconception rather than objectively analysing a source. So historians acquired the power to "to provide a historical basis for the *claims* to nationhood and political independence of states that did not yet existed,"[214] also by writing eulogistic national histories, an approach later criticised. In the twentieth century, there was a growing concern for objectivity with historians such as those from the French Annales school's Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch. The focus shifted on mentality, local or supranational history rather than grand narratives and teleological national histories. After the Second World War, the great Western nations remained stable and remembered the effects of nationalism as devastating. Therefore, a shift happened in European historiography, resulting in a pluralisation of historical discourses and the abandon of traditional national narratives influenced by politics. In the same period however, "minority

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[213] Lawrence, 2013:716.
[214] Lawrence, 2013:17.

nationalism in Europe, such as those of Scotland (…), sought (…) to construct their own national pasts as part of a political challenge to the dominant national narratives of Britain".[215] After important success in the past, national histories have lost their power today because they drew from popular imagery surviving from pre-national eras.[216] Most of the prominent ingredients of national histories went back to medieval and early modern times, and today this repertoire appeared quite dry and no other, recent one constitutes a decent substitute. Producing new national histories is not interesting anymore, and this general state of desuetude reflects on the other discourses, including political ones, with a loss in interest for historical narratives and references even among nationalists.

But for Charles Maier, nationalism and national histories were only a phase discontinuing supranational history writing. He argues that the period c.1860-c.1980 was one marked by the principle of territoriality and bordered political space.[217] He joins the ideas of Stuart Woolf who says that it is possible that the tradition of 'supra national' history writing and conceptualisation was only intermittently interrupted by the era of the nation state.[218] From this perspective, we can wonder if the lack of historical references in Scottish nationalist political discourse could be linked to the fact that Scotland, despite aspiring to achieving independence and forming a nation-state, has already evolved beyond from this nation-state phase. If it is the case, then it also explains why the Scottish nationalist claim to independence appears so detached from identity in general.

The absence of national histories appear as a distinctive phenomenon of our time for a multitude of factors already mentioned. In view of this trend, it is particularly reconsider the somewhat faulty account of Scotland's constitutional journey to independence in the historical annex of *Scotland's Future*, the SNP avoids providing the Scottish nation with its own national history narrative. As seen in the discourse of Scottish heritage sites, the SNP seems to be willing, in some cases, to take the risk associated with reinterpreting history and presented it from a biased point of view, from a point of view serving the nationalist cause for independence.

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[215] Lawrence, 2013:721.
[216] Berger, 2007:9, 31.
[217] Maier, 2000:823.
[218] Woolf, 2003:323.

## 2. Post sovereign nationalism and the SNP's internationalist approach of nationalism

Nationalisms, nations and the nation-state are no longer "a major vector of historical development" today, they are no longer at the centre of everything political as they used to be.[219] More and more of contemporary projects, may they be economic, political or cultural, do not see the nation as a natural organising principle. The old view of seeing the world only in terms of rivalling nation-states has become obsolete in the new world order. Unlike in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, nationalist movements are not required anymore for political emancipation. Nationalism only, and independence, is not enough anymore to build a political program on. So another dimension that I think important to mention in my analysis supporting the strategic omission of historical references in specific types of SNP discourse is the internationalist nationalist approach of the SNP.

Without ever talking directly of a 'post-sovereign state' or 'post-nationalism' in the white-paper or during the referendum campaign, the SNP supports the idea of not-so-strictly independent Scotland. They take great emphasis in guaranteeing that borders will remain open and that transit between English and Scottish borders would not be a problem for people living in one country and working in the other side or with attaches on both sides of the borders, suggesting a model similar to the arrangement in place between Northern Ireland and Ireland. Also, they wish that many institutions and services, such as the monarchy itself, but also the Ordnance Survey or the Civil Aviation Authority, will continue to be shared with the rest of the UK. As far as the currency debate has gone, the pound shall be retained for at least a while, thus adding the Bank of England to the list of shared institutions. The government even suggested delivering national passports to all residents from the day of independence, while also offering people to preserve their British passports, allowing dual citizenship.[220] The membership application of Scotland to NATO and the EU is taken as a given in case of independence. This vision of "Scottish autonomy situates the quest for Scottish statehood in a more general reinterpretation of ideas about national sovereignty in the wake of European integration and growing global economic interdependence".[221]

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[219] Hobsbawn, 1990:163.
[220] Mycock, 2012:59.
[221] Jackson, 2014:54.

There is one prominent figure in the SNP that rather describes himself as a 'post-nationalist' rather than a nationalist: Alex Salmond.[222] (Although it is possible that he only meant it as a tactical move to detach himself even further from the nationalist stigma associated with his party in order to give it more credibility as a true, traditional and viable political party). Despite Salmond being the only one openly claiming to belong to something more than traditional nationalism, it emerges from the discourse and the vision of the SNP for the future of Scotland that the party refuses to limit itself to a strict version of national self-determination and seeks instead a compromise that would play out best for the interests of the nation in the end. Thus, we learn from the SNP's discourse that Scottish nationalism, albeit still requesting independence, intends to do so in a rather progressive and modern fashion. This strategy can be interpreted as a strategy to appease voters, suggesting that the journey to full independence will be incremental rather than radical. For Jackson, this aspect of Scottish nationalism accounts for an attempt of the SNP to reach a perfect yet delicate balance between supporting that Scotland requires independence to prosper better and reassuring sceptics that in the end, a lot will remain the same.[223] In regard to this conceptualisation of nationalism applied to Scotland, it is natural to find that the rhetoric of the SNP does not follow the traditional theory about nationalist rhetoric. Some elements remain partially maintained, but in general, there are great divergences that account for the gap between what strategies should be followed in speech by SNP politicians and is actually used in practice. I think that the absence of a proper historical argumentation for the case of a second age of independence for the Scottish nation illustrates very distinctly those divergences and accounts clearly for the exception of the Scottish model of political nationalism. Now, the question remaining is more if Scottish political nationalism is a true exception to nationalist theory, or if Scotland, in reality, offers an example of post-nationalism, where the form taken by its political nationalism is nothing more than the first case of a new phase for nationalism and self-determination, marked by a growing context of international institutionalisation, a strong democratic environment and a strong economic and social international interdependence.

Thus, we can ask ourselves if nationalism is really a liberating process, and if secession is necessary to obtain sovereignty in the present context. It seems a bit paradoxical that, in a context such as the one of the European Union and the development of supranational institutions, emerging as a nation can only be done if granted sovereign autonomy through

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[222] Quoted in Torrance, 2011:244.
[223] Jackson, 2014:55.

secession. Nationalists appear to find it reassuring and a favourable context to become autonomous within a supranational institution based on laws, democratic procedures and defined norms such as the European Union. European integration was a broadly discussed topic in the independence referendum debate, and the SNP is definitively pro-European. Furthermore, the SNP itself tends to detach national identity from political independence, and thus state sovereignty. Somehow, through this notion it seems to already be admitting to the anachronism that is the creation of a Gellnerian nation-state, based on a nineteenth century model, today. It seems that "current Scottish political discourse has incorporated the reconceptualization of sovereignty while it remains essentially nationalist, thus confirming that sovereignty and nationalism are two separate concepts".[224] Sovereignty are two different forms of political practice, but in today's globalised and post-sovereign context, they tend to merge together, nationalism being understood as aiming to create a sovereign state. Yet sovereignty can be achieved through other means than independence and establishing a new nation-state. Especially from what transpires from the SNP's discourse, it appears that the party does not wish independence for pursuing purely traditional nationalist projects, but only to obtain full political and economic autonomy. In that sense, the goal of the SNP can be achieved through the notion of sovereignty alone, and not through achieving sovereignty only to be able to "pursue some of the nationalist objectives".[225]

# 3. Is there a future for history in post-nationalist political discourse?

For Hobsbawn, "characteristic nationalist movements of the late twentieth century are essentially negative, or rather divisive", and primarily reject "modern modes of political organization, both national and supranational".[226] The modern nationalist struggle is different from nineteenth and early twentieth century nationalism and nations in that they focus more on political emancipation. The past may be brought up in order to strengthen the identity of the nation asking for more recognition, but not in the same way, nor with the same force, as before. The invocation of a common past today still reinforces identity, but it cannot be used as a core reason to why the nation needs independence. The identity of the nation is not what is in

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[224] Ichijo, 2009:155.
[225] Ichijo, 2009:160.
[226] Hobsbawn, 1990:164.

question, and its markers of identity are not contested. In the present Western context, it is important to notice that the culture, language and eventually religion of those communities are actually not threatened of extinction. Scottish national sentiment, again, is not threatened by British identity and politics, nor European identity. On the contrary, being part of the European Union for instance means that a nation can benefit from new policies and financial support aiming at the preservation of some elements of its culture. For example in Scotland, the revival of the Gaelic language has received British and European funding. Furthermore, there are now several international institutions helping nations preserve their historical patrimony. In Scotland, there are six UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The UK has a scheme aiming to support financially the preservation and restoration of Scottish historical sites, and governments can also apply to a wide range of other international institutions, including the EU for such funding. More and more often, intangible and immaterial aspects of a culture are also added to the list of historical heritage, such as traditional dances, music, customs, crafts, jobs, etc. In other words, the historical landmarks and heritage sites of a given nation today, especially in Europe, are rather protected than threatened, and it appears unconceivable that a country such as the UK would choose to destroy the historical and cultural patrimony of Scotland in an attempt to reinforce the sense of British identity against the rise of Scottish nationalism. Counter-nationalism rarely emanates from the state. Modern states, hoping to avoid anxiety, rather tend to concede more and more to regional nationalists movements.

More and more scholars argue of the shift of nationalism in the modern era, often suggesting that regional nationalisms (and the nation-state) are decreasingly relevant because of globalisation and the new communication age. But for Smith, global culture has little or no influence at all on national identities and will never replace them because it lacks historical depth and memories. Smith thinks that the mobilising power of nationalism as a marker of identity comes from an 'ethnic core' constituted of symbols, myths, memories, culture, and eventually language and religion, without which there cannot be a collective identity because collective identity is historically specific, in the sense that it is based on shared memories and continuity between past and present.[227] Moreover, we have seen that the identity of an individual was a multi-layered construct in which a global culture would occupy its own layer and would only enriched the individual's identity rather than challenged or take over his national identity. The same can be said about a European identity: it exists at a different level than the Scottish one for instance and do not threaten it. It is interesting to note that the SNP

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[227] Smith, 1990:179-180.

does not conceive a future in which Scotland is not a part of the EU, and that in *Scotland's Future* and through its discourse in general, it "constructs a dual Scottish and European identity to the exclusion of Britishness".[228] In this context, we could speculate that also, historical references to the Scottish past, which excludes the relevance of the EU, would rather serve to support a close relationship between Scotland and England and the UK rather than Scotland and the EU. And that maybe this could be another reason supporting the reluctance to appeal to the cultural past and identity of the Scottish nation in the discourse.


## Conclusion chapter 5

Re-contextualising what has been evidenced in the previous chapters regarding nationalism in general, Scottish nationalism and the discursive practices of the SNP shows that there are also other external factors influencing how history can be used by politicians and perceived by the population. For instance, appealing to history as become riskier and less rewarding for politicians today, and they have less control over how the population will react to it. Additionally, the SNP is itself marked by post-nationalism and post-sovereignty. It refuses to create a strictly independent Scotland, and wish to still maintain some bounds with the UK and other British nations. It also wishes to be included in supranational organisations. And from this point of view, using history to defend Scottish independence and foster Scottish national identity would not serve those intentions. It would actually present a type of discourse going against this conception of the post-national future of an independent Scotalnd in a globalised world. Although references to the past appear to be challenged by this context, history has not fallen in desuetude yet. Because of migrations, global culture and institutionalism, the cultural past is more and more protected and heterogeneous. Not only this protect national identity, but it also opens for other national ones and other types of identity to coexist without threatening the integrity of a nation. As such, history in political discourse loses some of its traditional appeals but gains new ones. It ceases to be associated with the feared form of nationalism from the Second World war and totalitarian regimes, and from the populist far-right elsewhere in Europe. Maybe, because of the wider, international and globalised contemporary context, the role of history is evolving, and Scottish nationalist discourse finds itself in this transitional moment, not entirely sure about what attitudes to adopt yet regarding rhetorical resort to references to the past to mobilise voters and supports its argumentation in favour of its

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[228] Sutherland, 2005:199.

nationalist project. This nationalist project too finds itself in an in-between phase. Most people in Scotland supports the idea of political autonomy to some extent, but for many, seceding from the UK to establish a new nation-state appears not only as a drastic measure, but also an unnecessary one, for they believe sovereignty can be achieved without independence.

# Conclusion

My main goal was to discover to what extent and purposes, and to what ends and effects history is used in contemporary Western European regional nationalisms. But in order to do so by focusing on a specific case — Scotland and the independence question — and a corpus of primary sources — revolving mostly around the SNP government issued white paper *Scotland's future* — I had to first develop, based on the available theory, a working theoretical framework. This newly established framework allowed me to come to the main conclusion that still today, historical references can hold a strong mobilising power for nationalist politicians when trying to achieve independence. Yet, my analysis of the main source, especially when confronted to already identified trends from the secondary literature and observations made through other representative samples of the SNP discourse — the creation of memory sites, the content of the history school curriculum and some discourses by SNP leaders —, has shown that the SNP's attitude towards the employ of history in the independence debate deviated from what could be expected. The SNP employs history to five main purposes: 1) to insist on the historical moment that the referendum constitutes, 2) to suggest as history constitutes a resource for the future, 3) to establish a continuity between the past, the present and the future, 4) to promote the cultural identity of the members of the nation and mobilise around it, and 5) to underline the out-datedness and the inherited burden of some institutions and situations, in a detrimental manner.

By confronting those observations with the theoretical and practical framework established previously, I have identified several trends regarding the effects of the use of historical references in the independence case: the SNP's discourse is decisively turned towards the future, but still leave some room for the past, the SNP's discourse follows a traditional structure based on 'past-present-future', the notion of past is ambiguous and vague and its employs appear limited and contentious, the SNP uses appeals to the shared past of the nation to coax voters who are taken by the cultural aspect of nationalism, but also avoids it some other time to support a civic and inclusive form of nationalism.

All through my work, I have implied that on some points, Scottish nationalism could be considered as an exception to the theory and general trends. And as such, it is hard to generalise my results to all contemporary European regional nationalisms. However, because Scotland represent a *sui generis* case, the only of its type to happen through entirely peaceful democratic processes and is politicised through a centre-left party with a very civic and inclusive nationalist ideology, my findings could maybe offer a frame of reference if other Western European regional nationalist movements evolved towards something similar. This

suggest that Scottish nationalism has reached a sort of post-modern type of expression and that maybe in the future other nationalisms will evolve so.

A quick look at the 2015 manifesto shows that the SNP knows to learn from its own experience. This manifesto followed the failure of the referendum on independence and in order to maintain support among voters who did not vote for independence, the party has decided to seriously reduce the place of independence in its discourse, preferring instead to talk only about 'home-rule' and to mention independence as the ultimate goal to guarantee a better political rule for Scotland in a concluding sentence of the section.[229] In order to reassure more traditional voters, they also reassert that the party will always support independence without further comment in the introduction.[230] However, this attitude may be changing radically very soon again, with the demand for a new independence referendum following the Brexit.

I personally would find it fascinating to see Scotland become independent from a scholarly point of view, but I also do not think that independence should be a priority for Scotland (sovereign autonomy could be acquired otherwise than through independence) and that Scotland's quest for independence has actually little to do with Scottish nationalism, which, culturally, is not endangered in the slightest by unionism. Like many other nations who did not succumb to becoming nation-states, Scotland could resist it. The weight of economics in the debate was far too heavy, and I think that Scottish nationalism has more in common with the one of Northern Italy than other regional nationalisms which distinguish themselves by historical, cultural specificities like the Basque or the Irish, among others. Of course I wish first for the Scots to obtain what they wish for themselves democratically  and what is best for them. I did not believe the country to be ripen yet to massively support independence in 2014, but I truly believe that it is evolving in this direction. This evolution, I attribute to what I suspect to be the long-term plan of the SNP to finally achieve its raison d'être: a strong but relatively discreet revival of nation-building, targeting mostly the young generations by raising awareness around their own collective history. But the recent change of circumstances regarding Brexit, which was majorly opposed in Scotland, and the subsequent deterioration of the relations between SNP First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon and Conservative British Prime Minister Theresa May after the request for a new referendum on Scottish independence. Finally, I also think that Westminster felt that there was relatively little chance of the

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[229] SNP, 2015:35.
[230] SNP, 2015:10.

independence to pass in 2014 when they granted Scotland the right to hold the vote without too much opposition. Now, London is conscious of the trend among Scottish youth acceding to the right to vote and the circumstantial change induced by the divorce with the EU, and that it is why it presently opposes a new referendum, or at least in the official discourse, only wishes to 'merely postpone it'.

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# Annexes

# Annex 1

## Scottish history themes introduced
## in the social studies school curriculum

- Skara Brae (prehistory)
- North Britain Romans - AD 1000
- Scottish Medieval Life
- Scotland in Twelfth/Thirteenth centuries
- Scottish Wars of Independence 1286-1328
- Mary, Queen of Scots1540's-1587
- Reformation in Scotland 1542-1603
- 1707 Union 1690's-1715
- Jacobites
- Georgians and Jacobites 1715-1800
- Highland Clearance
- Scotland and Britain 1750-1850
- Scotland and Britain 1830-1930
- Scotland and Britain 1880-1980
- Campaigning for change
- Scottish immigrants and exiles
- Migration and Empire 1830-1939
- Impact of Great War 1914-1928
- Scotland 1945-2000

*(Source: Hillis, 2010:153-154)*

# Annex 2

# Examples of Alex Salmond's references
# to history or historical events and figures

"The rocks will melt with the sun before I allow tuition fees to be imposed on Scottish students."

*Reference to Robert Burns' poem "Red Red Rose"*
*Alex Salmond, keynote speech ahead of the 2011 Holyrood election.*

"For we ha'e faith in Scotland's hidden poo'ers,
The present's theirs, but a' the past and future's oors."

*Quote from MacDiarmid's poem "Gairmscole" by Alex Salmond after winning the 2011 parliamentary elections.*

"When reelected as First Minister, Salmond quoted MacDiarmid's poem "Scotland Small?" and used it in his argumentation against patronising Scotland as small."

*STV, 2011.*

"Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun addressed the Scottish Parliament in 1706, before it was adjourned- for some three hundred years."

"When the United Nations was founded, it had just 51 member countries. Now there are almost 200. As recently as 1990, Europe had 35 countries – now it has 50. Of the 27 countries which currently make up the EU, six of them did not exist as independent states before 1990. The current United Kingdom, as an incorporating union, where one nation will always prevail simply by virtue of its size, seems increasingly like an anachronism in the modern age. And

independence – with the right to participate as an equal on the international stage – appears more and more like Scotland's normal and natural state of being."

"I quoted GK Chesterton, a quintessentially English writer, earlier. I hope you will understand – especially given the date – that I want to close by quoting Scotland's bard, Robert Burns - nationalist and internationalist. I thought of a number of possibilities – for example his timeless description of the multi-party UK government of his day –
"yon mixtie-maxtie queer hotch-potch,
The Coalition"!"

"Another of his songs, "Ae fond kiss, and then we sever" also has a certain resonance – although I may not sing it to the Prime Minister any time soon! But ultimately, it is a line from one of Burns's great egalitarian poems that best sums up the likelihood of independence. "For a' that and a' that, it's coming yet, for a' that"."

*Alex Salmond, Hugo Young lecture, 24.01.2012.*

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"From tip to toe, Robert Burns was a 100 per cent Scottish patriot. No-one should ever try to pigeon-hole Burns into party politics because he was far too big for that, but it is clear from his private writings such as his letters to Mrs Dunlop and John Moore, as well as his poetry, that he always backed the nation of Scotland."

*Alex Salmond, quoted in Whitaker, 2013.*

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"On the eve of Burns Night, Scotland's First Minister has used the Bard's words to describe David Cameron as "a cowran tim'rous beastie" with a "panic on thy breastie"."

*Edward, 2014.*

# Annex 3

# Wmatrix queries and results

## 1. The three main topoi based on statistical occurrences of related terms

The full list of the category corresponding to each code can be found on the Wmatrix page on the website of the University of Lancaster here :

http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/usas/semtags_subcategories.txt

The categories topping the list that have been ignored have been so because they concern type of words that are not specific to a theme, for example, N1 refers to numbers, Z5 is the grammatical been, Z8 are pronouns, A3+ words referring to the concept of existing, like 'to be' or 'to find'.

| Semtag | Frequency | Relative Frequency | | | Summary information: |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Z5 | 52632 | 31.37 | Concordance | List | Number of types shown: 381 |
| Z2 | 9572 | 5.70 | Concordance | List | Total frequency of types shown: 167783 (100.00%) |
| Z8 | 6260 | 3.73 | Concordance | List | Total frequency overall: 167783 |
| N1 | 4877 | 2.91 | Concordance | List | |
| G1.1 (= gouvernment) | 4467 | 2.66 | Concordance | List | Number of items shown with a given frequency: |
| T1.1.3 (= future) | 3468 | 2.07 | Concordance | List | |
| A3+ | 3052 | 1.82 | Concordance | List | Frequency   Types        Tokens |
| S8+ | 2884 | 1.72 | Concordance | List | 1      36 (9.45%)    36 (0.02%) |
| Z99 | 2579 | 1.54 | Concordance | List | 2      11 (2.89%)    22 (0.01%) |
| S5- | 2376 | 1.42 | Concordance | List | 3       9 (2.36%)    27 (0.02%) |
| I1.1(= money and pay) | 2319 | 1.38 | Concordance | List | 4       9 (2.36%)    36 (0.02%) |
| A1.1.1 | 2185 | 1.30 | Concordance | List | 5       5 (1.31%)    25 (0.01%) |
| A9+ | 2026 | 1.21 | Concordance | List | 6      13 (3.41%)    78 (0.05%) |
| S5+ | 1835 | 1.09 | Concordance | List | 7       5 (1.31%)    35 (0.02%) |
| A7+ | 1804 | 1.08 | Concordance | List | 8       2 (0.52%)    16 (0.01%) |
| M6 | 1775 | 1.06 | Concordance | List | 9       5 (1.31%)    45 (0.03%) |
| X7+ | 1633 | 0.97 | Concordance | List | 10      5 (1.31%)    50 (0.03%) |
| M7 | 1566 | 0.93 | Concordance | List | > 10   281 (73.75%) 167413 (99.78%) |

## 2. Results regarding the 'Time' semantic category

| Semtag | Frequency | Relative Frequency | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T1.1.3 | 3468 | 2.07 | Concordance | List |
| T1.1.2 | 947 | 0.56 | Concordance | List |
| T2++ | 938 | 0.56 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3 | 896 | 0.53 | Concordance | List |
| T3- | 648 | 0.39 | Concordance | List |
| T2+ | 513 | 0.31 | Concordance | List |
| T1.1.1 | 360 | 0.21 | Concordance | List |
| T3 | 226 | 0.13 | Concordance | List |
| T2- | 149 | 0.09 | Concordance | List |
| T1.2 | 134 | 0.08 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3+ | 107 | 0.06 | Concordance | List |
| T3+ | 103 | 0.06 | Concordance | List |
| T4+ | 82 | 0.05 | Concordance | List |
| T1 | 64 | 0.04 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3++ | 64 | 0.04 | Concordance | List |
| T3++ | 33 | 0.02 | Concordance | List |
| T3--- | 33 | 0.02 | Concordance | List |
| T2+++ | 24 | 0.01 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3- | 22 | 0.01 | Concordance | List |
| T4- | 10 | 0.01 | Concordance | List |
| T1.1 | 10 | 0.01 | Concordance | List |
| T3+++ | 6 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T4 | 5 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T4-- | 5 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3+++ | 2 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3-+++ | 1 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T4++++ | 1 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T3-- | 1 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |

**Summary information:**

Number of types shown: 28
Total frequency of types shown: 8852 (5.28%)
Total frequency overall: 167783

**Number of items shown with a given frequency:**

| Frequency | Types | Tokens |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 (10.71%) | 3 (0.03%) |
| 2 | 1 (3.57%) | 2 (0.02%) |
| 3 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 4 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 5 | 2 (7.14%) | 10 (0.11%) |
| 6 | 1 (3.57%) | 6 (0.07%) |
| 7 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 8 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 9 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 10 | 2 (7.14%) | 20 (0.23%) |
| > 10 | 19 (67.86%) | 8811 (99.54%) |

## 3. Statistical occurrences of terms related to the past, the present and the future

| Semtag | Frequency | Relative Frequency | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T1.1.3 (= future) | 3468 | 2.07 | Concordance | List |
| T1.1.2 (= present) | 947 | 0.56 | Concordance | List |
| T2++ | 938 | 0.56 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3 | 896 | 0.53 | Concordance | List |
| T3- | 648 | 0.39 | Concordance | List |
| T2+ | 513 | 0.31 | Concordance | List |
| T1.1.1 (= past) | 360 | 0.21 | Concordance | List |
| T3 | 226 | 0.13 | Concordance | List |
| T2- | 149 | 0.09 | Concordance | List |
| T1.2 | 134 | 0.08 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3+ | 107 | 0.06 | Concordance | List |
| T3+ | 103 | 0.06 | Concordance | List |
| T4+ | 82 | 0.05 | Concordance | List |
| T1 | 64 | 0.04 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3++ | 64 | 0.04 | Concordance | List |
| T3++ | 33 | 0.02 | Concordance | List |
| T3--- | 33 | 0.02 | Concordance | List |
| T2+++ | 24 | 0.01 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3- | 22 | 0.01 | Concordance | List |
| T4- | 10 | 0.01 | Concordance | List |
| T1.1 | 10 | 0.01 | Concordance | List |
| T3+++ | 6 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T4 | 5 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T4-- | 5 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3+++ | 2 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T1.3-+++ | 1 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T4++++ | 1 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |
| T3-- | 1 | 0.00 | Concordance | List |

**Summary information:**

Number of types shown: 28
Total frequency of types shown: 8852 (5.28%)
Total frequency overall: 167783

Number of items shown with a given frequency:

| Frequency | Types | Tokens |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 (10.71%) | 3 (0.03%) |
| 2 | 1 (3.57%) | 2 (0.02%) |
| 3 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 4 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 5 | 2 (7.14%) | 10 (0.11%) |
| 6 | 1 (3.57%) | 6 (0.07%) |
| 7 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 8 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 9 | (0.00%) | (0.00%) |
| 10 | 2 (7.14%) | 20 (0.23%) |
| > 10 | 19 (67.86%) | 8811 (99.54%) |

## 4. Indicative list of the terms identified as relating to the 'past'

| Word | Semtag |
|---|---|
| already | T1.1.1 |
| history | T1.1.1 |
| historical | T1.1.1 |
| used_to | T1.1.1 |
| past | T1.1.1 |
| at_the_time | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_last_five_years | T1.1.1 |
| last_year | T1.1.1 |
| in_the_past | T1.1.1 |
| museums | T1.1.1 |
| background | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_years | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_past_five_years | T1.1.1 |
| at_that_time | T1.1.1 |
| last_32_years | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_past_30_years | T1.1.1 |
| last_decade | T1.1.1 |
| long_ago | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_past_32_years | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_last_30_years | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_last_three_years | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_last_decade | T1.1.1 |
| years_ago | T1.1.1 |
| originally | T1.1.1 |
| historically | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_past_decade | T1.1.1 |
| last_five_decades | T1.1.1 |
| last_68_years | T1.1.1 |
| last_ten_years | T1.1.1 |
| last_five_years | T1.1.1 |
| over_the_past_forty_years | T1.1.1 |
| backgrounds | T1.1.1 |
| last_25_years | T1.1.1 |
| last_time | T1.1.1 |
| formerly | T1.1.1 |
| last_six_years | T1.1.1 |
| 700_years_ago | T1.1.1 |
| regency | T1.1.1 |

## 5. Example of a table of concordance for the term "history"
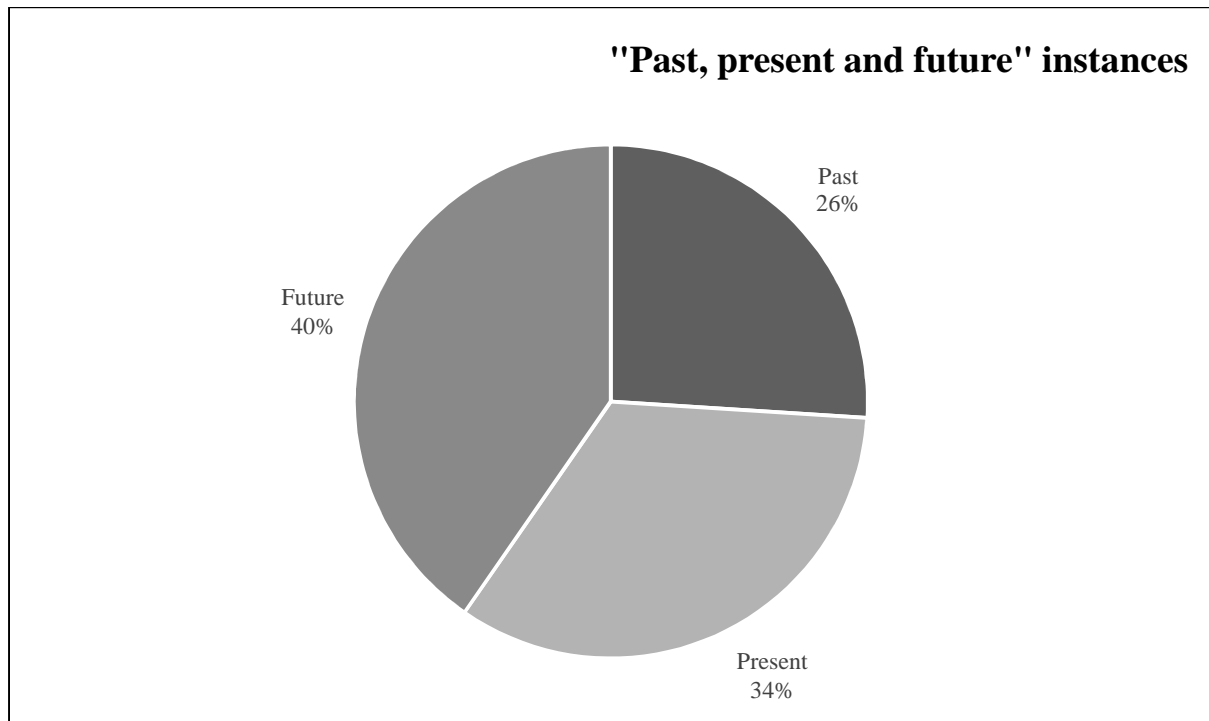
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| It is a rare and precious moment in the | history | of Scotland a once in a generation oppor | 1 More \| Full |
| that the bonds of family , friendship , | history | and culture between Scotland and the oth | 2 More \| Full |
| sses and institutions . We have a proud | history | , progressive traditions , fine intellec | 3 More \| Full |
| now under way in our countrys education | history | : Curriculum for Excellence ( CfE ) . Cf | 4 More \| Full |
| ance , recognising that there is a long | history | of substantial numbers of students from | 5 More \| Full |
| ands place in the western world and our | history | of friendship with a broad range of othe | 6 More \| Full |
| We can use this important moment in our | history | as an opportunity to extend a welcome to | 7 More \| Full |
| on , made up of connections of family , | history | , culture and language , will have every | 8 More \| Full |
| tunity to flourish and strengthen . The | history | of the UK , the Crown Dependencies and t | 9 More \| Full |
| rough our shared language , culture and | history | . It is in the interests of an independe | 10 More \| Full |
| zens , uniquely linked by geography and | history | , are connected today as never before th | 11 More \| Full |
| he UK and Ireland , reflecting cultural | history | and family ties , shared interests in tr | 12 More \| Full |
| ries , primarily , given our long joint | history | , from the rest of the UK . Such joint w | 13 More \| Full |
| cotland . The agency will build on that | history | and make the relationship even more effe | 14 More \| Full |
| d an important part throughout Scottish | history | in enriching and renewing our culture an | 15 More \| Full |
| and international arts , culture , and | history | . We have also created the first ever ov | 16 More \| Full |
| sector has in comedy , drama , natural | history | and factual entertainment programming . | 17 More \| Full |
| emocratic state . Scotland has a strong | history | in protecting the rights and freedoms of | 18 More \| Full |
| at sea and the organisation has a proud | history | of providing lifeboat services and volun | 19 More \| Full |
| rest of these islands . There is a long | history | of maritime search and rescue being co-o | 20 More \| Full |
| ent in Scottish heritage , identity and | history | for many centuries . Gaelic has official | 21 More \| Full |
| t of the single market . Throughout its | history | the guiding principle of the EU has been | 22 More \| Full |
| based in Scotland to 15,000 . In recent | history | , there has been a disproportionate redu | 23 More \| Full |
| the interests of any party . Our shared | history | , culture and borders make the Common Tr | 24 More \| Full |
| al citizenship , recognising our shared | history | with the UK . We will not place obstacle | 25 More \| Full |
| the interests of any party . Our shared | history | , culture and borders make the Common Tr | 26 More \| Full |
| and institutions have a long and proud | history | . Scotlands justice agencies have demons | 27 More \| Full |
| utional Journey 1 . Scotland has a long | history | , both as an independent nation before t | 28 More \| Full |
| institutions and legal system . 2 . The | history | of Scotland stretches back to the eighth | 29 More \| Full |
| tee 4 December 2012 : It is part of our | history | that we helped both Australia and Canada | 30 More \| Full |

# Annex 4

## Partial presentation of the results of the quantitative lexical analysis of *Scotland's Future*

*1. Instances of selected terms relating to the past, the present and the future*

| | Terms used to refer to the past | | | … the present | | | … the future |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Past | History, historic, historically | Heritage | Present (adj.), at present, presently | Today | Now | |
| Number of occurrences | 23 | 89 | 44 | 68 | 31 | 102 | 241 |
| Total occurrences | 156 | | | 201 | | | 241 |
| Total in percent | 26% | | | 34% | | | 40% |



"Past, present and future" instances

Past 26%

Future 40%

Present 34%

## 2. Instances of selected terms relating to history

| Term(s) | Occurrences |
|---|---|
| **History / historic / historically** | 89 |
| Proud history | 3 |
| Long history | 3 |
| Scottish history | 1 |
| History of Scotland | 2 |
| National history | 0 |
| Collective history | 0 |
| Our history | 3 |
| **Heritage** | 44 |
| Educational heritage | 1 |
| Natural heritage | 3 |
| World heritage (sites) | 7 |
| Scottish heritage | 3 |
| Other (heritage Lottery Fund) | 2 |
| Heritage *(alone, generally associated with culture and sometimes with praising adjectives strong heritage, rich heritage)* | 28 |
| **Memory** | 0 |
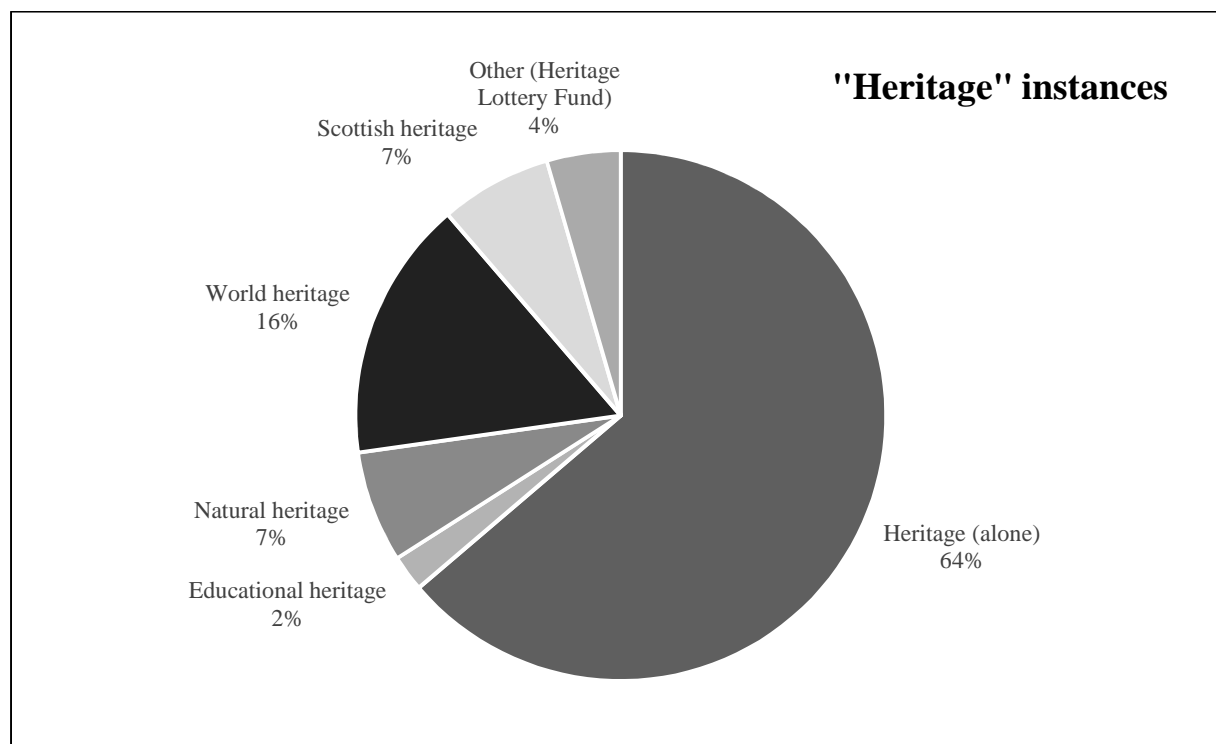
# Annex 5
## Qualitative analysis of *Scotland's Future*:
## Thematic overview of the mention of 'history'

## *1. History in the making*

| Page | Quotation | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| viii | "[The referendum about independence] is a rare and precious moment in the history of Scotland – a once in a generation opportunity to chart a better way." | History in the making rather than past history: suggests a will to break with the past and start the future by choosing the present moment when we chose for an independent Scotland as the new history of Scotland. |
| 187 | "In 2012/13, 89 per cent of school leavers were in positive destinations – positive and sustained learning, training or work – the highest proportion ever. This strong record of achievement means Scotland is well-placed for the next step now under way in our country's education history: Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). CfE is the radical renewal of the way Scotland's schools teach. It focuses on achieving the highest possible levels of literacy and numeracy, developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. (etc)" | The political program of an independent Scotland promise to bring a new reform of education that will become history in the future. |
| 211 | "(…)the move to independence will, in itself, deliver a boost to Scotland's international recognition. We can use this important moment in our history as an opportunity to extend a welcome to the world and an invitation to engage more fully with our newly independent nation." | The referendum and opportunity to vote for independence as an important moment of "our" history. The "our" also suggests that the SNP offers voters the opportunity to make history; all voters, including non-Scots, can by this act join the Scottish nation, do their share in national history. |
| 312 | [After mentioning Scotland as the home of six World Heritage Sites:] "Historic Scotland's "Scottish Ten" laser-scanning project is promoting present-day Scottish heritage and technology on an international stage." The Scottish Ten is "The project set out in late 2009 to | The six sites are the natural site of the small out-lying Hebridean archipelago of St Kilda, the districts of Old Town and New Town in the capital city Edinburgh, the prehistoric sites gathered under the name "Heart of Neolithic Orkney', the restored 18th century industrial cotton mill village of New Lanark, the Roman Antonine Wall and the Forth |

| | digitally document Scotland's then five World Heritage Sites and a further five international heritage sites to create accurate 3D data to help with their conservation and management, their interpretation and virtual access. It is a collaborative project between Historic Environment Scotland and The Glasgow School of Art's School of Simulation and Visualisation (working together as the Centre for Digital Documentation and Visualisation), with CyArk." | Bridge, a cantilever bridge completed in 1890 carrying trains and cars 46 meters above the water over 2,5 kilometers. Source: https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/world-heritage-sites/ <br><br> Presentation of the Scottish Ten project on the official website https://www.engineshed.org/about-us/the-scottish-ten/ |
|---|---|---|

## 2. Positive history: History as a resource, historical tradition as an asset, the past as an example for the future

| Page | Quotation | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| xiv | *Salmond lists the advantages of Scotland, mentioning first its natural advantages and abundant natural resources, then he names the talented population, world-class businesses and a talented population. He tops his list by:* "We have a proud history, progressive traditions, fine intellectual and artistic accomplishments, a strong identity and many friends across the world." | The references of history and past accomplishments here are used in the classical senses of historical references in political discourse: create continuity between the past and the present, but also to give confidence in the future by looking back in the past, although it is not explicitly said, some of those accomplishments can be linked to the time before the Union. Knowing who stands behind the text, we can almost guess that it was what he wanted to say, but yet, not said here, in this document that is the product of the government rather than its leader. |
| 84 | "£2.3 billion economic impact of the historical environment" *(under a drawing of a castle in an* infography*)*. | Clearly a reference to Scotland's national cultural heritage, and how it is actually an economic asset. |
| 313 | "Our historic environment has been estimated to contribute £2.3 billion to our economy, supporting 60,000 jobs in the tourism and construction industries. Scotland's 360 museums and galleries attract approximately 25 million visitors a year and generate approximately £80 million | History as an economic asset |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | for our economy whilst sustaining more than 4,400 jobs." | |
| 215 | "The history of the UK, the Crown Dependencies and the Commonwealth demonstrates that it is entirely normal for the UK to have varied and changing political relationships whilst retaining strong social ties. Scotland's social union with the other nations of the UK will continue through our shared language, culture and history." | History is linked with cultural heritage and identity |
| 314 | "We are establishing a new lead body to work collaboratively with local government, the third sector and private interests to place our historic environment at the heart of a flourishing and sustainable Scotland." | Historic environment as a resource and an economic asset for the future |
| 337 | "An independent Scotland will build on existing, robust and well-established foundations to develop our governance and a modern participative democracy. The Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government have demonstrated their competence to govern Scotland. Scotland's independent judiciary is based on a historical tradition that predates the Treaty of Union, as is Scotland's distinct legal system. Scotland also has well-established institutions for other functions of state governance: the police, local authorities and an active civic society and media. The basic building blocks of the nation are therefore in place and, in many respects, we are the best placed of any nation in modern times for a move to independent statehood." | Historical tradition of Scottish political and judiciary institutions and their endurance used to reassure about the future and guarantee a smooth transition from union to independence |
| 356 | "Scotland has a strong history in protecting the rights and freedoms of everyone living in our country and has used our limited powers to their maximum extent to promote a fair and more equal society." | History here used to underline the experience of Scotland, reinforce its capabilities by giving a proof "we've been doing it for a while, we know how to" |
| 457 | "Throughout its history the guiding principle of the EU has been | Even if it refers to the history of the EU rather than Scotland, we can still see that it is used to provide reassurance. History in |

| | enlargement of its membership, not contraction." | this context is used to give a sense of eternal, universal truth, and in this case, is used as a proof of the conjectured willingness of the EU to consider Scottish membership. |
|---|---|---|
| 501 | "Our justice system and institutions have a long and proud history. Scotland's justice agencies have demonstrated the benefits of having decisions taken in Scotland relevant to circumstances here." | Another example of the expertise of Scotland acquired in the past and that could be used in the future |

## 3. History as continuity between past and present

| Page | Quotation | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| 19 | "Our ambition is to build an independent nation where our cultural and historic life can continue to flourish." | Intent to provide a frame where history can continue |
| 199 | "The Government believes that continuing to charge students from other parts of the UK is the best way to achieve this balance, recognising that there is a long history of substantial numbers of students from elsewhere in the UK coming to Scottish universities to take advantage of our high quality education, our common language and the parallel system of educational qualifications that make Scotland an attractive place for them to study." | History as tradition, something that existed before and shall continue in the future. |
| 208 | "Given Scotland's place in the western world and our history of friendship with a broad range of other nations, our interests will largely coincide with many others in the international community." | Continuity of Scotland's role in international relations and multilateral institutions, traditional preeminent role of Scotland in them stressed here by historical factor. |
| 215 | "We will continue to be linked to other nations of the UK by five continuing unions: the EU; an ongoing Union of the Crowns; a Sterling Area; and as members of the NATO defence union. And the social union, made up of connections of family, history, culture and language, | Reassurance about the continuity of the close relations with other British nations |

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| | will have every opportunity to flourish and strengthen.” | |
| 230 | “With a focus on working in partnership and achieving real and tangible outcomes on the ground, the Scottish Government's international development policy seeks to build upon the historical and contemporary relationships that exist between Scotland and the developing world.” | Historical relationships with the global world will provide the frame through which to maintain a development policy |
| 262 | “Initially, we will draw on expertise (such as training and IT) from other countries, primarily, given our long joint history, from the rest of the UK. Such joint working in the early period after independence will deliver a seamless transition ensuring that the security of both countries is continuously maintained.” | Historical tradition of cooperation with other countries will provide a frame through which to continue to cooperate once independent. |
| 264 | “There is already a long track record of close co-operation between the UK security services and the police in Scotland. The agency will build on that history and make the relationship even more effective, while ensuring that there is very clear separation in terms of responsibilities, tasking, governance and accountability.” | Same idea as above. |
| 269 | “Migrants have played an important part throughout Scottish history in enriching and renewing our culture and boosting the economy of the country. We will welcome people who want to come to work and live in Scotland.” | Immigration will continue as it has previously in Scottish history |
| 419 | “There is a long history of maritime search and rescue being co-ordinated across borders and boundaries with all available resources and vessels deployed to assist in any incident. This will continue to be the case after independence.” | Perpetuation of the tradition in search and rescue, nothing will change after independence. |
| 527 | “Within 12 nautical miles, we would expect to agree with other member states that vessels from other member states (including the rest of the UK) with historic fishing rights should be able to continue fishing in Scottish waters, and vice versa.” | Because those fishing rights are historic, they ought to continue as such and will be defended so they practice can continue exactly as before independence |

## 4. History as part of the national cultural identity and past to preserve and promote

| Page | Quotation | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| ix | I also believe that the bonds of family, friendship, history and culture between Scotland and the other parts of the British Isles are precious." | history is associated with culture, and thus refers to history as a part of national identity |
| 215 | "Our citizens, uniquely linked by geography and history, are connected today as never before through business, politics, culture and sport, travel and technology and, of course, family ties." | History as a unifying factor for the nation |
| 216 | "Scotland's most important diplomatic relationships will be with the rest of the UK and Ireland, reflecting cultural history and family ties, shared interests in trade, security and common travel." | Cultural history of the members of the nation important to define its future attitude regarding other British nation |
| 216 | "cultural history" | Strong indicator of the type of history it is question: the one that binds people together, one of the content of identity of the members of the nation. |
| 309 | "Culture and heritage are already the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament, and this Scottish Government has focused on promoting Scotland's culture, creative industries and historic environment at home and internationally." | Importance of preserving and administrating the historic environment and heritage sites |
| 312 | "Scotland's beauty, historic attractions and hospitality are famed across the world, and Scotland's commitment to our culture and heritage enjoys international recognition, notably from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The inspiration and significance we draw from our culture and heritage, including Gaelic and Scots, are fundamental to shaping our communities and the places in which we live." | History as a source of national pride, history sets the Scottish nation apart from the rest of the UK for instance, but also history as an economic factor. History and cultural heritage are very loosely defined here, not necessarily the one of pure Scottish tradition and history, but also others that have made Scotland as it is today, more cultural diversity. Cultural diversity and an open society are the leitmotivs of the SNP's political agenda. Inclusive society and promise of protection to Scots and Gaelic. |
| 314 | "Our national collections – the National Galleries of Scotland, the National Museum of Scotland and the | Typical: nationalists using museum institutions to shape the national identity, |

| Page | Quotation | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| | National Library of Scotland – provide access to the best of Scottish and international arts, culture, and history. We have also created the first ever overarching Historic Environment Strategy to ensure that the people of Scotland gain the full benefit from our rich historic environment." | bring pride and cultural references to the population. |
| 490 | "Erecting border controls with Scotland would be inconvenient for all Common Travel Area partners, including Scotland and the rest of the UK, and would not be in the interests of any party. Our shared history, culture and borders make the Common Travel Area of benefit to all of the territories within it." | History as a marker of British identity. |
| 497 | [Regarding the possibility of holding both British and Scottish identity:] "Our proposals for citizenship in an independent Scotland are based upon an inclusive model and will include dual citizenship, recognising our shared history with the UK." | Continuity and rupture at the same time: satisfies everybody by making it possible to choose between declaring itself British or Scottish administratively (for identification papers). But most important here is the use of the term history as "shared history with the UK", equating to the recognition of the feeling of belonging to the British nation. |
| 500 | "Our shared history, culture and borders make the Common Travel Area of benefit to all of the territories within it." | Idem about accepting the simultaneous existence of Scottish and British identity based on shared history. |

## 5. History and pejorative association of idea

| Page | Quotation | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| 30 | "the historical contribution made to the UK's public finances by Scotland" | The adjective historical is used multiple times next to the head 'contribution' or 'share' or 'debt' when mentioning the repayment of UK debts. Suddenly the past is heavily present. Those debts have been contracted in the past, they are a burden today. The past means Scotland in the UK rather than Scotland before the UK. Usually, this debt is not called 'historic |
| 73 | "a historical share of public sector debt" | |
| 75 | "historical share of debt interest payments" | |
| 76 | "historical share of UK debt" | |

| 348 | "historical contribution made to the UK's public finances by Scotland", "Scotland's historical share of the UK national debt" | debt', but is just referred to as the 'UK national debt'. Shows a deliberate use to give a pejorative connotation to this debt which represents an important obstacle to Scotland's independent economic future. |
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| 554 | "our historical contribution to UK revenues" | |
| 604 | "Including historical share of debt interest payments" | |
| 604 | "Scotland's deficit is forecast to fall to between 1.6 per cent and 2.4 per cent of GDP in 2016/17 with a historical share of UK debt" | |
| 605 | "Scotland's historical contribution to the UK public finances" | |
| 606 | *Historical share A country's public sector net debt can be viewed as the sum of its historic annual borrowing, minus any debt repayment. Therefore, an alternative way to calculate Scotland's notional share of UK public sector"* | |
| 11 | "historic decline" [in private pension saving] | A problem in the present inherited from the past |
| 86 | "Devolution has provided Scotland with some – albeit limited – ability to tailor policies to Scottish circumstances, and successive Scottish administrations have used these to help narrow a historic gap in economic performance with the UK." | Again, the "historic gap" is meant to be something undesirable, a burden from the past, that the new independent Scotland will leave behind. |
| 146 | "help address the historic decline in private pension saving" | A problem in the present inherited from the past |
| 263 | [regarding homeland security:] "Setting up a new agency will allow us to do things differently, unconstrained by historical structures and precedent, and avoiding any barriers between different agencies." | Independence as a way to start a new and erase historical, out-dated, superfluous structure |
| 488 | "Scotland will need significant independent security and intelligence capacity to ensure its security. Independence offers an opportunity to build a new model for such work, that is fit for the 21st century and provides a proportionate means of | A critic of the present system, judged to be anchored in the past, a past decided by the UK and which is perceived as a burden or at least not fit from Scotland's point of view. Need to break with this past to do better in the future. |

| | ensuring Scotland's national security. (…) Setting up the new body will allow us to do things differently, unconstrained by historical structures and precedent." | |
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