The Instrumentalisation of Historical Motifs in Contemporary Scottish Politics

A comparative study of Scottish political parties from 2010 to 2020 and their portrayal of Scotland's past

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Abstract

'Who controls the past controls the future and who controls the present controls the past' (Orwell, 1950, p.38).

George Orwell eloquently explains the importance of history regarding current affairs and future prosperity. However, how does one control the past? The past cannot be changed, but history is not something that happened in the past; history is what we say happened in the past (Gillespie, 2017, p.29). Therefore, the flexibility and malleableness of our historical understanding allow agents of power to use history for political gain.

The tools required to do this can be called historical motifs. Motifs are mobilised and adapted to suit contemporary politics. This thesis aims to deepen the reader's understanding of historical motifs and apply the theory to contemporary Scottish politics to determine why and how the three main political parties use the motif of Imperial Amnesia and Gaelic Renaissance.

To do this research, a qualitative and quantitative analysis of parliamentary debates, manifestos, and various other aspects of the political process were carried out. The primary lesson learnt was that in Scotland, all factions of the political system tend to promote the same motifs. However, they do so nuancedly, which means even though they promote the same motif, they do so with very different intentions. This gives impetus to further studies into motifs. Future studies should not solely rely on the tangible manner of motifs but look at who is using them, why they are using them, and what might result from using them. This will lead to many more productive conclusions about history's relationship with the present and allow for a greater understanding of many worldwide issues.

Contents

Abbreviations and Notes

Gaelic = Anglicised version of Gaidhlig na h-Alba (Scottish Gaelic) as opposed to Irish Gaelic or Manx Gaelic.
SNP = Scottish National Party.
CON = Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party (The UK branch is referred to as just The Conservative Party).
LAB = Scottish Labour Party.
LD = Scottish Liberal Democrats.
Green = Scottish Green Party.
MP = Member of British Parliament.
MSP = Member of Scottish Parliament.
Holyrood = Popular metonym for the Scottish Parliament.
Reference Style = Harvard.

- The United Kingdom and Great Britain will be used interchangeably in this thesis. The term Great Britain technically excludes Northern Ireland. However, for the scope of this thesis, such a distinction is not pertinent.

- The British and Scottish parliaments offer MP/MSPs the option to take an oath or an affirmation. These two terms are both used in the analysis of the Gaelic Renaissance, but the distinction is not fundamental in understanding the chapter's content.

Introduction

Presentation

'National Histories are "retrospective mythologies" undergoing constant revision'
(Hobsbawm and Kertzer, 1992, p.3).

This statement by one of the pre-eminent scholars of nationalism, E.J. Hobsbawm, perfectly encapsulates the central theory of this thesis. In essence, this thesis aims to explore the forever-changing nature of history and its tendency to be manipulated and instrumentalised for political gain. By focusing on historical motifs in contemporary Scottish politics, this thesis will shine a light on the utilisation of history and the broader idea of how history is moulded to suit modern political perspectives.

Historical motifs are essential tools for instrumentalising history. The importance of studying such motifs is apodictic. As James Liu and Denis Hilton explain, 'history provides us with narratives that tell us who we are, where we came from and where we should be going' (Hilton and Liu, 2005, p.1). Instead of 'motif', Liu and Hilton use 'narratives' synonymously. They explain that narratives consolidate a group's identity, which in turn affects its intranational and international relations. Historical motifs provide the means for defining a nation's *raison d'être*. In other words, social representations of history act as a lever to use in prying open the door of time and making relevant the issues of the day (p.16). How politicians engage with these concepts is the primary concern of this thesis.

History has long been affirmed as an inevitable and irreplaceable feature of nation creation and confirming state identities. For a study of such themes, Scotland provides a perfect case study due to the potential change in its status as an independent state. The last decade has seen a rise in nationalist politics, with the Scottish National Party (SNP) becoming the leading force in Scottish politics. The SNP won its first election in 2007 and has been the largest party in every Scottish election since. This surge in support for separatist politics culminated in the independence referendum in 2014, which the unionist *NO* campaign narrowly won. However, like Scottish historical narratives, the status of Scotland's sovereignty is not set in stone. If Scotland does leave the United Kingdom, the study of history and its instrumentalisation will

be as relevant as ever. As Benedict Anderson explains, 'all profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesias. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives' (Anderson, 1983, p.139).

This thesis will focus on two narratives: the promulgation of Gaelic as a national language of Scotland and the motivated forgetting of Scotland's role in the transatlantic slave trade within the British Empire. These two narratives will be referred to as the *Gaelic Renaissance* and *Imperial Amnesia*. This thesis uses *Motif*; however, many other publications use terms such as narratives, charters, themes, and symbols. Motifs are narratives of history or how contemporary actors differ in their memory of the same history. It is essential to understand, as James Brow explains, 'while it is plausible to maintain that, having already happened, the past cannot be altered, it is equally evident that memory is less fixed' (Brow, 1990, p.1).

The two historical motifs will be studied in the context of Scottish and, to a lesser extent, British politics in the last decade (2010-2020). The reason for this demarcation is two-fold: firstly, the decade has been full of disagreeing discourse between nationalist and unionist politicians, which lends itself to a study of historical motifs, and secondly, the recent timeline allows this thesis to gain relevance in the backdrop of numerous studies on nationalism and state identities throughout the twentieth century. All three major political parties will be analysed to provide a bi-partisan perspective. These three parties are; The Scottish National Party, The Scottish Labour Party, and The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party. The Scottish National Party is the primary party that strives for independence, while the Conservative and Labour parties both represent the unionist voices in parliament. Although ordinarily dichotomies of political ideology, the Conservative and Labour parties will sometimes be joined in this thesis' analysis. This association is due to the more prominent nationalist-unionist rift that divides Scottish politics.

The central research question is thus; **How and why do Scotland's three main political parties differ in their portrayal and implementation of historical motifs in Scottish politics from 2010 to 2020?**

Sub Questions:

- **To what extent is the Gaelic Renaissance partisan, and what are the motivations behind each party's usage of it?**
- **Are all Scotland's three main political parties guilty of Imperial Amnesia, and in what manner is it committed?**

Hypothesis:

Based on pre-existing literature and the primary theories relating to concepts of motif instrumentalisation and nationalism, the hypothesis for this thesis makes two assumptions regarding the two motifs. Due to the pre-eminent theories that connect language and nationalist movements, the nationalist side of Scottish politics should be additionally interested in adopting the Gaelic language. The historical precedent in Britain is glottophobia (linguistic xenophobia) and a centralised language policy that repressed minority languages around the British Isles. Times have, of course, moved on, but the theory still stands that unionism with Britain would be less interested in the minority languages of the Celtic fringe.

Concerning Imperial Amnesia, again, nationalists should be interested in distancing themselves where possible from any history that closely ties their prospective nation to the central state and also denigrates the moral standing of the nation's heritage. A large part of this hypothesis relies on the data revealing a one-sided occurrence of instrumentalisation and a clear concordance within parties.

Historiography

A very extensive corpus of literature exists which attests to the salience of history as an irreplaceable feature of constructing and maintaining the concept of nations and state identities. Three publications of note are as follows; Benedict Anderson's 1983, *Imagined communities*, Ernest Gellner's 1983, *Nations and Nationalism*, and Eric Hobsbawm and Terrance Ranger's 1983, *The Invention of Tradition*.

Anderson's study of nationalism rejects the assumption that nations are a natural and inevitable social unit, but rather a cultural construct (Anderson, 1983). Gellner similarly recognises cultural homogeneity as a new concept and depicts the pre-industrial populations of Europe as being far more diverse in comparison to their industrial successors. It is Gellner's central thesis that economic change requires homogeneity; the demand for cultural homogeneity and the state apparatus to provide it drives nationalism (Gellner, 1983). Finally, Hobsbawm and Ranger's collection of work is all focused on the theme of invention, which gives a great insight into historical, cultural, and social traditions. The idea is that many traditions often have much later origins than commonly thought. Hobsbawm pushes the idea that elites use traditions to manipulate the powerless, but that they are also used by many institutions to maintain social unity (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1992). These three books were seminal and have provided the foundations for a wall of literature discussing the role of history in state identity and nationalism. It is this wall of literature that this thesis will augment with a new brick of research and perspective.

Just as the historiographical ground for the theoretical concepts of history and nationhood is well-trodden, so is the field of implementing historical motifs and cultural canons. Peter Duelund has explored this cultural policy implementation in Western Europe (Duelund, 2016). Duelund explains how cultural canons have been published in both the Netherlands and Denmark to cement a shared history of the nation containing national ideas and values (p.3). Elsewhere in Europe, the Greek state has systematically attempted to impose an official culture based on nationalist identity, religious beliefs, and the ancient Greek heritage (p.5). Poland is also embarking on a similar project, shaping a new national self-awareness based on the

Catholic Faith (Zorba, 2008). These concepts are examples of reinstating old or different narratives and concepts in modern societies. Marko Pavlyshn's 2006 work on literary canons and national identities in Ukraine is another valuable publication (Pavlyshyn, 2006). Pavlyshn explains the dichotomy in Ukraine between the two perspectives of Ukrainian history. This division came to a head with the new reconfigured national school curriculum, which the pro-Russian Ukrainians thought marginalised and discriminated against in favour of the more European-centric view of history (p.8). This thesis works with similar themes and topics but applies them to a Scottish setting.

In the Scottish context, the theories discussed thus far have been used as a theoretical locus for Stephen Reicher and Nick Hopkins' book, *Self and Nation* (2001). In this book, Reicher and Hopkins discuss the role of heroes in Scotland and how different political parties perceive and mobilise them. The Scottish National Party has long been accused of playing into old narratives of noble Scots fighting wars against oppressive Englishmen to foment anti-unionist sentiments. Reicher and Hopkins provide an example of such by the SNP MP, Jim Sillars' speaking in Falkirk before the 1992 elections:

> *This is an historic election and every one of us individually and collectively is on the spot in 1992. Just as in 1314 the political/military circumstances put the nation on the spot at Bannockburn. This is the modern Bannockburn. We're not talking about crossing swords, we're talking about crossing a ballot paper. But the essential issues are exactly the same. There was no way off the Bannockburn field in 1314. You either stood or you ran away. It's exactly the same in 1992. We either stand up and face our responsibilities or we bow the knee to power south of the border* (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001, p.144).

Reicher and Hopkins explain how although there is a precedent of nationalist politicians such as Sillars using this sort of rhetoric, it occurs on both sides of the political spectrum. They conclude that disagreement regarding historical perspectives is inevitable and frequent. As James Brow explains, 'in the struggle for community, re-visions of history are as pervasive as they are endlessly contested (Brow, 1990, p.5). Reicher and Hopkins' study complements this thesis greatly and goes a long way in providing it with both context and potential conclusions. This thesis, however, is a reconsideration of a similar question. Although Reicher and Hopkins's 2001 book is not too far removed from today, the political landscape in Scotland has

changed dramatically since then. Thus a new study may have very different conclusions than its counterpart twenty years prior. Reicher and Hopkins say in their conclusion that motifs change over time, and with an independent Scotland on the cards, 'who knows what a new Scotland could bring?' (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001, p.150).

Robert Fletcher first popularised the idea of Imperial Amnesia in the *Third World Quarterly*. Fletcher defines *imperialist amnesias* as 'a tendency on the part of "agents of postcolonialism" to either ignore the history of colonial domination in their accounts or to present a sanitised version of colonialism from which evidence of exploitation, persecution, subjugation and genocide has been effectively effaced' (Fletcher, 2012, p.423). In a Scottish context, this theory was deployed by Cait Gillespie in her Masters thesis. Gillespie's thesis looked at the 2007 bicentenary of the abolition of slavery with a comparative study of the British and Scottish reactions to the anniversary (Gillespie, 2017). Gillespie's study highlighted the lacklustre response by the Scottish government towards the bicentenary, an inertia which in relation to England was quite pronounced. This augments my study as it gives some evidence for the existence of Imperial Amnesia in Scotland. However, this thesis improves upon Gillespie's study as it looks at Imperial Amnesia through a cross-party lens and provides more insight into the political motivations behind the motif.

Language mobilisation has been studied all over Europe and further afield. Scholars such as Wawrzyniec Konrad Konarski have discussed language as a tool for ethnopolitics, and in his analysis, he applies his findings to Scotland inter alia (Konarski, 2015, p.28). In addition to this, publications such as *Gaelic in the New Scotland: Politics, Rhetoric and Public Discourse* by Wilson McLeod give a good overview of how Gaelic has developed in Scotland and how its perception amongst the Scottish people has changed over time (McLeod, 2001). This thesis will draw from both sets of studies to fill the lacuna that exists specifically pertaining to the mobilisation of Gaelic in the Scottish Politics of the last decade. As far as the research for this thesis could find, this is a topic that has avoided rigorous academic scrutiny.

Theoretical Framework

Nationalist movements often use history and language to consolidate state unity or inspire separatist sentiments. Ernest Gellner defines a nation by explaining that 'two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture, in turn, means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating' (Gellner, 1983, p.7). The idea of a common ancestry and a common culture must be created as part of this. Often this process consists of implementing historical and linguistic motifs.

Anthony Smith popularised ethno-symbolism when theorising about the relationship between language use and nationalist policies (Smith, 2009, p.1). With ethno-symbolism, the cultural importance of a language is not dependent on it being widely spoken, which is the case with the Celtic languages in the majority English-speaking areas of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Regarding nationalism in Scotland, it is arguably a unique case. This is because the independence movement in Scotland has never really had to fight to define Scotland as a nation, nor did the British state ever stand in the way of a referendum. However, the central theory of utilising language politically is still relevant, to what degree is arguably up for debate. Gellner describes the connection between language and the state as such a condition of modernity that nationalists campaigning for the autonomy of small nations could not but aspire to make the language of their nation the language of a new state. He argues that the very legitimacy of the new state would require it because 'modern loyalties are centred on political units whose boundaries are defined by the language … of an educational system' (Gellner, 1994, p.59). With the recent rise of Scottish Gaelic in public and political life in Scotland, it is crucial that in a study of the instrumentalisation of historical motifs, the Gaelic language renaissance must be included.

The importance of history in nation-building and nationalism has been mentioned. However, for this thesis, the relevant theory is not just that shared history is a crucial starting point for a nation but rather that the shared history may evolve. What was a universal understanding of a nation's history may change. In the case of Scottish nationalism, a transition might consist of

British elements of history being ignored in favour of distinctly Scottish narratives. This is what Hobsbawm meant by history being a retrospective mythology.

Romanticism is a theory that ties into the idea of history being malleable. Romanticism provides nationalists, particularly in ethnically diverse areas, with powerful weapons for the political mobilisation of whole communities. The return to medieval epochs and Saxon, Celtic and Norse themes by writers and artists such as Thomas Gray, Bishop Percy, William Blake and James Barry, and later Sir Walter Scott helped regions of substantial cultural diversity find an authentic English, Scots, Welsh, and Irish national distinctiveness (Smith, 2009, p.67). This is an important concept to understand for this thesis because it provides a greater understanding of historical motifs. The two motifs in question are not to be thought of as false narratives and those who promulgate them as liars or manipulators, but rather just another example of a theme which has, and arguably still, runs through all nationalisms. The formation of nations needs this plea to a shared past. Therefore, the romanticising of languages, historical symbols and figures, and culture all amount to what is a fundamental aspect of state-building.

One final theory which should be pondered is the levels of self-categorisation. This was first presented by Dresler-Hawke and is closely related to Imperial Amnesia. Dresler-Hawkes writes of the solution to the negative positioning imposed on Germans by their national history (Dresler-Hawke, 2000). Germans can utilise the process of high-level identification to deny culpability for historical injustices. For example, many Germans may identify at a higher level, such as European as opposed to German, or at a more regional or individual level. This is arguably one of the reasons for Imperial Amnesia in Scotland, by identifying as Scottish as opposed to British, might explain why some in Scotland do not feel such an imperial burden as those in England. Therefore, this theory would undergird this thesis' hypothesis that nationalists should be more prone to Imperial Amnesia.

Methodology

The research component of this thesis consists primarily of qualitative discourse analysis. By examining parliamentary debates, in addition to speeches and actions of individual MSPs, efforts will be made to distinguish the different motives behind the narratives promulgated by politicians from all three parties in question. In order to access parliamentary debates in both the Scottish and British parliaments from 2010 to 2020, the *Hansard* database and the Scottish Parliament Archive were invaluable. Another online resource that was of great value is *TheyWorkForYou*. These three online databases allowed for a wide range of comprehensive documents to be easily harnessed. Examples of such documents include House of Commons debates dating back to the General Election of December 1918, data on MPs dating back to 1806, and House of Commons written answers and written ministerial statements back to the General Election of June 2001. The databases also contain everything from the Northern Irish and, most importantly, Scottish parliaments. Each motif will be assessed, and the motives behind each party's instrumentalising will be discussed.

The debates that will be discussed for the Gaelic Renaissance motif are as follows: The National Gaelic Language Plan, 2012-2017 (2012), the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (10th Anniversary) (2015), and the National Plan for Gaelic (2018). These three debates were chosen as they span across the decade and represent significant debates regarding the status and encouragement of Gaelic in Scotland. To research Imperial Amnesia, this thesis will refer to five central debates, which are as follows: Scottish Studies, St Andrew's Day, Commonwealth Day 2015, Year of History, Heritage, and Archaeology, and Showing Solidarity with Anti-Racism. These debates represent the main occasions where Scotland and Britain's imperial legacy was discussed. The selection also gives a good sweep of the decade, contextualising any changing attitudes over the period.

The qualitative parts of the research in this thesis are augmented by various quantitative analyses. One method utilised the manifestos of the three main political parties from the Scottish and British parliamentary elections. The Labour Party, The Conservatives, and the Scottish National Party published six manifestos throughout the decade (2010, 2011, 2015,

2016, 2017, 2019). Through a simple study of the manifestos' lexicon, clear and convincing arguments can be made. Manifestos are simplified depictions of how a political party hopes to be perceived. Thus, they provide the thesis with an invaluable source of data collection.

Actions of the MPs and MSPs oath/affirmation taking will also be charted. This information came courtesy of Hansard. All data collected is displayed in the appendix section at the end of the thesis. Further statistical information will be retrieved from surveys carried out by previous studies, census results, and government statistics.

When analysing MSP/MP contributions and appearance, it is crucial to understand the composition of parliament throughout the decade. The two tables below show how many seats each party won at the various elections.

MSPs in parliament from the three main parties, out of 129 available seats (The Scottish Parliament, 2022).

Party	2011-2016	2016-2021
SNP	69	63
CON	15	24
LAB	37	24

Scottish MPs in the UK parliament from the three main parties, out of 59 available seats (UK Parliament, 2022).

Party	2010-2015	2015-2017	2017-2019	2019-Present
SNP	6	56	35	46
CON	1	1	13	6
LAB	41	1	7	1

Except for the 55th session of the UK parliament (2010-2015), the SNP has maintained a sizeable advantage over both the Conservatives and Labour. The numerical breakdown is important to note as it puts the statistical analysis in context. If the SNP MSPs or MPs contribute more to a debate on a particular motif, this is not evidence itself, as there are more SNP members in parliament. Therefore, only when a disproportionate numerical advantage or disadvantage exists can conclusions accurately be suggested.

Structure of Thesis:

The shape of the thesis will be broken into two parts, each focusing on two separate historical motifs. For Imperial Amnesia and the Gaelic Renaissance, respectively, the discussion will commence with an introduction to the history and nature of the debate surrounding each motif. This context will enhance the reader's understanding of each motif and allow them to grasp the subsequent findings and conclusions. The research will follow this for both motifs. Most of the research is focused primarily on the Scottish parliament, but where appropriate, research will also cross over to the British parliament. Due to the numerous connections and shared histories, it is not easy to give a complete representation of Scotland's parliament without reference to the British parliament. The research will primarily look at debates in Holyrood and manifestos, and other symbolic aspects of political praxis. Finally, a conclusion will be made about the nature of each motif's existence in Scottish politics, and this will then add to our shared understanding of historical instrumentalisation in politics.

Chapter 1: Gaelic Renaissance

Introduction

The last two hundred years have seen an insidious decline in the number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland. In 1755, Gaelic speakers made up 22.9% of the Scottish population. In 1901, this number fell to a mere 5.1%; by 1971, the figure had dropped again to 1.7%. According to the most recent census, only 1.1% of Scotland's population could speak Gaelic, and only 0.5% spoke the language at home (Census Records, 2011). For the majority of Scots living in Scotland's urbanised Central Belt, Gaelic has ceased to become a part of everyday Scottish life and now resides as a romanticised image of a foregone era. For many, Gaelic has a cultural value. However, there also exists a malign indifference to the language that, quite surprisingly, has been seen in the mainstream Scottish media up until very recently. In 1995, an article in *The Scotsman* referred to Gaelic as a 'low-level peasantish sort of debris that we need not be least reverential about' (McLeod, 2001, p.11). In 1999, the *Sunday Mail* published a similar sentiment, with an article stating that 'Gaelic should be allowed to die a quiet, dignified death' (p.12).

However, in recent decades, public opinion has made quite an extraordinary volte-face regarding the Gaelic language. *Gaelic Renaissance* has become the term used to describe the upsurge in support for the Gaelic language (Rogerson and Gloyer, 1995). The Gaelic Renaissance arguably began with the passing of the Gaelic language act in 2005, which elevated Gaelic's status to become an official language of Scotland. Since then, government initiatives in education, broadcasting, and the arts have undergirded the Gaelic language. Funding for these initiatives totalled around £12M in 2000, and as of the year 2021/22, funding has risen to just over £31M (For the complete statistics, see appendix 7.1).

On the whole, this rise in funding has enjoyed public support. In a survey carried out by the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey in 2012, from a sample size of 1180 people, 76% said that Gaelic was important to Scottish heritage to either a very important or fairly important extent. Only 17% said that Gaelic was not very important. Only 4% responded that Gaelic is not at all important to Scottish heritage (Paterson, O'Hanlon, Ormston and Reid, 2014, p.438). In a similar survey by the Scottish government in 2011, two-fifths of the total sample size stated

that Gaelic was important to their sense of national identity, with some 17% claiming that it was very important (West and Graham, 2011, p.6). Testament to this increase in the public interest, the language learning app Duolingo released its first Scottish Gaelic course in November 2019. The course attracted more than 50,000 active learners in just a few days which is almost more than the number of fluent Gaelic speakers in Scotland (Young, 2022).

Nevertheless, the increase in support for Gaelic institutions has not yet translated into a tangible increase in Gaelic speakers. The most recent census in Scotland was carried out earlier this year, with results set to be released in March 2023. The predictions for Gaelic speakers from the census results are set to be lower than the 2011 census. The number of Gaelic speakers is predicted to fall below speakers of immigrant languages such as Polish and Urdu. The level of Gaelic is so low amongst the Scottish population that most Scots would know the Spanish words *poco* and *perro* before they would know their Gaelic equivalents *beag* and *cù*. This is the foundation for the Gaelic Renaissance motif. How is it that the Gaelic language has enjoyed such a revival in public and government support, while only being spoken by 1% of the population?

A good way of furthering our understanding of the Gaelic motif is by the idea of posturing. It is not just the usage of Gaelic that is the focus of this thesis; it is the symbolic usage or posturing of the language that pertains best to the central theme of motif instrumentalisation. In the newly opened railway station at Tweedbank, in the Scottish Borders, a symbolic form of Gaelic can be observed. The platform sign provides the Gaelic translation, *Bruach Thuaidh*, even though there is probably not a single person in the village of Tweedbank that speaks Gaelic.[1] Therefore, this symbolic usage is the crux of the Gaelic Renaissance motif. It is a language that today is not a part of the majority of Scottish citizens' lives, but as a nation, Scotland has adopted it as an official language. The theoretical section of this thesis introduced some common theories regarding Language mobilisation. These theories will be prevalent throughout the research section and conclusions at the end of this chapter.

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[1] 2011 Census recorded only one Gaelic speaker out of Tweedbank's 2,040 population.

Research

The first aspect of this motif that needs to be ascertained to answer the research question is whether the promulgation of Gaelic in Scottish politics is a partisan affair. This distinction indicates whether Gaelic is promoted more by the SNP, Labour, or the Conservatives. In the past, there has been suspicion surrounding support for languages in the Scottish Parliament. Language academic Davie Horsburgh alludes to this suspicion in 2002, relating to Scotland's other minority autochthonous language, Scots. Horsburgh argues that 'The Labour Party is at best suspicious of supporters of the Scots language' and that the Conservative Party has 'always been suspicious of a language which is supported by the SNP' (Horsburgh, 2002, p.38). To what extent Horsburgh is correct in this party generalisation is debatable, as during a debate in the year 2000 regarding Gaelic, Labour minister, Alasdair Morrison, described the language as a 'precious jewel in the heart and soul of Scotland' (McLeod, 2001, p.10). Furthermore, Scottish Conservative Party's spokesman, Jamie MacGrigor, also spoke of Gaelic as a great asset, 'I cannot emphasise enough the value of Gaelic' (p.10). If a suspicion existed, or rather, still does, it is certainly not held party-wide. Any suspicion that may arise towards the Scots or Gaelic language is explained relatively easily. The nationalist connotations that accompany language mobilisation are well known. Therefore, suspicions are understandable when a nationalist party vigorously supports national language acquisition. Johann Herder goes as far as to define a nation as 'a separate natural being, which aspires for political recognition on the grounds of having a common language' (Konarski, 2015, p.33). To what extent these perceptions exist from 2010 to 2020 will be determined in due course.

Parliamentary debates, manifestos, and the number of Gaelic oaths and affirmations taken in parliament will provide good insight into the existence of a *parti pris*. Once this has been concluded, the discussion will focus on possible reasons for the party's usage of Gaelic. The central premise of determining partisanship is that if the nationalist party is far more engaged in the Gaelic language, this will apply to theories linking language and nationalism, such as ethno-symbolism. If the unionists also promulgate the Gaelic language, this could go against the preconceptions of Gaelic belonging to separatists. Of course, if it is felt that all parties promote Gaelic in the same way, Scotland could represent a real *sui generis* case of language and nationalism. It must also be said that if all parties promote Gaelic, this does not necessarily

allude to total agreement. As Reicher and Hopkins explain, 'one can agree on relevant events but differ when it comes to their interpretation' (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001, p.143).

<u>*Manifestos*</u>

During this thesis' research demarcation, there were two Scottish parliamentary elections, one in 2011 and a second in 2016. For the 2011 manifesto, the SNP pledged to support Gaelic in two separate sections, whereas Labour and the Conservatives supported Gaelic in just one. In the subsequent election's manifesto, the SNP discussed Gaelic in three different sections, and again, Labour and Conservatives each mentioned it once. Although this alludes to a slight numerical advantage for the SNP, all the discussions' tone and content were very similar. The Labour party manifesto in 2011 stated:

> *Scottish Labour is proud to celebrate the diversity of Scotland's many languages, including Gaelic ... We will support opportunities for learning Gaelic, including removing the obstacles to Gaelic education and increasing the number of Gaelic medium teachers where there is strong parental demand. We will encourage Gaelic broadcasting, Gaelic arts and increased visibility for the Gaelic language in Scotland. We will support the work of the Gaelic college in Skye, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, and will encourage new learners of the language, along with supporting those native speakers from the traditional Gaelic heartlands and beyond* (Election Manifesto of the Labour Party, 2011, p.88).

The Conservative manifesto of the same year published a similar sentiment *'We remain committed to the promotion of the Gaelic language and culture. Having fought hard to move BBC Alba on to Freeview, we will allow, within our new school's model, the creation of new Gaelic schools where there is local demand'* (The Scottish Conservative Manifesto, 2011, p.27). The SNP's discussion of the Gaelic language in their 2011 manifesto is remarkably similar to that of the Conservatives *'We will also continue to support the expansion of Gaelic medium education and will examine how we can introduce an entitlement to Gaelic medium education where reasonable demand exists* (The Scottish National Party Manifesto, 2011, p.24).

A detailed discussion of the semantics may provide some separation, but pragmatically, one can see very little difference in how the three parties promote Gaelic in their manifestos. Through frequency and tone, the manifestos are much alike; all three parties focus heavily on Gaelic education and show minimal variance in enthusiasm. From this initial analysis of manifestos, Gaelic in Scottish politics between 2010-2020 has been non-partisan. This conclusion could lead to the suspicion that the Gaelic Renaissance is not a nationalist tool as the two unionist parties match the SNP for enthusiasm. However, as the theory by Reicher and Hopkins goes, just because they both support the language does not mean they are portraying the motif in the same way. Therefore, it is not possible to exclude a nationalist motivation just yet.

Where is the disagreement if all three-party manifestos accept the status of Gaelic and hope for its revival and resurgence? Perhaps, they are promoting the same thing but with different interpretations of the effects. In the 2011 SNP manifesto, the idea of Gaelic promotion ties into the general concept of promoting Scottish Studies, *'Creating 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* (The Scottish National Party Manifesto, 2011, p.24). This passage ties Gaelic into a strong sense of Scottishness. It does not reference highland culture or the few areas where Gaelic survives as a community language but instead gives it a nationwide appeal. It is tough to find this sentiment in the Conservative or Labour manifestos. The Labour manifesto of 2016 states that Labour *'Recognises Scotland's rich cultural heritage including Gaelic, Scots and Nordic'* (The Scottish National Party, 2016, p.23). This quote has a much more diverse tone. Gaelic is portrayed more as a geographically and temporally constrained cultural feature than an all-encompassing tenet of Scottishness. The Conservative manifesto of 2011 depicts a similar image of Gaelic. 'We will allow, within our new schools model, the creation of new Gaelic Schools where there is local demand' (The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Manifesto, 2011, p.27). The emphasis here is on the 'local demand'. The Conservatives and Labour both show equal support for the language, but they view Gaelic as a part of Scotland's linguistic culture, rather than a national language of the whole country. Nevertheless, further research on other elements of political discourse is needed to substantiate these conclusions.
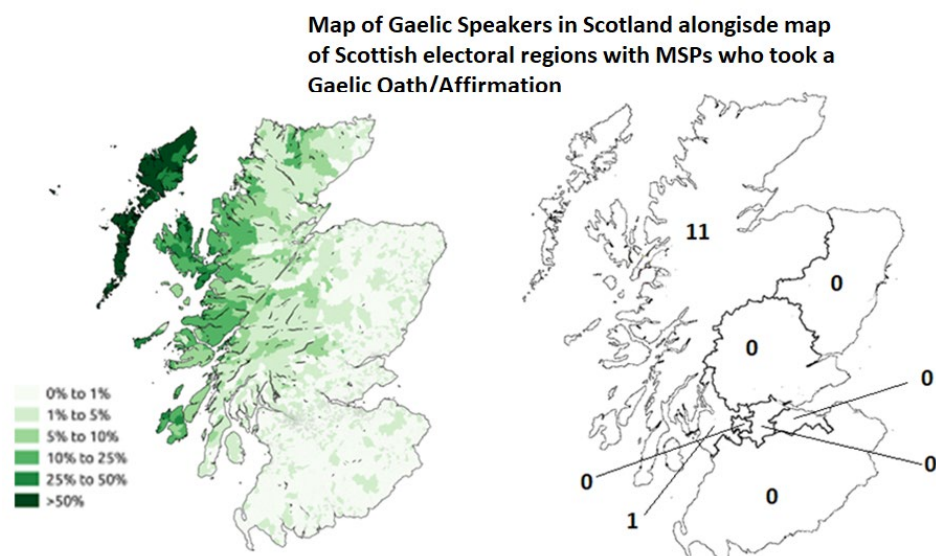
Oaths and Affirmations

One explanation common with the Instrumentalisation of historical motifs is that they are symbolic tools used by nationalists to distance their nascent states from the larger union. Anderson comments on the symbolic nature of languages, remarking that 'certain nationalist ideologues treat them as emblems of nation-ness, like flags, costumes, folk-dance, and the rest' (Anderson, 1983, p.122). Symbolic displays of the Gaelic language could potentially have a didactic purpose in Scottish politics. It could be a symbolic way of distancing Scotland from the rest of the United Kingdom or a way to tie in Scottish heritage and culture with the rest of the union. For example, if the United Kingdom adopted Gaelic as an official language, perhaps this would remove its power as a symbol of distinction. A good example of symbolic usages of Gaelic is the oaths and affirmations made by Scottish MSPs and MPs in parliament. Some MSPs and MPs chose to take their oaths/affirmations in Gaelic, which may not sound necessarily like a symbolic gesture, but when one looks closely, it is the perfect example of the performative language implementation.

Two examples of blatant posturing of the Gaelic language through parliamentary affirmations come courtesy of MP for Edinburgh North and Leith, Deidre Brock, and MP for West Dunbartonshire, Martin Docherty-Hughes. Brock was born in Australia to an English father and an Australian mother. She moved to Scotland with her partner at age 35; She does not speak Gaelic and represents a constituency with a Gaelic-speaking community making up a mere 0.7% of the population (Census Records, 2011). Therefore, Brock's Gaelic affirmation is a clear example of performative Gaelic, as neither she nor the vast majority of her constituents would even understand what she was saying in her affirmation. Martin Docherty-Hughes also gave a Gaelic affirmation even though he has minimal familiarity with the language. Upon taking the stand to give his affirmation, Hughes was presented with the written passage in Gaelic, to which he replied, 'Oh, they have changed it!' (Parliamentlive.tv, 2019). Clearly, this passage was different from the one which Hughes had memorised as he preceded to read the affirmation with incredible difficulty. Any Gaelic speaker could notice Hughes' glaring mispronunciations and stuttered rhythm. The point is not made to disparage Docherty-Hughes' efforts to learn Gaelic but rather to pose the question, why did he do the affirmation in a language that he cannot speak, nor do the vast majority of his constituency? McLeod alludes to this idea by saying that Gaelic in the public sphere 'tends to be used only ritualistically or

tokenistically' (McLeod, 2001, p.24). There is nothing wrong with tokenising a language per se. However, it does allude to suspicion of alternative motives. Often this would be, as discussed, linked with nationalist intent. It is too soon to say whether that is the case.

At the opening of the fourth Scottish parliamentary session (2011), out of the 129 MSPs, five gave their oaths/affirmations in Gaelic. All five of these MSPs represented the SNP. At the opening of the fifth session (2016), six MSPs took the Gaelic oath/affirmation, five of which represented the SNP, and the sixth represented the Green party (another pro-independence party). At first glance, this might suggest that the SNP are more prone to the performative promotion of the Gaelic language. Therefore in terms of the research question, this could provide evidence for a nationalist motive behind the Gaelic renaissance. Although reaching slightly out of the thesis' timeframe, the sixth session (2021) showed a slightly less convincing result. Out of the eight MSPs using Gaelic, five were from SNP, and one was from the Green Party. However, Labour and the Conservatives also had one MSP who took a Gaelic oath (See appendix 4.2 for a complete list of MSPs who took a Gaelic oath/affirmation). Perhaps nationalism is not the cause for this; a more convincing explanation may be the personal circumstance of the MSPs. Looking at the maps below, the areas where Gaelic is spoken show a correlation to the areas that elected MSPs who swore Gaelic oaths/affirmations. So, the conclusion can be made that the performative Gaelic oath/affirmations in parliament are much more affected by geography than by party politics.

Map of Gaelic Speakers in Scotland alongisde map of Scottish electoral regions with MSPs who took a Gaelic Oath/Affirmation

Perhaps, if the focus switches to looking at the Gaelic oaths and affirmations taken by Scottish MPs in the British parliament, different conclusions may be revealed. In 2019, nine of the 59 MPs in the UK parliament swore Gaelic oaths/affirmations. All nine of these MPs represented the SNP. Arguably, the reason for the higher percentage of Gaelic oaths in the UK parliament, as opposed to the Scottish parliament, is evidence that Gaelic is often symbolic. In a setting where Gaelic is not seen as necessary by the majority of the House, it might feel more necessary to be overtly supportive of the language. In other words, in the British context, Gaelic provides an opportunity to differentiate Scotland from the rest of the UK. It is not just supporting the language and those who speak it; it is adopting it to transform the geographical border between Scotland and England into a linguistic and cultural one that will foment further appetites for complete state independence. The electoral regions of the MPs taking Gaelic oaths in parliament are also much more arbitrarily spread out than those of the MSPs in the Scottish parliament, as seen in the map below. This further supports the idea that in the British parliament, Gaelic oaths and affirmations, and by extension, promoting Gaelic, can be argued to be a symbolic tool by the SNP to create a sense of othering between themselves and the United Kingdom.

Map of Scottish Electoral Regions with MPs who took Gaelic Oaths/Affirmations
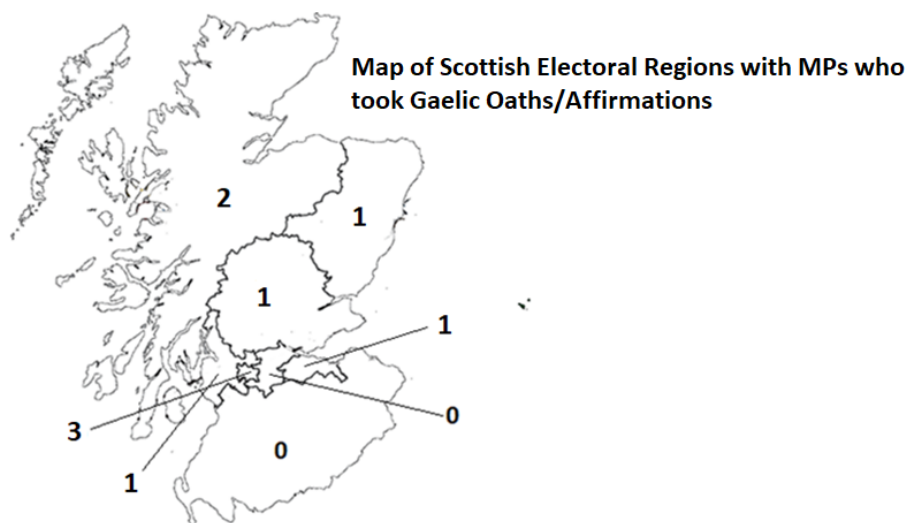
This research is helpful to the research question, as it adds evidence to the accusation that for the SNP, the Gaelic motif is a valuable tool for promoting nationalist politics. All three parties in Scotland share an enthusiasm for Gaelic. However, when looking deeper into the motivations, an argument can be made that nationalist politicians adopt the Gaelic language artificially as a way of differentiation. On the other hand, unionist politicians support the Gaelic

language for its intrinsic qualities as a rich thread in the tapestry of Scottish culture. The three debates outlined earlier in this thesis will now be consulted to consolidate this conclusion.

Debates in parliament

Much of what has been discussed thus far relates to the idea of a partisan bias for instrumentalising the Gaelic motif in Scottish politics. The party manifestos have confirmed this to a reasonable extent, but looking at the political discourse will prove this axiom beyond doubt. Nevertheless, before the discussion turns to the discourse, it is elucidating first to observe the MSP involvement in the debates surrounding Gaelic.

Thirteen MSPs gave contributions to the debate concerning the National Gaelic Language Plan 2012-2017. Six from the SNP, including Alasdair Allan, who proposed the motion, two from the Conservatives, and five from Labour. Eight MSPs made contributions to the 10-year anniversary of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. The SNP provided four, Labour and the Conservatives both provided one MSP, and the two remaining MSPs stood as independents. For the third debate, the National Plan for Gaelic, nineteen MSPs contributed to the proceedings. Eight from the SNP, five from the Conservatives, four from Labour, one Liberal Democrat, and one Green. From just the statistical involvement in the primary debates concerning Gaelic, the common thread of this research is replicated, as no solid partisan correlation is discernible. The figures more or less match what would be expected. The chart below provides these numbers in a more explicit format.

MSP involvement in debates concerning the Gaelic Language
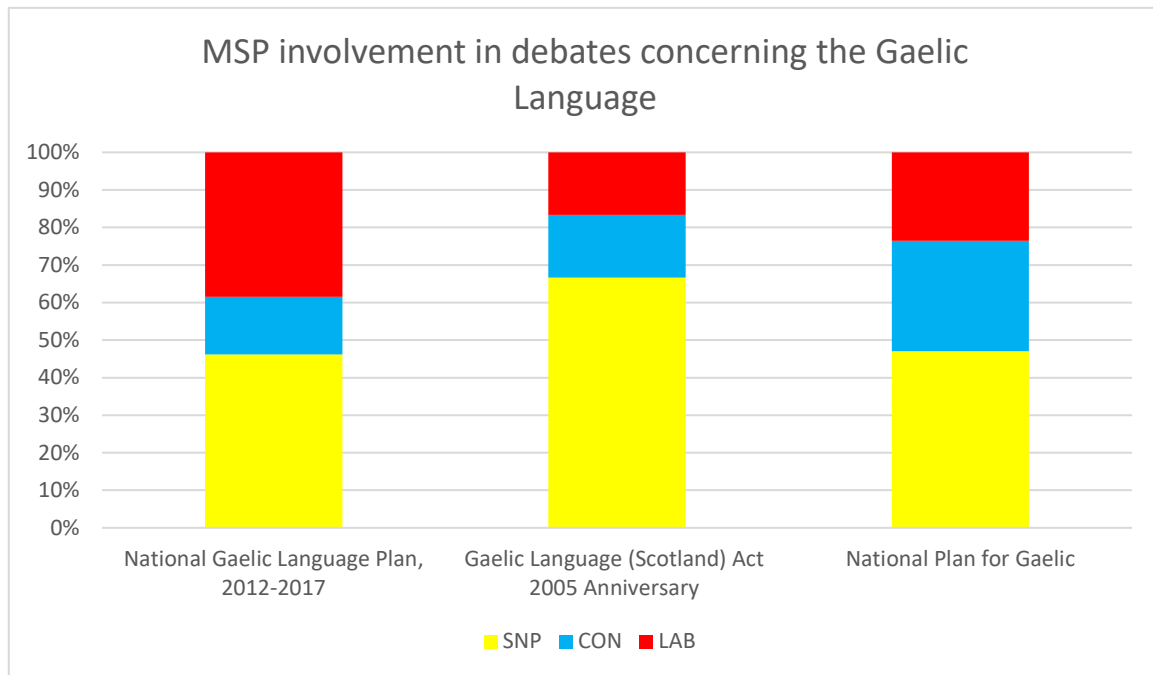
From the contributions made by the MSPs in the debates, it is clear that everyone shares an enthusiasm for Gaelic's survival and increased status. Conservative Leader Annabel Goldie gave a speech at the Gaelic language plan debate, indicative of the instrumentalising of historical motifs. Goldie stated that '*the temporal reach of Gaelic is not limited to the past; the language connects us to our future and informs the evolution of our society, our identities and our characters*' (TheyWorkForYou, 2012a). SNP MSP William Coffey followed Goldie's statements by adding that the Gaelic language '*plays a huge part in shaping who we are as a people and where we are going as a nation*' (TheyWorkForYou, 2012a). Both agree that the language's history is significant and has a vital role in Scottish society. So, what is the distinction?

Support for Gaelic exists across party lines, but do politicians use Gaelic as a political tool? Leader of the Conservatives, Annabel Goldie, remarked in the National Gaelic language plan debate that '*It was the Conservatives who ignited the Gaelic revival, in the early 1980s, by delivering £16 million of funding support for that purpose. We continue to work in co-operation with our partners to ensure that that impetus is sustained*' (TheyWorkForYou, 2012a). Labour member Iain Gray also took pride in his party's record with Gaelic promotion:

Scottish Labour has a good record of supporting the Gaelic language … in 2005, Labour-led Strathclyde Regional Council opened the first Gaelic-medium education unit at Sir John Maxwell primary school in 1985, and Labour-led Glasgow City Council opened the first standalone Gaelic School in 1999. The United Kingdom Labour Government ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 2001, and the Communications Act 2003 provided the legal underpinning for BBC Alba (TheyWorkForYou, 2018).

Conservative MSP Mary Scanlon then reminded the House of cross-party support when she remarked, *'I think that we can all claim success. Labour, the Lib Dems and the SNP contributed, but the Conservatives also contributed to Gaelic culture and language during the 1990s'* (TheyWorkForYou, 2015b). Katie Forbes of the SNP, also a Gaelic speaker, then summarised to enforce the depoliticisation of the Gaelic language, *'Although the debate is taking place in parliament, Gaelic is not a political thing. I am a member of the SNP, but I must say that it was the Tories who granted permission for Gaelic-Medium education in the first place, for 14 pupils in 1984, and it was Labour and the Liberal Democrats who introduced the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005'* (TheyWorkForYou, 2018).

The insistence by the MSPs for non-partisanship, accompanied by their willingness to remind the House of the excellent track record of their respective parties concerning Gaelic, is somewhat illogical. On the one hand, the House is reminded not to politicise the language, while at the same time, MSPs score points by reminding their contemporaries of partisan achievements. From the discourse throughout all three debates, this is a consistent theme; therefore, it is fair to posit that all three parties share enthusiasm for Gaelic and, to some degree, take pride in their commitments to the language. In other words, they score political points by paying lip service to the general support for Gaelic, which is growing throughout Scotland. This practice can be chalked down to the inevitability of party politics. When one side claims to have done something positive, it will undoubtedly be followed by the other side claiming they have done something even more positive. Therefore, for the scope of this thesis, the argument that Gaelic is being used to score political points will not be stressed. What is interesting from these discussions is whether or not there is a discernible difference in each party's motivation. That is what is most pressing for this research.

The argument that was made regarding both the manifestos and consultation of the oaths and affirmations, posed the question, how do the two sides perceive the motif. They both agree on the history and want to see history guide the future and support the status of Gaelic. Of course, the future they want to see is not the same, which is the main distinction. The SNP want to foment Gaelic as a distinctive feature of Scottish identity, which stands alone from the rest of the United Kingdom. The theoretical consensus is strong in this argument. In the case of Quebec and Catalonian Independence, Keating stresses how language policy is increasingly becoming an instrument of nation-building' (Keating, 1997, p.701). Hobsbawm's theory further pushes the importance of language for nationalists, 'language multiply with states; not the other way round' (Hobsbawm, 1992, p.63). Therefore it is very hard to deny that the motivation behind the SNP's promulgation of the Gaelic motif is separatist at heart. If this is denied, Scotland truly is a unique case, and the conclusion will have opened up many more questions than it has answers.

From the debates, just as with the manifestos, it is noticeable that when referring to the Gaelic language, the SNP politicians tend to use it very broadly to define the nation and stress its importance to Scottish identity. Whereas the SNP uses terminology which depicts the whole of Scotland embracing the language to its fullest, the Conservatives stress the diversity of Scotland's culture and understand the difference in geographical persuasions. Jamie Johnston of the Conservatives discussed the other autochthonous languages of Scotland, Scots:

> *Moving beyond the Gaelic-speaking areas, we see a huge diversity of cultures in Scotland. I am an Orcadian* [inhabitant of the Orkney Islands]*, and people in our islands most likely moved from speaking Pictish to speaking Norse and then English without any historical Gaelic tradition. It remains a matter of academic speculation how closely the Pictish language was related to the insular Celtic languages of Britain. In other areas that I represent, there is a long Doric tradition – in the Highlands and Islands, there is a distinct Moray and Nairn Sub-dialect of that. We also know well of other languages that have been brought to Scotland more recently by our migrant communities* (TheyWorkForYou, 2018).

This sounds more like a plea to the value of culture and preserving different traditions and customs than it does a nationalist call to linguistic arms. Johnston continues to remark that

'Languages are not political beasts, much less political weapons, and culture thrives by crossing barriers, not by being exclusive or exclusionary' (TheyWorkForYou, 2018). Oliver Mundell, also of the Conservatives, stresses geographical diversity by saying *'It is important that those of us who live in the south of Scotland in communities where Gaelic has not been a traditional part of the heritage or oral traditions … it is clear that the cultural connection with the language is not the same in all parts of the country'* (TheyWorkForYou, 2018). In response to this, SNP's Alasdair Allan asked *'Does Oliver Mundell realise that the big stone in Gretna, the Lochmaben stone, has a Gaelic name, and that it is named after a stone, not a loch? Is he seriously suggesting that Gaelic has never been part of the heritage of the South of Scotland?'*(TheyWorkForYou, 2018). This response is a rather tenuous argument for Gaelic's relevancy in the South-West of Scotland. It is further evidence of the SNP's refusal to view Gaelic as a regional language of Scotland that, although important and worthwhile, does not fully represent the whole of Scotland. This is the argument that Mr Mundell was making and shows quite a clear distinction between the two sides' usage and perception of Gaelic.

Conclusion

The hypothesis of this thesis predicted that the Scottish National Party would interact with the Gaelic Renaissance motif far more than other parties due to the close theoretical and historical ties of language mobilisation and nationalism. From previous studies and precedents in Europe and around the world, this was an understandable conclusion to draw. However, from the research displayed thus far, quite a different conclusion has been reached.

All three major Scottish political parties are congruent regarding support, engagement, and general interest in the survival of the Gaelic language. Through manifestos, engagement with the language, and support giving in debates, it is fair to say that Gaelic in Scotland is a non-partisan component of politics. However, just because all three parties share an enthusiasm for Gaelic does not mean they all share the same motivation. With the aid of the theory presented by Reicher and Hopkins, a closer look at the source material revealed a slightly different perspective on the role of Gaelic. The Scottish National Party looked upon Gaelic as a symbol of Scottish identity in contrast to the British state. Demonstrated by their greater tendency to use Gaelic in their UK oaths as opposed to those oaths taken in the Scottish parliament. In addition to this, the discourse of the SNP MSPs and MPs clearly demonstrated a willingness to identify Scotland holistically with Gaelic. On the contrary, the Conservatives and Labour looked upon Gaelic as a valuable and important piece of Scottish culture and heritage. However, they were not so inclined to identify it as representative of Scotland as a whole. They were also certainly not inclined to use it as a tool for distancing Scotland from the United Kingdom.

So, what does this mean for the broader understanding of the instrumentalisation of historical motifs? Motifs mean different things to different people. It is not always that motifs are at odds with each other, but rather that the people who posit them have different perspectives. As put by Brow, 'Memory is less stable than the events it recollects, and knowledge of what happened in the past is always subject to selective retention, innocent amnesia, and tendentious re-interpretation' (Brow, 1990, p.3). Motifs are not stagnant, the perception of Gaelic in Scotland today is very different than it was thirty years ago, and in another thirty years, undoubtedly, it

will have transformed again. The chapter augments the idea of malleable histories, and a discussion of Imperial Amnesia will likely provide similar results.

Chapter 2: Imperial Amnesia

Introduction

The implementation of history into political discourse has been discussed and argued at length in academia. Myths of history are forever being manipulated, moulded, and made up to serve current perspectives and motivations. In the Scottish context, no historical myth is more revered and well-known than that of Sir William Wallace. It is not that Wallace himself was a myth but rather the way he was perceived and how this perception has changed over time that has warranted mythological status. Wallace is known for his victorious defeat of the English at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297, popularised worldwide by Mel Gibson's 1995 Hollywood blockbuster, *Braveheart*. Wallace's legacy is often presumed to incur anti-English sentiment; however, this has not always been the case. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Wallace was often used as a figure of the union. Scots were reminded that Wallace's struggles for freedom and liberty had set the foundation for the possibility of a union in 1707. As Benjamin Wilkie explains, 'because Scotland remained unconquered, it could form a beneficial and equal union with England in the eighteenth century' (Wilkie, 2015, p.141). James Coleman, speaking of this era, expands on this unionist element to Wallace's legacy by describing his monument in Stirling as 'unionist-nationalism in stone' (Coleman, 2007, p.151). Today, however, the instrumentalisation of Wallace is often mobilised in the other direction. Former Scottish first minister, Alex Salmond, in his speech at the SNP Annual Conference in Perth, 1995 enacted the deeds of Wallace:

> *Perhaps they are starting to realise the power of the story of Wallace on the big screen. They were certainly having trouble explaining away the message. Michael* [Michael Forsyth, Conservative Secretary of State for Scotland] *said that Wallace was a fighter for Scottish "interests". George said he fought for Scottish "identity". Notice this difficulty with the "I" word. The one word they did not want to mention was INDEPENDENCE, which is what Wallace was actually fighting for. So, we do not intend to allow Unionist politicians to tell us how we should commemorate William Wallace* (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001, p.134).

This speech is an extraordinary example of history being used to influence contemporary political issues. The idea that a war fought over 700 years ago would have any relevance to the status of Scotland's sovereignty in the modern day is surprising and disheartening. The

Scotland which William Wallace was fighting for bears minimal resemblance to the Scotland of today, and thus, his political relevance should be moot. However, the lesson from this discussion, is just how malleable history is.

However, the motif this chapter intends to focus on is not Wallace but rather the British Empire and its legacy surrounding the slave trade. As previously mentioned, the term Imperial Amnesia was first popularised by Robert Fletcher and essentially defined the act of forgetting or not identifying with a nation's colonial past. Michael Taussig conceptualised Imperial Amnesia as a 'public secret', something commonly known but not generally acknowledged (Taussig, 1999, p.246). This definition is a good way of looking at the theory in a Scottish context. It is not that knowledge of Scotland's colonial past has been forgotten or is not known, but rather that the people and state do not overly address or identify with that part of their history. It is tough to claim genuine ignorance in modern times, as prominent historians such as Tom Devine (1999), John Mackenzie (Mackenzie and Devine, 2011), Michael Fry (1990), and Edward Spiers (2006) have all written in-depth about the various ways Scotland were involved throughout the British Empire. So, it is not that the history is not known, but how Scotland identifies with that history, and indeed, how this manifests in contemporary Scottish politics that, is the impetus for this chapter.

In 2014, a YouGov survey posed the question, '*Thinking about the British Empire, would you say it is more something to be proud of or more something to be ashamed of?*' Of the 1,741 British adults surveyed, 59% answered that *the empire was something to be proud of*; 19% said it was *something to be ashamed of*, and 23% responded with, *I do not know*. Interestingly, out of the Scottish contingent, only 46% answered that *the empire was something to be proud of*, with 27% considering it *something to be ashamed of* and 27% saying that they *do not know* (YouGov, 2014). This provides some evidence for the starting point that in Scotland, there is more of a tendency to not identify with their imperial past. However, the central question of this chapter is really how does Imperial Amnesia manifest within the three main political parties. By discussing this question, lessons will be learnt regarding contemporary Scottish politics' use of historical motifs, and a greater understanding of the instrumentalisation of historical motifs as a whole. The sub-question for this chapter is, to what extent is Imperial Amnesia present in Scottish politics, and what motivations lay behind it?

Research

The first axiom that this chapter aims to determine is the partisanship of Imperial Amnesia. The hypothesis is that a party which wishes to detach itself from the United Kingdom would be more likely to exhibit Imperial Amnesia. If such a one-sided occurrence of Imperial Amnesia exists, this will provide a good understanding of nationalism and the process of re-imaging a shared past. However, if the findings show a similar occurrence on both sides, then perhaps the conclusion will ask more questions than it does provide answers.

Manifestos

The six manifestos published by the three main parties provide an excellent resource for determining how each party displays itself in the political sphere. Concerning Imperial Amnesia, a quantitative scan of all eighteen manifestos for semantics relating to the British Empire, the legacy of slavery, and the modern-day relationship with the former colonies, provides some interesting results.

The Conservative manifestos often refer to Britain's current relationship with the Commonwealth. The 2010 manifesto pledged to 'focus more on the poorest, paying particular attention to development within the Commonwealth' (The Conservative Manifesto, 2010, p.118). The 2015 manifesto affirms this commitment to the Commonwealth by promising to tackle global problems within the Commonwealth framework. In addition to this, the manifesto explained how Britain can, and should, strengthen its relationship with the Commonwealth allies and promote democracy throughout the association (p.76). Although these statements pertain to the modern era, they are still relevant for this thesis as they show the Conservative party looking at the world through a Commonwealth lens. In other words, this expresses a desire to embrace imperial ties. However, one aspect of Imperial Amnesia that does show up is the mention of modern-day slavery. In the 2017 manifesto, it states '*We will lead the fight against modern slavery, just as we overcame the trade in slavery two-hundred years ago*' (The Conservative Manifesto, 2017, p.38). Similarly, in the 2019 manifesto, it reads '*From helping to end the slave trade to tackling modern slavery, the UK has long been a beacon of freedom and human rights*' (The Conservative Party Manifesto, 2019, p.53). These references clearly

brush over Britain's role in the brutal slave trade before 1833. It is not that they are ignoring the slave trade but rather cherry-picking and manipulating history to reflect positively on Britain.

The Labour Party, similarly to the Conservatives, often refer to the ties with the Commonwealth in the modern era. Through diplomatic and investment ties, the Labour manifestos are markedly outward-looking in their perspectives. The 2019 manifesto is of particular note as it is the only manifesto of the eighteen to directly reference Britain's slave past. In the manifesto, Labour pledge to *'Create an emancipation educational trust to educate around migration and colonialism, and to address the legacy of slavery and teach how it interrupted a rich and powerful black history, which is also British history'* (The Labour Party Manifesto, 2019, p.67). This is direct evidence against Imperial Amnesia within the Labour party, but it does come at the end of a decade where all five previous manifestos were bereft of such mentions.

In all but one of the six SNP manifestos, any mentions of historical or modern connections with the former British Empire are absent. The one mention comes by the 2019 manifesto, in which the SNP calls for *'Commonwealth personnel in the UK armed forces and their families to receive indefinite right to remain during and after service in the UK* military' (The Scottish National Party Manifesto, 2019, p.50). It is clear from the manifestos that the SNP in no way wants to promote themselves with an imperial legacy. Although some dues are paid to the Commonwealth veterans of the British army, it is clear that there is no desire to see Scotland represented closely with its British imperial past.

By looking at the manifestos, it is clear that addressing the legacy of slavery is not particularly important for any three of the major parties. All bar the Labour manifesto of 2019 did not mention Britain's role in the slave trade. However, Labour and the Conservatives see Scotland and Britain's future role as heavily embedded in the Commonwealth framework. It could be argued that all three parties reveal Imperial Amnesia, but just as with the Gaelic motif, it is how the motif is perceived that is important, not just its occurrence. It is clear that the SNP want to remove themselves entirely from the legacy of the empire, as in their opinion, the empire was the archetypal institution which kept Scotland from achieving sovereignty. On the other hand,

the unionist parties, Labour and the Conservatives, too, avoid direct reference to certain harmful elements of the imperial past and harness it in a positive way to maintain the global outreach of a united Britain and a united Commonwealth. Anthony Smith explains this transition to a positive narrative concerning British history *'The imperial heritage and its underpinning values have been largely rejected; yet the idea of Britain as a world leader, at least in moral terms, remains intact. Empire has now been transmuted into Commonwealth, and the country has become, in its own eyes, something of a multicultural magnet for immigrants'* (Smith, 2009, p.35).

Debates

Between the years 2010 to 2020, the Scottish parliament hosted very few debates about Scotland's imperial legacy or on the general topic of the transatlantic slave trade. On five occasions, there were sessions with considerable attention afforded to Scotland's history and imperial legacy. The discussion that follows is centred on these five debates.

<u>Scottish Studies – in the Scottish Parliament on 29th September 2011</u>

The first debate which will be discussed occurred on the 29th of September 2011, in a debate about the inclusion of Scottish studies within the national curriculum. The debate was proposed by SNP's Alasdair Allan, who synopsised the debate's intention for Schools in Scotland to 'give them [Scottish School Children] access to and knowledge of their country's culture' (TheyWorkForYou, 2011). This is an interesting debate as school curriculums are the perfect setting for historical instrumentalisation. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, Marko Pavlyshyn provides Ukraine as an example of a debate regarding school curriculums and the embedded motifs (Pavlyshyn, 2006). Jean Urquhart of the SNP began the debate by discussing Scotland's role in the British Empire:

> *Of course, Scotland's history is not something that we can always be proud of. Our role in the British Empire, in slavery and in land acquisition in other countries are all part of it and need to be learned. We need to learn about our mistakes and although our past can be inglorious, that is no reason not to teach history; indeed, it is a reason why it should be taught well, properly and exactly* (TheyWorkForYou, 2011).

In terms of the motif, Urquhart is quite evident with her acknowledgement of Scotland's role in slavery and the fact that it is important to learn this history and not shy away from it. Urquhart was followed by Joan McAlpine, of the SNP, and Jenny Mara, of Labour, who both reference accusations of Imperial Amnesia. McAlpine addresses the common myth that Scotland was a colony itself as she mentions the *'Difficulties and potential offensiveness that are inherent in comparing Scotland's experience to that of peoples from former colonies of the British Empire'* (TheyWorkForYou, 2011). McAlpine substantiates these comments by referencing the many roles that Scots played throughout the empire. Marra then questions the government by ensuring that Imperial Amnesia will not exist in the Scottish Studies of the new curriculum. *'Can he assure me that proper emphasis will be placed on debates and arguments in Scottish history? Will we shine a light on the dark days of our past, such as the Highland clearances, the Scottish role in empire and our role in slavery?'* (TheyWorkForYou, 2011). This is a clear example of suspicion from a Labour MSP towards an SNP MSP. The suspicion is that the SNP government will try and manipulate Scottish history to replace the negative aspects. Presumably this fear comes from beliefs that this action would have nationalist intentions. Michael Russel of the SNP responds to this accusation by stressing the importance of learning about slavery:

> *Scottish Studies is about joining things up ... Let us touch on the Scottish experience of slavery. Yes, it needs to be taught. The role of Scottish slave traders needs to be taught* (TheyWorkForYou, 2011).

What is interesting is the follow-up to this point, where Russel stresses the importance of learning all aspects of British history, not just Scottish history:

> *At the ironworks, there is a monument and a tribute to Nelson and the battle of Trafalgar. Yes, the history of the union is part of the history of this country. That needs to be taught too* (TheyWorkForYou, 2011).

This is not only a rejection of Imperial Amnesia; it is a clear display of intent to have the clearest and most accurate representation of Scotland's history possible. From the theories that undergirded the hypothesis for this thesis, thus far, the political discourse has shown quite the opposite. If following usual trends, the SNP should distance itself from negative aspects of Scottish history or Unionist aspects. This does not appear to be happening. No overt or implicit rejections of Scotland's involvement in slavery could be found in this debate. From this, the

Imperial Amnesia motif seems to not be as prevalent as hypothesised, and much alike the Gaelic language, appears to be very non-partisan.

St Andrew's Day – in the Scottish Parliament on 27th November 2012

The next debate that will be consulted, occurred near St Andrew's Day the following year. Parliament met to discuss the motion by SNP's Fiona Hyslop, which aimed to celebrate Scotland's heritage and historical legacy. Annabel Goldie, leader of the conservatives at the time, stated to the House *'I remind parliament that it was together, as part of the United Kingdom, that we led the fight against slavery and delivered huge social reform and the universal franchise, which were made possible by acts of the parliament of the United Kingdom, so we can all Scots and English alike, take pride in that'* (TheyWorkForYou, 2012b). This is a perfect example of viewing a national history through an optimistic lens. It is true that Britain abolished slavery in the 1830s, before the majority of the world, but it is also true that for centuries prior, Britain had been leading the way in the transatlantic slave trade. What is most telling from this, however, is the insistence that it was alongside England and the wider United Kingdom that Scotland fought to abolish slavery. This, therefore, does not only portray Scotland's history positively, but also in the framework of the United Kingdom. Goldie is arguably instrumentalising history to promote a positive image of Scotland within the United Kingdom. As Liu and Hilton remark, 'the great advantage of history for politicians is that most of the participants in it are dead, and while immortal as symbols, can speak only through the tongues of present-day interpreters' (Hilton and Liu, 2005, p.3). This argument by Goldie was quickly interjected by Independent MSP Margo MacDonald, who stated, 'On a point of historical accuracy, we have nothing to be proud of in Scotland when it comes to the slave trade' (TheyWorkForYou, 2012b). Goldie's speech continued on without much heed being paid to MacDonald's point. So, from this, it could be said that there is more Imperial Amnesia being shown from the unionist sections of the Scottish parliament than from the nationalists. The important factor here is not which side of parliament presents Scottish history more positively but how each side present the history in a Scottish or a Scottish/British framework.

<u>Commonwealth Day 2015 – in the Scottish Parliament on 11th March 2015</u>

In the name of Patricia Ferguson of Labour, this debate, held on Commonwealth Day 2015, discussed different aspects of Scotland's role within the Commonwealth. SNP's Humza Yousef gave an impassioned speech about his thoughts on the Commonwealth:

> *My parents came from different parts of the Commonwealth … The Commonwealth was, of course, born out of difficult circumstances and a challenging part of our history. I do not just mean the UK's history, as Scotland played a huge role in the British Empire, with Glasgow being known as the second city of the empire. There are visual reminders of that in Glasgow when we walk along streets such as Buchanan Street, Ingram Street and Bell Street, which were named after various slave owners. Glasgow and Scotland played a role in the British Empire too … What is important for us, whether in Scotland or the United Kingdom, is to ensure that we have learned from that history and that the Commonwealth, which has become something positive, continues to be a force for good* (TheyWorkForYou, 2015a).

This is an honest admission of Scotland's role in slavery, but also a narrative heavily embedded within a British framework. It could be argued that these acknowledgements are few and far between, but what can be said thus far from researching the political discourse through Scottish debates is that blatant Imperial Amnesia is not as prominent a force as initially hypothesised.

<u>Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology – in the Scottish Parliament on 31st January 2017</u>

The discussion surrounding the year of history, heritage and archaeology in 2017 is the second debate promoted by SNP's Fiona Hyslop. This debate begins to provide some answers to the research question. A trend becomes noticeable; when debates are intended to celebrate the history and heritage of Scotland, slavery and negative aspects of the empire get pushed to the wayside. Conservative MSP, Jamie Greene, gave a long address to the House, which outlined the many different aspects of Scottish history raised by various MSPs in the debate:

> *Colleagues across the chamber have talked about the importance of Scotland's heritage for tourism, culture and education. We have discussed the need to foster the skills and craftsmanship that maintaining our historic buildings requires … In the Scotsman today, I read about the launch of a new Jacobite*

trail that covers a huge part of my region …Oliver Mundell spoke about Robert Burns. No longer confined to suppers and speeches, we can all walk the hills that he walked and get fou [drunk] *in the pubs that he frequented … Alison Harris spoke about the great role that Falkirk has played in the history of Scotland … Alexander Stewart spoke of the importance of bringing together the creative industries, the museums, the trusts and our agencies. He also gave a warning that we cannot be complacent: in today's world, tourism is fiercely competitive and getting on a plane is just as easy as getting on a bus* (TheyWorkForYou, 2017).

This might be telling for the broader question. MSPs will openly discuss Scotland's role in slavery in a debate surrounding slavery or race relations. It is less common to see it in a debate intended to promote Scottishness. Perhaps what is seen here is the relationship between the Scottish parliament and the general population. In the last decade, we have seen a change in how the Scottish people see their history, which is reflected in this political discourse. The general idea is that politicians are prone to imbue a specific aspect of history for a political gain. When a debate is about race relations, it is undoubtedly beneficial to acknowledge imperialism. However, when Scottishness is being discussed, neither side of the parliament wants to denigrate or make adverse claims about Scotland. This appears as Imperial Amnesia but it is, arguably, to be expected. James MacPherson of the SNP, augments this conclusion *'From the fishing communities of Newhaven to the industry of Granton, from the internationalism of the old port of Leith to the influence of imperial commerce and the slave trade in the residential development of Inverleith and Trinity, the history and heritage of the constituency that I have the privilege to represent are varied and complex and are bound into our wider stories and the achievements and mistakes of generations past'* (TheyWorkForYou, 2017). While MacPherson does mention the slave trade fleetingly, it is clear that he is spinning a positive lens on the 'imperial commerce' of Edinburgh's past. Neil Findlay of Labour pays more homage to the negative parts of Scotland's history but again is wholly positive in his outlook:

We need to analyse our history critically and learn from it. We need to learn about Scotland's role in empire building and the slave trade. We need to hear about huge political figures such as Hardie, Maxton and Jimmy Reid, about events such as those at the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, Timex and Piper Alpha, and about Glasgow's role in fighting apartheid (TheyWorkForYou, 2017).

This debate has highlighted the trend that Imperial Amnesia flares up, when the subject matter is Scottish pride. However, what can this tell us about the differences between the different parties. This tells us that with the instrumentalisation of historical motifs, both sides of the political spectrum will instrumentalise history in the same way but for a different goal. Similarly to the Gaelic motif, pro-separatist politicians and unionist politicians in Scotland both promote very similar aspects of Scottishness. This is quite an unusual thing, as other nations with internal sovereignty disputes often have dichotomies of national narratives. One such example is Ukraine, which was discussed earlier at the behest of Marko Pavlyshyn in the historiography of this thesis.

From looking at debates throughout the decade, it is clear that MSPs from all parties are taking heed of Scotland's imperial past and the amnesia and bias that was posited by the theoretical expectation and historiography of Imperial Amnesia have proven to be fading. Although 2020 extends slightly out of my temporal delineation, a debate during this year provide evidence for this conclusion's continuation.

Showing Solidarity with Anti-Racism – in the Scottish Parliament on 10th June 2020

The showing solidarity with anti-racism discussion in the Scottish parliament came two weeks after the death of George Floyd. In the aftermath of this event, discussions of racial equality were on the rise in the whole of the United Kingdom. In showing respect to the death of George Floyd, the MSPs also paid tribute to Scotland's broader relationship with racial equality.

Christina McKelvie (SNP) began the discussion by saying *'Last year, I undertook a tour of Glasgow- not for the first time- to learn more about the city's links to the historic slave trade, and I was struck by just how much that terrible stain on our history is still woven throughout the fabric of that great city. Although today, we are resolutely focused on improving the lives of black and minority ethnic people, we must not forget that we once enabled the terrible practice of slavery'* (TheyWorkForYou, 2020). Pauline McNeill (LAB) followed, *'The history of African, Caribbean and Asian people and their contributions to Scottish history is often forgotten or relegated to a bit part. We want the opportunity to promote an inclusive*

history of Scotland (TheyWorkForYou, 2020). Jamie Greene (CON) came to an eloquent denouement:

> *Education lies at the heart of changing attitudes. That iconic image of Glasgow, the Duke of Wellington with a cone on his head, sits in front of the building that houses the gallery of modern art, which was built by William Cunningham, a tobacco lord who made his fortunes from the triangular slave trade. What have we done? We have turned that building into a beacon of light, art, modern ability and social maturity. We did not knock it down. We do not rip statues down; we stick cones on their head, or we stick them in museums ... That is what we do in Scotland. We face our gritty and dark past in the same way that we face darkness today. Whether it is Edinburgh's new town or the mansions that litter the Clyde, these are physical embodiments of the Scottish enlightenment that also serve as reminders of the grotesque history of the wealth on which they were built* (TheyWorkForYou, 2020).

In this debate, all three major parties completely disparaged Imperial Amnesia. This debate is indicative of the gradual change that has been noticed across the decade in politics and public life. It is clear that Imperial Amnesia is beginning to be addressed and that very little partisan bias exists in its perpetrators.

Conclusion

Cait Gillespie's Masters thesis presented the copious evidence of imperial amnesia found in Scotland's reaction to the 2007 bicentenary of the abolition of slavery. This thesis intended to take the study and apply the concepts to a more contemporary time frame with a cross-party lens. This process has proven that Imperial Amnesia in Scottish politics is not as abundant as initially thought, and the partisan bias is minimal.

From the research into the party manifestos, this thesis has highlighted a noticeable dearth of admissions of guilt or intentions for retribution for Britain's imperial past and involvement with slavery. However, upon closer inspection, it is clear that although all three parties are guilty to some degree of Imperial Amnesia, they do so in very different ways. Labour and the Conservatives fail to address the negative imperial past but do so in a way that reflects positively on Britain and the general concept of Britishness. The SNP also fail to address the negative past, but they do so not out of concern for Imperial Amnesia but as a way to distance themselves from the British state. The Imperial Amnesia from the perspective of Labour and the Conservatives is therefore only partial; it is not that they forget their imperial past, but instead, they paint it in a positive light. The SNP, on the other hand, try their best to ignore it completely.

The debates provided somewhat varying results. The first debate concerning the creation of 'Scottish Studies' in schools showed Imperial Amnesia to be negligible. From this debate alone, it would seem that the hypothesised prevalence of Imperial Amnesia in Scottish politics was false. However, the debate on St Andrews day did not continue this conclusion. This debate saw a glaringly obvious example of Imperial Amnesia by the Conservative leader. However, similarly to the manifestos, the omission of acceptance was done in a way that moulded the imperial past rather than disputed its existence. The focus was shifted from Britain's involvement in the slave trade to their involvement in abolition. The debate on Commonwealth Day came to the same conclusion as the one for Scottish studies. A speech by SNP's Humza Yusef addressed the imperial past and accepted Britain and Scotland's role in it. Furthermore, the debate on the year of history, heritage, and archaeology, as well as the solidarity with anti-

racism debate, all go against the accusation of Imperial Amnesia in Scottish politics. From the debates alone, one is led to doubt the strong existence of Imperial Amnesia in Scottish politics. The five debates researched were spread over the decade, and the noticeable trend in Imperial Amnesia was indicative of the trends regarding race relations in Scotland and the UK. Imperial Amnesia is not as strong now as it was in 2010 or further in the past.

The common thread in this chapter and throughout the thesis is how motifs are framed. The motif is present, but just because both sides of the political divide are guilty of Imperial Amnesia does not mean they do it in the same way. It is clear that Imperial Amnesia exists in the political discourse of the SNP, Labour, and the Conservatives to some degree, but undoubtedly, they have different aims. With these aims, they do not create different motifs but use the same motifs and implement them differently. The unionists are more prone to ignore the negative aspects of the British Empire and project the positives in a manner closely linked to Scotland. The SNP, on the other hand, are more likely to ignore the empire altogether. Not because they feel more ashamed of the actions, but rather because it is an expedient way of disassociating with the British state. This nuanced look at Imperial Amnesia is similar to that of the Gaelic Renaissance, as they both demonstrate the versatility of motifs, the importance of studying the motif itself, and the importance of the people and institutions mobilising them.

Conclusion, Limitations and Further Research

It is undeniable that the Scottish National Party use history in their arguments. As Eric Woods explains, 'Nationalism may involve the combination of culture and politics, but for many of its prominent students, the former is subordinate to the latter' (Woods, 2016, p.1). There are many overt examples of the SNP using history, such as when campaigners handed out flyers outside cinema screenings of Braveheart. There are also more subtle examples, such as the SNP government changing the national arts programme, 'One Scotland, Many Cultures' to its new name, 'One Scotland' (Duelund, 2016, p.5). The higher propensity of SNP engagement in such practices was the starting point of this thesis, but through all the various discussions of political discourse, no valid partisanship existed. However, this does not mean that the instrumentalisation of history in Scotland is homogenous.

The realignment of identity and history runs through the core of this thesis' research, but it is not the central argument. What this thesis has presented to the reader is the nuisance in historical motifs. They are tools, not facts. They can be manipulated and altered to fit whoever requires them. Therefore, future studies should not solely rely on the tangible manner of motifs but instead look at who is using them, why they are using them, and what might be the result from using them. Through this angle, more productive and benign conclusions may be found. This thesis opened with Hobsbawm's quote about retrospective mythologies. From the discussion of this thesis, one alteration to that quote can be made. National histories are retrospective mythologies undergoing constant revision, and the people revising them are also constantly changing.

Thesis Limitations:

The question of this thesis was to research to what extent and why the three main political parties of Scotland promoted or ignored Imperial Amnesia and the Gaelic Renaissance. The research carried out by this thesis has hopefully added some perspective to the concept of instrumentalisation of history in contemporary Scottish politics. However, the limitations that exist are related to this thesis' size. This thesis primarily focuses on three main parties and on two motifs, of which there are many. This focus excludes the minority parties in Scottish politics, such as the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party. This focus also omits the numerous other motifs present in Scottish politics. This focused view makes broad conclusions difficult, as motifs may vary in their findings. An extension of this thesis' scope could provide a more significant analysis, but arguably, the concepts explored here will represent what a broader thesis would discover.

If this thesis can conclude with one anecdote demonstrating the multi-purpose qualities that motifs can hold, it is this. In Scotland, the Glasgow Rangers football club are synonymous with unionism. At any Rangers match, banners litter the stadium with the slogan 'we are the people.' This slogan has also become synonymous with unionism. If a fan at a Rangers game looks closely, they will see this slogan translated into *Sinne Na Daoine* by the Western Isles Rangers supporters club. This is such a juxtaposition of symbols; the Gaelic language being intricately intertwined with the archetype of Scottish unionism. Comparisons to other linguistic nationalism across Europe show how unique this case is. To imagine a Barcelona football game with Catalonian banners praising the King of Spain puts this into perspective. Hopefully, this anecdote will incur other students of historical motifs to fully appreciate that the actual quality of a motif is in the eye of the beholder.

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Appendix

Appendix 1.1 - Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2011)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Annabel Goldie	Con	No
Gavin Brown	Con	No
Jackson Carlaw	Con	No
Ruth Davidson	Con	No
Murdo Fraser	Con	No
Alex Johnstone	Con	No
John Lamont	Con	No
Jamie McGrigor	Con	No
David McLetchie	Con	No
Nanette Milne	Con	No
Margaret Mitchell	Con	No
Mary Scanlon	Con	No
John Scott	Con	No
Liz Smith	Con	No
Alex Fergusson	Con	No
		Total = 0

Appendix 1.2 – Scottish National Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2011)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Alex Salmond	SNP	No
Brian Adam	SNP	No
George Adam	SNP	No
Clare Adamson	SNP	No
Alasdair Allan	SNP	Yes
Colin Beattie	SNP	No
Marco Biagi	SNP	No
Chic Brodie	SNP	No
Keith Brown	SNP	No
Margaret Burgess	SNP	No
Aileen Campbell	SNP	No
Roderick Campbell	SNP	No
Willie Coffey	SNP	No
Angela Constance	SNP	No
Bruce Crawford	SNP	No
Roseanna Cunningham	SNP	No
Graeme Dey	SNP	No
Nigel Don	SNP	No

Bob Doris	SNP	No
James Dornan	SNP	No
Jim Eadie	SNP	No
Annabelle Ewing	SNP	No
Fergus Ewing	SNP	No
Linda Fabiani	SNP	No
John Finnie	SNP	Yes
Joe Fitzpatrick	SNP	No
Kenneth Gibson	SNP	No
Rob Gibson	SNP	Yes
Christine Graham	SNP	No
Jamie Hepburn	SNP	No
Fiona Hyslop	SNP	No
Adam Ingram	SNP	No
Colin Keir	SNP	No
Bill Kidd	SNP	No
Richard Lochhead	SNP	No
Richard Lyle	SNP	No
Kenny MacAskill	SNP	No
Angus MacDonald	SNP	No
Gordon MacDonald	SNP	No
Derek Mackay	SNP	No
Mike Mackenzie	SNP	No
Tricia Marwick	SNP	No
John Mason	SNP	No
Michael Matheson	SNP	No
Stewart Maxwell	SNP	No
Joan McAlpine	SNP	No
Mark McDonald	SNP	No
Christina McKelvie	SNP	No
Aileen McLeod	SNP	No
Fiona McLeod	SNP	No
Stuart McMillan	SNP	No
Alex Neil	SNP	No
Gil Paterson	SNP	No
Dennis Robertson	SNP	No
Shona Robison	SNP	No
Michael Russell	SNP	Yes
Stewart Stevenson	SNP	No
Kevin Stewart	SNP	No
Nicola Sturgeon	SNP	No
John Swinney	SNP	No
Dave Thompson	SNP	Yes
David Torrance	SNP	No
Jean Urquhart	SNP	No
Bill Walker	SNP	No

Maureen Watt	SNP	No
Paul Wheelhouse	SNP	No
Sandra White	SNP	No
John Wilson	SNP	No
Humza Yousaf	SNP	No
		Total = 5

Appendix 1.3 - Scottish Labour Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2011)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Iain Gray	Lab	No
Jackie Baillie	Lab	No
Claire Baker	Lab	No
Richard Baker	Lab	No
Claudia Beamish	Lab	No
Neil Bibby	Lab	No
Sarah Boyack	Lab	No
Malcolm Chisholm	Lab	No
Kezia Dugdale	Lab	No
Helen Eadie	Lab	No
Mary Fee	Lab	No
Patricia Ferguson	Lab	No
Neil Findlay	Lab	No
Rhoda Grant	Lab	No
Mark Griffin	Lab	No
Hugh Henry	Lab	No
James Kelly	Lab	No
Johann Lamont	Lab	No
Lewis MacDonald	Lab	No
Ken MacIntosh	Lab	No
Hanzala Malik	Lab	No
Jenny Marra	Lab	No
Paul Martin	Lab	No
Margaret McCulloch	Lab	No
Margaret McDougal	Lab	No
Michael McMahon	Lab	No
Siobhan McMahon	Lab	No
Duncan McNeil	Lab	No
Anne McTaggart	Lab	No
Elaine Murray	Lab	No
John Park	Lab	No
Graeme Pearson	Lab	No
John Pentland	Lab	No
Dr Richard Simpson	Lab	No

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Drew Smith	Lab	No
Elaine Smith	Lab	No
David Stewart	Lab	No
		Total = 0

Appendix 1.4 – Scottish Green Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2011)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Patrick Harvie	Green	No
Alison Johnstone	Green	No
		Total = 0

Appendix 1.5 – Scottish Liberal Democrat MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2011)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Tavish Scott	LD	No
Jim Hume	LD	No
Liam McArthur	LD	No
Alison McInnes	LD	No
Willie Rennie	LD	No
		Total = 0

Appendix 2.1 – The Scottish Labour Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2016)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Kezia Dugdale	Lab	No
Jack Baillie	Lab	No
Claire Baker	Lab	No
Claudia Beamish	Lab	No
Neil Bibby	Lab	No
Mary Fee	Lab	No
Neil Findlay	Lab	No
Rhoda Grant	Lab	No
Iain Gray	Lab	No
Mark Griffin	Lab	No
Daniel Johnson	Lab	No
James Kelly	Lab	No
Johan Lamont	Lab	No
Monica Lennon	Lab	No
Richard Leonard	Lab	No
Lewis MacDonald	Lab	No
Ken Macintosh	Lab	No
Jenny Marra	Lab	No
Pauline McNeil	Lab	No
Alex Rowley	Lab	No

Anas Sarwar	Lab	No
Elaine Smith	Lab	No
Colin Smyth	Lab	No
David Stewart	Lab	No
		Total= 0

Appendix 2.2 - Scottish National Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations SNP (2016)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Nicola Sturgeon	SNP	No
George Adam	SNP	No
Clare Adamson	SNP	No
Alasdair Allan	SNP	Yes
Tom Arthur	SNP	No
Colin Beattie	SNP	No
Keith Brown	SNP	No
Aileen Campbell	SNP	No
Willie Coffey	SNP	No
Angela Constance	SNP	No
Bruce Crawford	SNP	No
Roseanna Cunningham	SNP	No
Ash Denham	SNP	No
Graeme Dey	SNP	No
Bob Doris	SNP	No
James Dornan	SNP	No
Mairi Evans	SNP	No
Annabelle Ewing	SNP	No
Fergus Ewing	SNP	No
Linda Fabiani	SNP	No
Joe Fitzpatrick	SNP	No
Kate Forbes	SNP	Yes
Jeane Freeman	SNP	No
Kenneth Gibson	SNP	No
Jenny Gilruth	SNP	No
Christine Graham	SNP	No
Emma Harper	SNP	No
Clare Haughey	SNP	No
Jamie Hepburn	SNP	No
Fiona Hyslop	SNP	No
Bill Kid	SNP	No
Richard Lochhead	SNP	No
Richard Lyle	SNP	No
Angus MacDonald	SNP	No
Gordon MacDonald	SNP	No

Fulton MacGregor	SNP	No
Derek Mackay	SNP	No
Ben Macpherson	SNP	No
Ruth Maguire	SNP	Yes
Gillian Martin	SNP	No
John Mason	SNP	No
Michael Matheson	SNP	No
Joan MacAlpine	SNP	No
Mark McDonald	SNP	No
Ivan McKee	SNP	No
Christina McKelvie	SNP	No
Stuart McMillan	SNP	No
Alex Neil	SNP	No
Gil Paterson	SNP	No
Shona Robison	SNP	No
Gail Ross	SNP	No
Michael Russell	SNP	Yes
Shirley Ann-Sommerville	SNP	No
Stewart Stevenson	SNP	No
Kevin Stewart	SNP	No
John Swinney	SNP	No
Maree Todd	SNP	Yes
David Torrance	SNP	No
Maureen Watt	SNP	No
Paul Wheelhouse	SNP	No
Sandra White	SNP	No
Humza Yousaf	SNP	No
Rona Mackay	SNP	No
		Total = 5

Appendix 2.3 – The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2016)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Ruth Davidson	Con	No
Jeremy Balfour	Con	No
Miles Briggs	Con	No
Alexander Burnett	Con	No
Donald Cameron	Con	No
Jackson Carlow	Con	No
Finlay Carson	Con	No
Peter Chapman	Con	No
Maurice Corry	Con	No
Murdo Fraser	Con	No
Maurice Golden	Con	No

Jamie Greene	Con	No
Rachael Hamilton	Con	No
Alison Harris	Con	No
Alex Johnstone	Con	No
Liam Kerr	Con	No
John Lamont	Con	No
Gordon Lindhurst	Con	No
Dean Lockhart	Con	No
Margaret Mitchell	Con	No
Edward Mountain	Con	No
Oliver Mundell	Con	No
Douglas Ross	Con	No
John Scott	Con	No
Graham Simpson	Con	No
Liz Smith	Con	No
Alexander Stewart	Con	No
Ross Thomson	Con	No
Adam Tomkins	Con	No
Annie Wells	Con	No
Brian Whittle	Con	No
		Total = 0

Appendix 2.4 - Scottish Green Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2016)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Patrick Harvie	Green	No
John Finnie	Green	Yes
Ross Greer	Green	No
Alison Johnstone	Green	No
Mark Ruskell	Green	No
Andy Wightman	Green	No
		Total = 1

Appendix 2.5 - Scottish Liberal Democrat MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2016)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Willie Rennie	LD	No
Alex Cole-Hamilton	LD	No
Tavish Scott	LD	No
Mike Rumbles	LD	No
Liam McArthur	LD	No
		Total=0

Appendix 3.1 - The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2021)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Douglas Ross	Con	No
Jeremy Balfour	Con	No
Miles Briggs	Con	No
Alexander Burnett	Con	No
Donald Cameron	Con	Yes
Jackson Carlaw	Con	No
Finlay Carson	Con	No
Sharon Dowey	Con	No
Russell Findlay	Con	No
Murdo Fraser	Con	No
Megan Gallacher	Con	No
Maurice Golden	Con	No
Pam Gosal	Con	No
Jamie Greene	Con	No
Jamie Halcro Johnston	Con	No
Racheal Hamilton	Con	No
Craig Hoy	Con	No
Sandesh Gulhane	Con	No
Liam Kerr	Con	No
Stephen Kerr	Con	No
Dean Lockhart	Con	No
Douglas Lumsden	Con	No
Edward Mountain	Con	No
Oliver Mundell	Con	No
Graham Simpson	Con	No
Liz Smith	Con	No
Alexander Stewart	Con	No
Sue Webber	Con	No
Annie Wells	Con	No
Tess White	Con	No
Brian Whittle	Con	No
		Total = 1

Appendix 3.2 - The Scottish National Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2021)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Nicola Sturgeon	SNP	No
George Adam	SNP	No
Karen Adam	SNP	No
Clare Adamson	SNP	No
Alasdair Allan	SNP	Yes
Tom Arthur	SNP	No

Colin Beattie	SNP	No
Keith Brown	SNP	No
Siobhan Brown	SNP	No
Stephanie Callaghan	SNP	No
Willie Coffey	SNP	No
Angela Constance	SNP	No
Ash Denham	SNP	No
Graeme Dey	SNP	No
Natalie Don	SNP	No
Bob Doris	SNP	No
James Dornan	SNP	No
Jackie Dunbar	SNP	No
Annabelle Ewing	SNP	No
Fergus Ewing	SNP	No
Jim Fairlie	SNP	No
Joe FitzPatrick	SNP	No
Kate Forbes	SNP	Yes
Kenneth Gibson	SNP	No
Jenny Gilruth	SNP	No
Mairi Gougeon	SNP	No
Christine Graham	SNP	No
Neil Gray	SNP	No
Emma Harper	SNP	No
Clare Haughey	SNP	No
Jamie Hepburn	SNP	No
Fiona Hyslop	SNP	No
Bill Kidd	SNP	No
Richard Lochhead	SNP	No
Gordon MacDonald	SNP	No
Fulton MacGregor	SNP	No
Rona Mackay	SNP	No
Ben MacPherson	SNP	No
Ruth Maguire	SNP	Yes
Gillian Martin	SNP	No
John Mason	SNP	No
Michael Matheson	SNP	No
Mairi McAllan	SNP	No
Ivan McKee	SNP	No
Christina McKelvie	SNP	No
Paul McLennan	SNP	No
Stuart McMillan	SNP	No
Marie McNair	SNP	No
Jenni Minto	SNP	No
Audrey Nicoll	SNP	No
Angus Robertson	SNP	No
Shona Robison	SNP	No

Emma Rodick	SNP	Yes
Shirley-Ann Somerville	SNP	No
Collette Stevenson	SNP	No
Kaukab Stewart	SNP	No
Kevin Stewart	SNP	No
John Swinney	SNP	No
Michelle Thomson	SNP	No
Maree Todd	SNP	Yes
David Torrance	SNP	No
Evelyn Tweed	SNP	No
Elena Whitham	SNP	No
Humza Yousaf	SNP	No
		Total = 5

Appendix 3.3. - The Scottish Labour Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2021)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Anas Sarwar	Lab	No
Jackie Baillie	Lab	No
Claire Baker	Lab	No
Neil Bibby	Lab	No
Katy Clark	Lab	No
Pam Duncan-Glancy	Lab	No
Rhoda Grant	Lab	Yes
Mark Griffin	Lab	No
Daniel Johnson	Lab	No
Monica Lennon	Lab	No
Richard Leonard	Lab	No
Michael Marra	Lab	No
Pauline McNeil	Lab	No
Sarah Boyack	Lab	No
Carol Mochan	Lab	No
Paul O'Kane	Lab	No
Alex Rowley	Lab	No
Colin Smyth	Lab	No
Paul Sweeney	Lab	No
Mercedes Villalba	Lab	No
Martin Whitfield	Lab	No
Foysol Choudhury	Lab	No
		Total = 1

Appendix 3.4 - Scottish Green Party MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2021)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oaths/Affirmations
Patrick Harvie	Green	No
Lorna Slater	Green	No
Ariane Burgess	Green	Yes
Maggie Chapman	Green	No
Ross Greer	Green	No
Alison Johnstone	Green	No
Mark Ruskell	Green	No
		Total = 1

Appendix 3.5 - Scottish Liberal Democrat MSPs Oaths/Affirmations (2021)

MSP	Party	Gaelic Oath/Affirmation
Willie Rennie	LD	No
Alex Cole-Hamilton	LD	No
Liam McArthur	LD	No
Beatrice Wishart	LD	No
		Total = 0

Appendix 4.2 – Constituencies of MSPs with Gaelic Oaths/Affirmations (2011, 2016, & 2021)

MSP	Constituency	Party
Alasdair Allan	Na h-Eilean Iar	SNP
Kate Forbes	Skye, Lochaber, & Badenoch	SNP
Ruth Maguire	Cunninghame South	SNP
Michael Russell	Argyll and Bute	SNP
Maree Todd	Highlands and Islands	SNP
Ariane Burgess	Highlands and Islands	Green
Donald Cameron	Highlands and Islands	CON
Rhoda Grant	Highlands and Islands	LAB
Emma Roddick	Highlands and Islands	SNP
Dave Thompson	Skye, Lochaber, & Badenoch	SNP
John Finnie	Highlands and Islands	Green
Rob Gibson	Caithness, Sutherland, & Ross	SNP

Appendix 5.1 – UK Parliament, Scottish MP Oaths and Affirmations (2019)

MP	Party	Gaelic Oath	Constituency
Kirsty Blackman	SNP	No	Aberdeen North
Stephen Flynn	SNP	No	Aberdeen South

Margaret Ferrier	SNP	No	Rutherglen and Hamilton West
Dave Doogan	SNP	No	Angus
Brendan O'Hara	SNP	No	Argyll and Bute
Allan Dorrans	SNP	No	Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock
Dr Phillipa Whitford	SNP	No	Central Ayrshire
Patricia Gibson	SNP	No	North Ayrshire and Arran
Steven Bonnar	SNP	No	Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill
Stuart McDonald	SNP	No	Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East
Amy Callaghan	SNP	No	East Dunbartonshire
Martin Docherty-Hughes	SNP	Yes	West Dunbartonshire
Stewart Hosie	SNP	No	Dundee East
Chris Law	SNP	Yes	Dundee West
Douglas Chapman	SNP	No	Dunfermline and West Fife
Dr Lisa Cameron	SNP	No	East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow
Tommy Shepard	SNP	No	Edinburgh East
Deidre Brock	SNP	Yes	Edinburgh North and Leith
Joanna Cherry	SNP	No	Edinburgh South West
John McNally	SNP	No	Falkirk
Alison Thewliss	SNP	Yes	Glasgow Central
David Linden	SNP	Yes	Glasgow East
Patrick Grady	SNP	No	Glasgow North
Anne Mclaughlin	SNP	No	Glasgow North East
Carol Monaghan	SNP	Yes	Glasgow North West
Stewart McDonald	SNP	No	Glasgow South
Chris Stephens	SNP	No	Glasgow South West
Peter Grant	SNP	Yes	Glenrothes
Richard Thomson	SNP	No	Gordon
Ronnie Cowan	SNP	No	Inverclyde
Drew Hendry	SNP	Yes	Inverness, Nairn, Badendoch and Strathspey
Alan Brown	SNP	No	Kilmarnock and Loudoun
Angela Crawley	SNP	No	Lanark and Hamilton East
Martin Day	SNP	No	Linlithgow and East Falkirk
Hannah Bardell	SNP	No	Livingston
Owen Thompson	SNP	No	Midlothian
Marion Fellows	SNP	No	Motherwell and Wishaw
Angus Brendan MacNeil	SNP	Yes	Western Isles
John Nicolson	SNP	No	Ochill and South Perthshire
Gavin Newlands	SNP	No	Paisley and Renfrewshire North
Mhairi Black	SNP	No	Paisley and Renfrewshire South
Neil Gray	SNP	No	Airdrie and Shotts
Pete Wishart	SNP	No	Perth and North Perthshire
Kirsten Oswald	SNP	No	East Renfrewshire
Ian Blackford	SNP	No	Ross, Skye & Lochaber

Alynn Smith	SNP	No	Stirling
Neale Hanvey	ALBA	No	Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath
Kenny MacAskill	ALBA	No	East Lothian
Andrew Bowie	CON	No	West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine
David Duguid	CON	No	Banff and Buchan
Alister Jack	CON	No	Dumfries and Galloway
John Lamont	CON	No	Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk
David Mundell	CON	No	Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale
Douglas Ross	CON	No	Moray
Ian Murray	LAB	No	Edinburgh South
Alistair Carmichael	LD	No	Orkney and Shetland
Wendy Chamberlain	LD	No	North East Fife
Christine Jardine	LD	No	Edinburgh West
Jamie Stone	LD	No	Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross
		Total = 9	

Appendix 6.1 – Mentions of Gaelic in Election Manifestos

Sections concerned with Gaelic	2010 (UK)	2011(S)	2015(UK)	2016(S)	2017(UK)	2019(UK)	Total
SNP	0	2	1	3	1	0	7
LAB	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
CON	0	1	0	1	0	0	2

Appendix 7.1 Scottish Government Funding for Gaelic Initiatives, 1999-2022 (Scottish Government, 2018)

Funding for Gaelic Initiatives from Scottish Government (1999-2022)
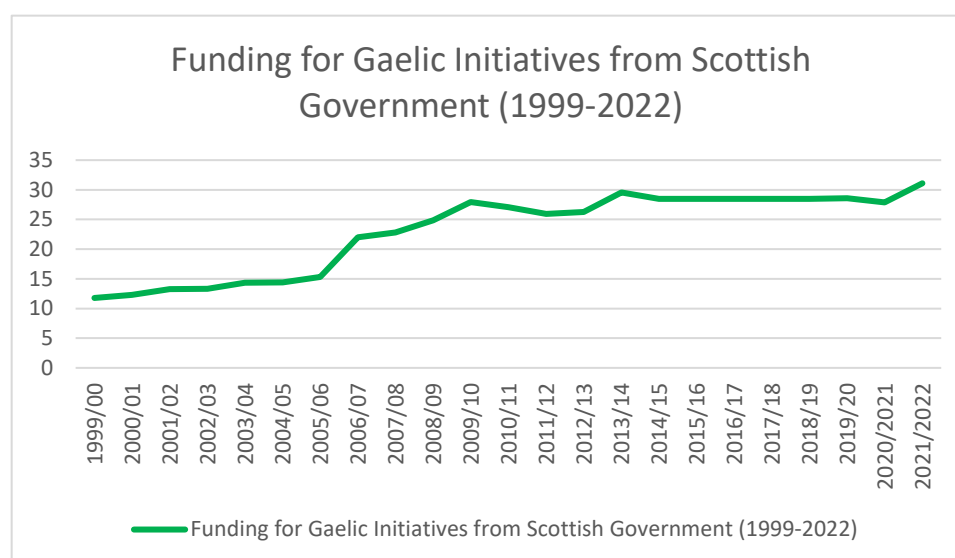
PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS
STATEMENT

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Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

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If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

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Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.
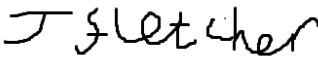
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- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
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- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
- copying the work of another student and presenting it as one's own work. If this is done with the consent of the other student, then he or she is also complicit in the plagiarism;
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The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) theses sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.
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I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above.
Name: Jamie Fletcher
Student number:1699814
Date and signature: 12/05/2022 J Fletcher

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