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More an Emotion than a Country? Scottish Identity, Nationhood and the New World Diaspora

Elizabeth Carnegie

> I found the sound of the bagpipes extremely moving. It awakened my sense of Scottish history with its violence and its pageantry and its fatal predilection for the lost cause … Scotland came for me more an emotion than a country.[1]

On 19 September 2007, *The Times* published an article which argued that 'despite all the money, the glossy adverts and the brand marketing' Scotland's international image is personified as 'offensive, angry and ginger' as typified by the cartoon character Willie from *The Simpsons*. The article, based on a United States Mori poll, went on to note that Willie, as a 'a red-haired, bearded, foul-tempered, incompetent, haggis-eating, testosterone-filled boor who spends his private time secretly videotaping couples in their cars' was the 'worst possible stereotype of the Scot'. Survey respondents, many of whom were students, when asked to 'identify images that typified Scotland' came up with 'hills, golf, tartan and sheep'. They described the Scottish character with 'the words hearty, traditional, family orientated, fighting and principled'. Some students even questioned whether the internet had reached a Scotland they generally viewed as 'a backward, old-fashioned, rural country'.[2]

Contemporary Scotland, if this article is to be believed, is a land of stereotypes, albeit some of these are of mythological, indeed monstrous, proportions. Yet this view of Scotland seems at variance with the passion for, and promotion of, Scottish identity that many diasporic Scots Americans evidence within their leisure and cultural lives. This suggests there are clearly differences in opinions and attitudes of Scottish Americans towards Scots in Scotland and as forefathers within the diaspora. Thus, *The Times* article became the impetus for a study of how diasporic Scots resident or born in the United States explore, identify and develop their sense of Scottishness.

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[1] David Daiches, *Two Worlds* (Edinburgh, 1957), 59.

[2] *The Times,* 19 September 2007, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article2491531.ece, [accessed 27 August 2010].

In this paper, I consider whether, or to what extent, the New World Scot inhabits Paul Basu's 'clanscape' whilst imagining the old Scotland as Brigadoon's fantasy landscape and contemporary Scotland as an urban wasteland.[3] I consider whether, and in what ways, John Caughie's three mythologies of Scotland – 'Tartanry', 'Kailyard' and 'Clydeside' – are embedded within the diasporic consciousness and show how these myths are also reflected within the global marketing of the Scottish nation.[4] I determine that, as in the Daiches quote above, embracing Scottishness is a form of emotional engagement with an 'imagined community' and that this community is not located in Scotland as a country but helps define and shape individuals' American identity.[5]

I begin by drawing upon a number of sources, including academic texts, popular histories and promotional material, to explore how ideas about Scottish identity, of characteristics and 'intrinsically' Scottish products which have been sustained in the New World, have been, and indeed are, shaped by Scots themselves. I discuss Scottishness as a concept and a link to nationhood. Furthermore, the Scots-Irish, although a distinct cultural group, are discussed in the context of this paper in terms of their distinct contribution to the shaping of Scottish identity with America. I then go on to discuss the survey in some detail, developing a snapshot of contemporary Scots-American attitudes to, and emotional engagement with, their 'imagined' pasts. Additionally, I highlight how survey findings suggest that the Scotland of the imagined past represents a purer form than the one visited or envisioned in the modern world. Ultimately, I argue that American identity is expressed through a Scottishness that shapes and reinforces ideas about pioneership, and political, cultural and religious freedoms.

I Of Myths and Scottish Men

> A threatening autumnal sky blows away over a desolate rocky vista. Three red deer look warily around from a foreground of shattered rock and the only sign of human presence, a sunlit road, twists its way

[3] Paul Basu, 'Macpherson Country: Genealogical Identities, Spatial Histories and the Scottish Diasporic Clanscape', *Cultural Geographies* 12 (2005), 123–50.

[4] John Caughie, 'De-picting Scotland: Film, Myth and Scotland's Story' in Timothy Ambrose (ed.), *Presenting Scotland's Story* (Edinburgh, 1989), 44–58.

[5] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1991).

> through the middle distance and points to the empty glen slanting off to the right.[6]

Horatio McCulloch's 1864 painting *Glencoe* (described above) depicts, according to John Morrison, 'the archetypal Scottish landscape' that is 'representative of the essential qualities of the nation itself.'[7] Arguments about Scottish stereotypes or myths being created by the Scots themselves are not new as can be seen in Murray Grigor's *Scotch Myths* (1982). As Cauthe notes:

> The tartan myth of Brigadoon, triumphal defeatism of Culloden, the couthy community of the kailyard are both massively regressive, and, at the same time, provide some of the images by which Scottish people recognise and misrecognise themselves and insist on some kind of nationality.[8]

Morrison queries why the Scots, 'who were then in an unprecedented paroxysm of industrial and urban development, should have embraced empty desolation as a national defining image'.[9] Yet notions of Scottishness have evolved, been created and recreated to reflect abiding ideas about Scotland and its people at home and abroad. Many authors including Basu argue such myths serve an essential purpose in creating a sense of group, familial or cultural identity.[10] As Caughie's piece argues, 'mythologies cannot simply be construed as false consciousness to be corrected by hard facts … they are probably foundational for national memories'.[11] Sean Field goes so far as to argue the importance of myth in identity shaping. He states that 'wrong statements are still psychologically "true"' and that 'life stories are not necessarily incomplete, the sense of self not whole, unless completed through myth'.[12] Within contemporary debates, as Field, drawing on Alesandro Portelli, notes, authenticity often matters less

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[6] John Morrison, *Painting the Nation: Identity and Nationalism in Scottish Painting, 1800–1920* (Edinburgh, 2003), 1.

[7] Ibid, 1.

[8] Caughie, 'De-picting Scotland', 92.

[9] Morrison, *Painting the Nation*, 1.

[10] Paul Basu, 'Roots-Tourism as Return Movement: Semantics and the Scottish Diaspora' in Marjory Harper (ed.), *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants, 1600–2000* (Manchester, 2005), 132.

[11] Caughie, 'De-picting Scotland', 92.

[12] Sean Field, 'Beyond "Healing": Trauma, Oral History and Regeneration', *Oral History*, 34 (2006), 35, 39.

than perceived truths and 'has more to do with the creation of meanings than with what exactly happened in the past'.[13]

Basu argues that within the Scottish diaspora myths are what people live by through 'pursuing genealogical research, attending clan gatherings, learning clan stories'.[14] Elsewhere he argues that 'affiliation to a clan is frequently central to the practice of being Scottish' in North America and 'yet [it] can be founded on a number of erroneous assumptions. Myths and memories combine with historical accounts'.[15] Caughie stresses that 'the evidence isn't either in myth or in documented history but in the exchange between them'.[16] In creating – or condoning – a sense of Scottishness driven by the mythologies of people and place, cultural identities are shaped then reinforced in the present and can indeed be repackaged back to the diasporic groups whose heritage is defined by them. Such is the power of myth to create central 'truths', as is apparent in Patricia Ferguson, Minister for Tourism Sport and Culture's claim that the 'great thing for me about Tartan is that it says so much about our history but it can also be used to market our modern Scotland'.[17]

Tourism marketing creates an expectation of a mythical Scotland based on emblems and icons which in turn creates a demand for such representations. Deborah Kerstetter and M-Hea Cho argue that consumers 'depend more on their own internal sources' when shaping their expectations of what a destination will be like. Consequently, the destination will respond by creating an experience which best fits consumer expectations and which will 'theoretically lead to satisfaction'.[18] Keith Hollinshead's work on 'worldmaking' argues that this privileging of interpretations leads to their becoming accepted narratives.[19] The memory of the Highlands has in fact been shaped by immigrants.

Visitors come seeking the Scotland that has been imagined for them or by them. Akhil Gupta and June Ferguson suggest that 'remembered places' serve as 'symbolic anchors for communities' and George Hughes determines

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[13] Ibid., 34.

[14] Basu, 'Macpherson Country', 125.

[15] Basu, 'Roots-Tourism as Return Movement', 128.

[16] Caughie, 'De-picting Scotland', 92.

[17] http://www.scotlandstartanday.com/ambassadors/ambassadors.asp, [accessed 6 April 2009].

[18] Deborah Kerstetter and M-Hea Cho, *Prior Knowledge, Credibility and Information Search, Annals of Tourism Research*, 31/4 (2004), 961–85.

[19] Keith Hollinshead, 'Tourism and the New Sense: Worldmaking and the Enunciative Value of Tourism' in Colin Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker (eds), *Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations*, Contemporary Geographies of Leisure, Tourism, and Mobility, 3 (London, 2004).

that the *remembered* past and *imagined* past combine to create the 'geography of the imagination'.[20] Where this becomes problematic is that Scottish myths also conjure up visions of an uninhabitable and inhospitable Scotland that needs to be left behind in order for its (essentially nomadic) people to flourish and of a New World ready to welcome them. These accepted 'truths' lead to the kinds of cultural judgements evidenced in the *Times* article as I will now discuss.

II The Global Nomad?

> *Scotland the Brave* tells us we are from the 'land of the shining river,' which is true, but it also tells us we are from the 'land of thy high endeavour.' Mother Nature created us to do worthwhile things – even when they are difficult.
> (Survey Respondent, 12 July 2007)

The Scottish character is established within the body of literature that defines the social and cultural history of the nation as essentially nomadic; borne of either an entrepreneurial spirit or desperation. Although Marjorie Harper estimates that Norway and Ireland had similar patterns of outward migration, she notes that 'emigration central to Scottish identities was woven indelibly into the fabric of Scottish life and lore'.[21] Gordon Donaldson, in the preface to *The Scots Overseas*, states that 'the history of the Scottish nation has for many centuries now been something more than a history of the inhabitants of the geographical bounds of a small, poor remote island'.[22] Jeanette M. Brock stresses that this view of the Scots as a migrant people is borne out as 'it is becoming increasingly clear that Scots have always emigrated in significant numbers, this culture of emigration being established well before the seventeenth century'.[23] Donaldson points out that Scotland was by no means unique in this as 'almost every country in Western Europe had formed

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[20] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, 'Beyond Culture: Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference', *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1992), 11; George Hughes, 'Tourism and the Geographical Imagination', *Leisure Studies*, 11 (1991), 31–42.

[21] Marjorie Harper, *Emigration from Scotland between the Wars: Opportunity or Exile?* (Manchester, 1998), ix.

[22] Gordon Donaldson, *The Scots Overseas* (London, 1996).

[23] Jeanette M. Brock, *The Mobile Scot: A Study of Emigration and Immigration 1861–1911* (Edinburgh, 1999), 15.

a settlement of some kind in America before the middle of the seventeenth century'.[24] Yet Michael Brander outlines that by the '1790 census (there were) 189,000 people of Scottish origin in United States coupled with 'some 200,000 of Scottish decent from Ireland'.[25]

Mythologies of migration seem based on the individuals who were migrating and what this meant for those left behind. Brock notes that there tended to be significant gender bias with young men being in the majority although family groups were not uncommon.[26] During the nineteenth century, she evidences a growth in urban emigration with numbers growing substantially during the second half of the nineteenth century. She notes that from 1846–54, 58.9 per cent were males and this number increased to 79.9 per cent from 1885–8. She suggests numbers of young males were as high as 8:1 in 1880. Helen Smailes highlights though, what seems generally believed to be the case that 'emigration from the highlands tended to be a communal affair'.[27] In all, Brock suggests some 28 per cent of the population of Scotland provided one third of emigrants to the new world during the eighteenth century'.[28]

It has been noted by several authors (such as Donaldson) that migration was perceived as a drain on Scotland's resources and such impressions may well have contributed to the myth of a Scotland emptied of its young and entire settlements and of its entrepreneurial population.[29] Brock acknowledges that as a consequence of the Clearances, Scotland 'developed a historiography of enforced diaspora, fuelled by polemicists, poets and novelists, which portrayed the movement from Scotland primarily as an outflow of unhappy highlanders'.[30] Smailes determines that the 'epidemical fever' described by Samuel Johnston began to affect Scotland seriously in the mid eighteenth century. The main causes (rural poverty and over population in relation to resources) were exacerbated by the improvement of farming techniques and were not eliminated by the expansion of trade following the union of 1707.[31] Indeed, Brock argues, that increased urbanisation leads to the potential for

[24] Donaldson, *The Scots Overseas*, 33.
[25] Michael Brander, *The Emigrant Scots* (London 1982), 89.
[26] Brock, *The Mobile Scot,* 15.
[27] Helen Smailes, *The Scottish Empire* (Edinburgh, 1981), 12.
[28] Brock, *The Mobile Scot*, 20
[29] Donaldson, *The Scots Overseas*, 217.
[30] *The Mobile Scot*, 20.
[31] Smailes, *The Scottish Empire*, 11; Douglas Kelly with Caroline Switzer Kelly, *Carolina Scots: An Historical and Genealogical Study of over 100 years of Emigration* (South Carolina, 1998).

capitalist development of the rural and in the case of a developing Scotland the highlands were required to be rationalised to produce food to service the cities.[32]

Drawing on contemporary accounts Brock argues that Queen Victoria's 1837 assisted emigration scheme 'came to be regarded as a panacea – a remedy for social discontent, a provider of markets and raw materials, and an expedient for fulfilling the expansionist and mercenary ambitions of the empire'.[33] The Passenger Acts of 1803 pushed costs up as ships were compelled to carry fewer people. However, Brock shows that migration did become faster and cheaper after the famine in the mid nineteenth century making emigration a more attractive option and more readily affordable.

Between 1865 and 1910, the United States became the most popular destination for Scottish migrants.[34] Brock suggests that during this time migration was not necessarily a choice but reflected the 'boom and bust cycles in both countries', although she maintains that the decision to emigrate was 'not just linked to economics' but reflected a 'propensity to emigrate more significant than the nature of the country'.[35] As Rob Gibson notes, this propensity to emigrate, albeit temporarily, is again being seen as a cultural trait.[36] Brock determines that between 1825 and the outbreak of World War 1, at least 1,841,534 emigrants left Scotland for non-European destinations.[37]

Brock also notes that the image and mythology of Scottish migrants impacts on our understanding of reality. She maintains that:

> the dominant image of the impoverished highland emigrant, just as hagiographical studies of the achievements of individual Scots abroad, retarded scholarly investigation of the overall economic, social, cultural and political impact of the Scottish presence.[38]

Marjory Harper argues that the projection and protection of Scottish identity and symbols provides for 'corporate identity, ethnic anchors and practical tools for their economic or social advancement' while Basu believes that

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[32] Brock, *The Mobile Scot*, 8.
[33] Ibid., 11.
[34] Ibid., 35.
[35] Ibid., 204.
[36] Rob Gibson, *Plaids and the Bandanas: From Highland Drover to Wild West Cowboy* (Barr, 2003).
[37] Brock, *The Mobile Scot*, 204.
[38] Ibid., 20.

these symbols of Scottish identity helped diasporic communities to maintain their strong cultural affiliations.[39] This network in turn encouraged further migration, as Harper notes:

> Inter-war emigrants, like their nineteenth-century predecessors, were influenced primarily by personal persuasion, private assistance and increasingly sophisticated ethnic and regional networks, which both stimulated and sustained a long tradition of diaspora.[40]

It seems then that there is both a mythology of the nomadic Scot and evidence of patterns of Scottish migration to America and elsewhere which argues for this definition. The conscious positioning of the emblems of Scottishness helps create a positive brand image for the Scots overseas but may also mask any negative connotations associated with exile, including poverty. The subsequent histories of the Scots within the United States diaspora have clearly influenced how people view their contribution, role and ultimately – through the successes of notable Scots – determine their right to be there and share in the Glory (as the original flag of the United States is often referred to). Billy Kennedy proclaims:

> Heroism was a distinct characteristic of the Scots-Irish immigrants who settled on the American Frontier in the eighteenth century. The raw courage shown by this dogged, determined people in very difficult circumstances helped shape the fabric of the United States as an embryonic nation, and ultimately, as the world power that is it today.[41]

The mythologies of the successful immigrant are counterbalanced by the narrative of the Clearances which Basu notes is one that is recounted and accepted by individuals that he interviewed in his survey. These tended to view their shared past through the frame of a whole-scale cultural and class rejection and subsequent forced ejection from the homeland.[42] Basu notes that families' narratives tend to become more positive as they are handed down, suggesting there are accepted mythological accounts which impact on Scots as a people

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[39] Harper, *Emigration from Scotland between the Wars*, 5; Basu, 'Macpherson Country', 125.

[40] Harper, *Emigration from Scotland between the Wars*, 214.

[41] Billy Kennedy, *Our most Priceless Heritage: The Lasting Legacy of the Scots-Irish in America* (Greenville, 2005),1.

[42] Basu, 'Macpherson Country', 136.

and personal accounts which shape the lives and memories of individuals. Importantly, these sometimes disparate accounts also influence the way that the diasporic communities view, or rather imagine, their homeland.

III The Mark of the Scots

> Ironically, it was while being taught the history of the United States of America that many of us became aware of the massive contribution made by our eighteenth-century fellow countrymen.[43]

Duncan Bruce's 1999 work *The Mark of the Scots: Their Astonishing Contributions to History, Science, Democracy, Literature and the Arts* builds on the vision of an enlightened Scotland but transfers these attributes to the diasporic Scot. By drawing on the successes of a small number of Scots it creates an imagined geological connection and lineage for all diasporic Scots. This lineage is evident in the 1921 piece *Scotland's Mark on America* which cites:

> Some 1,500 Scots of importance in the government, armed forces, professions, industry, finance and the arts. Apart from fifteen judges of the Supreme Court, more than 100 governments of states since the Revolution are listed as well as many notable leaders in other fields.[44]

One of the marks of Scots in the USA was (and remains) the promotion of their Scottishness as an aspect of their daily lives. In New York, the first Scots Society was founded in 1744; the successor to this, the St Andrews Society, was founded in 1756. The first Burns Club in New York was founded in 1820 and inns such as the Burns Tavern and the Blue Bonnet show a clear projection of Scottish identity as well as providing a place for Scots to meet.[45] The impact of Scottishness was not so evident in the social arena: Ron Chepesiuk argues that this was because of the large numbers of Scots-Irish and their role in the development of education and religion; the major part they played in the fight against 'political privilege; promoting democratic principles; supporting the War of Independence and participating in the winning of the west'.[46]

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[43] Kennedy, *Our Most Priceless Heritage*, xv.

[44] Brander, *The Emigrant Scots*, 104.

[45] Ibid., 91, 100.

[46] Ron Chepesiuk, *The Scotch-Irish* (North Carolina, 2005), 146.

Brander concludes that the preservation and promotion of the customs and traditions of Scotland 'surely sums up the principal motivation of every emigrant Scot'.[47] Here the expression of Scottishness is presented not just as a voluntary badge of identity but as an expected way for a diasporic Scot to conduct himself overseas. The loyalty to all things Scottish that developed within the diaspora was carried through generations, although the Scots-American was required to develop a dual loyalty or, in the case of the Ulster-Scots, embrace Scottishness as part of a wider cultural identity. Subsequent generations of Scots-Americans identify with recent American history and their contribution to the development of the United States; their current (and perhaps only known) land may merge with earlier pre-migration memories. Brander notes that:

> While pre-eminently wanderers, the Scots felt a tremendous loyalty to their homeland, and never more so than when abroad. This yearning for the land of their birth was generally transmitted to their children and passed onto their grandchildren and even to their great grandchildren. Thus even when blood has been diluted many times over and their names changed almost beyond recognition, those with Scots blood retain their feeling for Scotland and all things Scottish with a singular tenacity.[48]

Given this continued interest in Scottishness, as Donaldson suggests, 'it would have been surprising if it had not been common for descendents of Scottish emigrants to attempt to trace their ancestry'.[49] Moreover, people who feel strong connections with the dominant narratives of the Scottish diaspora can, through engaging with their Scottishness, 'recover a sense of belonging to a historical community'.[50]

IV Methods and Context for the Study

I now explore, with reference to a North American case study, where that community might be geographically located. Is it in the imagined Scotland of

[47] Brander, *The Emigrant Scots*, 112.
[48] Ibid., xvi.
[49] Donaldson, *The Scots Overseas*, 209.
[50] Basu, 'Roots-Tourism as Return Movement', 147.

fiction, past or present or within the imagined America of the early Scottish settlers or indeed a mixture of both? How have Caughie's three mythologies of Scotland: 'Tartanry', 'Kailyard' and 'Clydeside' been adopted by, and adapted to, the American Scots' sense of contemporary Scotland?

The case study discussed in this paper is drawn from a larger project that focuses on the Scottish diaspora within both the United States and Canada. Although the impetus for the study came from a Mori poll as discussed earlier, it also builds on my own experiences from fieldwork undertaken with Scottish Americans in the Southern States of America in 1988. This study aims to offer a contemporary snapshot to determine how people who are Scottish or who claim Scottish descent and who are currently resident within North America view, celebrate, explore, and indeed perform, their Scottishness. Subsequent discussion is concerned only with the United States element of the survey and focuses primarily on those questions which reflect the key aims of the paper: how the mythologies of place and peoples inform and are reflected in the performance of Scottishness as a badge of identity.

The findings are based on a twenty-one question survey designed around a number of qualitative and quantitative questions. Some questions allow for multiple answers and, where this is the case, findings may be expressed according to the number of persons who ticked each box rather than as a percentage of the whole survey. Questions aim to discover participants' sense of their own Scottishness, their attitudes to Scotland, and to determine who they consider famous or successful Scots both in Scotland and in North America across the artistic, cultural and political spectrum. In short, the survey aims to discover Scots-Americans' relationship to Scottish Americans, Scots in Scotland, Scotland as an imagined place, and Scotland as a place they have visited (or intend to).

Additionally, the questionnaire explores the material culture of the Scottish diaspora (including items they have in their homes which they deem to have a connection with Scotland) and Scottish cultural activities they are involved in locally which links them with Scotland. In shaping this questionnaire, I was also trying to determine whether there were differences in attitudes to Scotland from those who had visited, those who had only imagined Scotland and the degree of Scottishness 'owned' or claimed by the participants. The survey was carried out during the presidential campaigns leading up to the 2008 election and a question relating to whether participants would wish their incoming president to have Scottish blood was withdrawn at the pilot stage in response to comments about the potential of this question to cause offence. Many

of the responses to Question 12, 'Name some famous Scottish Americans', claimed Scottish blood for previous presidents including 'Abraham Lincoln, Washington, Jefferson (1/3 of the US founding fathers) President Johnson, [and] President Taft'.

The survey questions which are most relevant to the aims of this paper and discussed here in some depth are Question 13: 'Name the qualities you feel best represent the Scots'; and questions 16 and 17 which explore these themes further. Question 4: 'How far back does your Scottish ancestry go?' aims to determine a timeline for emigration; and Question 6: 'Why did your family move to the United States?' explores the motivations for (and sometimes the mythologies of) emigration. All of the questions allow for free comment but some guidance is offered when appropriate. Choices given for Question 6 include religious freedoms, looking for employment, forced to leave, a better life, or other. I consciously did not use the term 'Clearances' in these potential responses although it can possibly be inferred from all responses. I inserted 'religious freedoms' into this question as this was a key reason given for leaving during my studies in the United States in 1998. Kennedy, for example, argues that the 'fundamentals of faith and freedom' were 'profound, meaningful and enriching to the proud pioneering people' but one might ask whether these values and perceived virtues are still extant.[51] I was keen to find out if there had been a narrative shift in the intervening two decades.

Question 3: 'How would you define yourself?' had five options: as Scottish, as Scottish American, as Scottish and another nationality as well as American, as simply an American Citizen, or other. Question 4 queried how far back people believed their ancestry to go, Question 7 asked if participants had living relatives in Scotland and Question 8 asked how they celebrate their Scottishness. Question 16 asked participants if they have visited Scotland, if they would like to and how often they have been there. Following on from this, Question 17: 'Did your visit to Scotland live up to your expectations?' offered a Lickert scale to determine a quantifiable answer. This question helped determine whether participants believe the 'real' Scotland is as good (or as bad) as the Scotland left behind.

The survey was carried out during 2007/8. The online link to the questionnaire was sent to 100 named individuals listed on Scottish association web sites, for example St Andrews Associations and Burns Societies. They were also invited to forward the link. Although the survey was allowed to

[51] Kennedy, *Our Most Priceless Heritage*, 3.

run online for over a year many of the responses arrived overnight and the majority within the first few days. Through snowballing, I was able to achieve a high response rate and indeed over a quarter more than were sent out with 127 responses. The Canadian study brought over 260 responses from an initial 100.

The US responses represented thirty different states, although Texas provided the greatest single number of responses. The survey shows that Scottishness is keenly felt in areas beyond the traditional emigration 'heartlands' of the east coast, Appalachians and Novia Scotia as the following comment highlights: 'here in California you cannot believe how important Scottishness is to a large number of Americans and expats. There is quite a community of persons dedicated to preserving the music, dance, sports and culture'.

As well as the completed questionnaire, I received many personal communications, invites to attend events, links to various sites and several papers and genealogies from participants who were researching their own relationship with Scotland. These were usually positive although one commented that, 'as a dispersed Scot, descended from those who suffered the burnings and other assorted horrors of the Clearances, you may wish to understand that a "questionnaire", per se, as often as not, will hide more than what it reveals'. Accepting these limitations, the survey must also be viewed as reaching 'the converted' as it is likely that only people who are to some extent engaged with Scottish societies or are connected to people who are would have seen the questionnaire. As one of the participants stated, 're-introducing and supporting the Scottishness of those who are from or descended from Scotland' is an aim of many of these organisations. Another forwarded 'Some thoughts on being Scottish' which opened with a call to Scots to recognise the need to be actively Scottish:

> When, as a Scot, I think of Scotland and the Scots who live there – and the many of Scottish blood living in every other country on earth – I feel there is something we must all keep in mind. Something intangible which may not exist to the same degree it once did. Something we must do all we can to preserve, but also develop and advance. What I am referring to is something called *Scottishness*.

Therefore, we can assume that people who are linked to societies are keen to, and indeed actively encouraged to, keep their sense of Scottish identity alive. The timing of this project meant that it did not benefit from or provide

information about the Homecoming (2009) events where people might have been expected to have a heightened sense of their Scottishness. It now becomes necessary to discuss the findings in some detail.

V Findings

> 'Scottishness' in a person must live and breathe, or it is no more than a stag head on a wall when compared to a living, breathing stag in the moors.
> (Participant email communication)

Two thirds of the responses were from men and the majority of all participants were in the higher age bracket with 85 per cent over forty-five years old with the largest single age group represented being fifty five to sixty five. They covered a range of professions, although some tended to stress work activities that reflected their commitment to expressing their Scottishness, as in 'teach the bagpipes' or 'teach Scottish dancing'. Besides teaching there was a significant number in law enforcement, civil service, fire fighting or retired military, although other professions were represented, including several medical practitioners and one chaplain. Other responses included 'mechanic' and 'bartender' and 28 per cent of survey respondents were retired.

Some 88 per cent of respondents answered yes to Question 1: 'Do you consider yourself to be Scottish?' although further exploration in Question 2: 'How much do you consider yourself to be Scottish' broke this percentage down with 50 per cent being Scottish on one side, one third stating that both parents have Scottish ancestry, some 8 per cent saying both parents were Scottish and 8 per cent who were themselves born in Scotland. In answer to Question 3: 'How would you define yourself', the largest number of responses at 38 per cent was 'As Scottish American' with a further 19 per cent 'as Scottish and another nationality as well as American'. Only 23 per cent defined themselves solely 'as American Citizen'.

Responses from the 21 per cent who described themselves as 'other' ranged from the impressionistic to the precise. These included: 'American citizen with Scottish ancestry', 'Scots Cherokee (Native American)', English/American', 'American with Scottish descent', 'American of German, Irish and Scottish descent', 'French (50 per cent), 'English' (25 per cent), 'Norwegian' (25 per

cent)', and '1st Texan, 2nd American, 3rd Scott-American'. A significant number (21 per cent) defined themselves as 'Celt' or included Celt as in 'An Italian, German, Scottish, Irish, Viking Celt!' and 'Celtic American'.

Question 4: 'How far back does your ancestry go?' elicited a wide range of responses. Some had clearly researched this as an important part of their expression and celebration of their Scottishness. As the comments below show, participants were not just going back in time but also linking themselves with notable or titled Scots. Basu notes that many diasporic Scots are seeking to 'find the missing link that connects their own family histories with those … lineages that emerge simply from Scottish mytho-history'.[52] One respondent wrote:

> I just recently discovered my Scottish ancestry. Mom never talked about it. I was very fortunate to find Grandpa and Grandma Primrose from Dunbarton, Great Grandpa and Grandma Macgregor from Aberfoyle, Great-Great Grandpa and Grandma Robertson from Bonhill and Great-Great-Great-Grandpa and Grandma Collins from Bo'ness all in one cemetery. My Primrose line goes back to the Earl of Roseberry in 1490.

A few of the answers were precise about dates: '03/27/1813', 'documented to 1633', '1745 Scotch Irish on the one; 1875 on the other', 'traceable to 1575, no records before that', 'traced back to 1700s, although ancestor came from Ayrshire in early 1800s'. Some 22 per cent said they were from nineteenth-century arrivals, 21 per cent eighteenth century, four sixteenth century, three fourteenth century, and two people said thirteenth century. Only four proved to be twentieth-century arrivals. Some comments link in with mythologies of Scottish people, places and clans and are often referred to in historically vague terms. These include 'ca. 430 a.d. (Cormack Mor MacErc of Dalriada); '700s – yes, that's seven hundreds'; 'from the beginning?'; 'my clan is said to be of Pictish origins'; 'Kenneth MacAlpine is an ancestor'; 'fourth generation American on one branch; the rest much earlier arrivals in the US', and 'Scots Irish who arrived in the colonial period documented to 1633'. Some admitted they did not know and typical comments included the following: 'it's been centuries at least' or 'we're not done investigating yet'. One man added that:

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[52] Basu, 'Roots-Tourism as Return Movement', 128.

> I find it interesting as well why people over here consider themselves Scottish. Many people can not even trace their family history to Scotland but like me have a Scottish last name. I however have family over there and can trace the exact route in which my family took to get to the US.

The answers to this question illustrate the respondent's belief in a long history of Scottish ancestry but also demonstrate a strong sense of connection with the country of their domicile, America. This is shown clearly in the following comment: 'Ever since reading Robb Roy [sic] as a young boy (under twelve), I have been fascinated with ideals and spirit of Scots. I produce our community's 4th of July celebration.' The findings suggest that the majority (61 per cent) see themselves as Scottish Americans or Americans with Scottish ancestry. Yet when asked to say 'how proud they were of their Scottish identity' (Question 5), the vast majority (84 per cent) rated their pride at five and a further 10 per cent at four, rendering 94 per cent very proud or proud of the ancestry that shaped their cultural identity. Survey respondents were involved in a number of Scottish activities such as playing bagpipes, hosting Burns Suppers, favoured television shows such as *Monarch of the Glen*, watched *Braveheart*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Rob Roy* and *Tunes of Glory*. They favoured Burns, Buchan, clan and cookery books, and, above all, loved Sean Connery. Several people mentioned that they were learning, or intending to learn 'the language' (referring to Scottish Gaelic) which again reflects the abiding draw of the Highlands. They have clan plaques, wear kilts and tartan, and are also proud of their American Scottish lineage as well.

This pride is evident in the responses to the 'name famous Scottish Americans' question with claims of Scottish ancestry being made for many eminent Americans, including, as mentioned earlier, 'most US Presidents', 'many of the signers of the Declaration of Independence', 'most of the Southern Confederate Generals during the Civil War, John Quincy Adams, and our newest New England Hero, Johnathan Pappalbon of the Boston Red Sox'. One participant goes so far as to argue that the number of eminent Scots proves there is something special about them as a people. He notes:

> Look at the incredible contribution the Scots have made to the world, in so many fields, and relate that to the small part of the world's population which Scots comprise. There has to be something special at work. Maybe it's our Celtic blood, with a touch of Pictish (if that's different) but whatever it is, I feel we should all be directing whatever

> effort it takes to make sure that Scottishness lasts. Scotland—and the world—would be a lesser place without it.

One respondent though was keen to point out that 'some of the best known were poor examples of humans—better were many signers of the American Declaration of Independence'. One mentioned Betsy Ross, who is often credited with sewing 'Old Glory', one of the key symbols of Americanness. Several people mentioned that 'many US astronauts have had Scottish blood (i.e. Neal Armstrong)' which highlights not only personal achievement but seems in keeping with the mythology of the Scot as nomadic explorer. Unsurprisingly, given his legacy within America, Andrew Carnegie was the most mentioned historical figure, cited by 30 per cent of the sample.

The answers to Question 6: 'Why did your family move to the United States?' highlights the loyalty to and favouring of the new country as a land of opportunity and/or sanctuary. Responses also reflect the literature on mythologies of diaspora. The largest response (sixty-four people) agreed that they left Scotland or believed their ancestors left in order to find 'a better life' and a further thirty-six persons said they or their family member(s) left to seek employment. Another twenty-one respondents said they or their family members were forced to leave, with only nineteen persons agreeing migration was linked with religious freedoms. There were thirty-nine persons who selected 'other' with one noting 'Sent by King George in 1764 from Ireland', while another recounted that a presumed ancestor, the 'Baron of Caskieben was on wrong side of an argument with the king, and had to flee'. One said his ancestor came because they were not first born. Another cited 'independence' and one stated the opposite—'indentured servant'.

Only one person mentioned leaving the industrialised heartlands of central Scotland, noting 'things were tough on Clydeside in the '50s'. One respondent admitted he did not know why their family had moved and one other mentioned that emigration to the United States was possible because of family connections. Of the sample, 55 per cent of persons still have family in Scotland.

One comment highlights that the pride in a Scottish heritage can be transferred to 'adopted Scots':

> I myself am not Scottish, but have been told even by my husband, that I am more Scottish than some of the people in Scotland itself. I have fallen deeply in love with it, and as I have read the history and

> especially the history of the Camerons. I could not have fallen in love with a better man if I tried, nor could I have picked a better heritage for my children or chosen a family with a last name that has a history that is ancient and deep in history as are the Camerons. Plus they have so many beautiful tartans!! Seriously, I am very blessed to be part of such a wonderful family/clan.

Question 13 aims to explore the essence of Scottishness as it invites respondents to 'name some qualities you think best represents the Scots'. Respondents could chose from pioneering, hard working, religious, and humorous and also comment in the other box. The favoured options were hardworking with 109 ticking yes and twelve responding no; brave with ninety-three ticks for yes and seventeen for no, and pioneering with eighty-four voting yes and twenty one no. Humorous elicited seventy-three positive responses with forty-four persons disagreeing. Most significantly, there was a slight majority (fifty-eight persons) saying no to religious against fifty-four for yes. This could imply that the Scots in Scotland are deemed less religious than their American counterparts who 'kept the faith'—and indeed left to be able to have freedom of worship. It may also imply a liberalisation of values and assumptions of a decline in the central importance of religion in contemporary society. The 'other' box inspired some further comments, including 'inventive, philosophical, spiritual', 'uncooperative with authority', 'appreciative of education and knowledge', 'intensely loyal, passionate about causes', 'democratic and egalitarian, respectful of personal accomplishment and merit', 'thrifty (different from cheap) and efficient—practical', 'very strong willed, to the point of stupid', 'adaptable and versatile, fierce, romantic about the past and about causes', 'rebellious (which I consider a good thing!)', 'great story-tellers and poets & musicians (throwbacks to the oral culture)'. The most mentioned individual who was again deemed to sum up all these qualities was, once more, Sir Sean Connery.

The characteristics that are expressed here do seem to offer a mixture of the mythologies of the Scots as typified in *Braveheart* with overtones of Groundsman Willie (fighting, rebellious, fierce, romantic, uncooperative with authority), and with the qualities required by the early emigrants in the new land (hard working, brave, pioneering, appreciative of education and politically egalitarian). Indeed, these are all the same arguments which come through the literature about the role the Scots and Scots-Irish played in the development of the constitution. (It is no accident that Tartan Day is celebrated on the day

of the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath which, some argue, is the basis of the US Constitution with world heritage site status currently being sought for Arbroath Abbey). Within these larger narratives and hero myths there is also evidence of more intimate, perhaps family-orientated, accounts – the oral history and the story-telling and music making that provides links back to, and indeed with, present-day Scotland.

Of the sample, a majority at 58 per cent had actually visited Scotland, although the answers to 'question 15: 'How did you form your ideas about Scotland?' were mixed. The greatest influences were summarised as 'been there', 'from friends' and 'from books'. The answers to question 14: 'Name three words that you think consider best reflects Scotland', draw on a number of mythologies that evidence the seeming merging of place with nationhood noted earlier by Morrison. Eleven people wrote 'proud' and ten put 'brave'. There were thirty-three people who said 'beautiful' and eleven 'historic'. There were also seven mentions of whiskey, four of tradition, and only two of 'haggis'.

The responses to this question were almost entirely reflective of rural Scotland, suggesting that the 'archetypal Scottish landscape' of McCulloch's *Glencoe* still dominates the imagination (at least of Scots-Americans). There were no mentions of Edinburgh or Glasgow, the castle or the shipyards and, for a small country, a surprising number describe a Scotland akin to Brigadoon, 'mysterious, and empty'. Typical responses were 'barren, beautiful, historic', 'vast, empty, beautiful', 'beautiful, haunting, captivating', 'rugged, beautiful, peaceful', 'magical, mystic beauty', 'mysterious, legendary, beautiful', 'rare, beautiful, open' and the 'The Lord's Land'. Only a couple of the comments were personalised as in 'mountains, sea, home' and 'to me Family, History, Presbyterianism'.

These comments suggest an unliveable and seemingly uninhabited place, not unlike the Scotland represented in the *Times* 2007 article. They depict a version of Scotland that comes easily to the imagination, without electric light and inhabited by angry red-haired throwbacks, if inhabited at all. One person commented, 'my sister lives in St Monans in Fife and I think that is amazing she has been able to make the transition to living and working there. I am not sure I could'. This imagined Scotland is vast, barren, and empty and yet incurs a longing and fulfils the category of innately understood and known homeland. One respondent noted:

> When I go to Scotland I feel as if I am going home (genetic); like going someplace you have never been before and you seem to know

> the landmarks or you have walked the streets and paths; when I go to Peebles and Edinburgh I have this feeling.

Scotland, nonetheless, is the left behind even deserted *non-home*. For Scottishness 'to live and breathe in a person' it must be kept alive, as the opening comment of this section argues, and kept alive *elsewhere* and beyond Scotland's shores. It is surely easier to leave behind a land which cannot give you the tangible benefits of the new world. Responses to Question 17: 'Did your visit to Scotland live up to your expectations?' shows an evident split with slightly over two thirds voting that the visit had exceeded or far exceeded their expectations. The other third responded that it fell below their expectations. No one said their visit was far below their expectations. Given their overall view of Scotland, I am left to question whether the expectations, good or bad, if based on the mythologies of Scotland and the dominant narratives of the diaspora, were low to begin with. As one respondent, merging place and peoples commented, 'Scotland today still has a wonderful people, but it is a shadow of what it once was – from a creativity point of view'.

VI Conclusion

> It is a belonging a tying together to each other. It is beyond words. (Survey Respondent)

Given the small sample size, I am making no great claims for these findings. Nonetheless, the questionnaire did reach the majority of Scottish societies listed from state to state and thus can offer an impressionistic and contemporary sense of the role of Scottishness as an identity to those who value it. The wider study compares and contrasts the Canadian and American responses and other work explores artistic influences more fully. The responses discussed in this paper do seem to reflect the influence of the mythologies of Scottishness on subsequent generations of Scottish Americans. This seems true in relation to the grand narratives of the Scottish diaspora and the personal family stories handed down from generation to generation. This flagging of Scottishness reflects that 'cultural dynamics are affected not only by the spatial migration of people and things, but also by the migration of meanings and discourses

across and between groups'.[53] It also reflects an assumed need for individuals to reflect on belonging through those symbols of Scottishness.

Thus, I can conclude that the flagging of Scottishness in these terms suggests the 'banal nationalism' discussed by Michael Billig where identity is performed in daily life based on the emblems which become the expression of cultural belonging.[54] As the Scottish people claim a key role in the development of the American nation this blazoning of Scottish Americanness can, as the following survey respondent's comment suggests, be interpreted as making claims for Scottishness as having shaped the characteristics of old-fashioned Americanness: 'I grew up in the Southern culture and that culture is a perfect transplant of the Scottish culture I discovered in Scotland. That's why Scotland seemed so familiar and so much like home.'

Does this performance of Scottish identity then become an expression of American patriotism? In the debates about the imagined homeland of the imagined community that is Scotland it seems that people feel their Scottishness emotionally; as the opening epigraph from David Daiches suggests, this emotional engagement transcends the realities of place, although the props and symbols of that imagined Scotland enables them to express those feelings. As Basu argues, identification with the symbols of Scottishness provides a link to the homeland,[55] although I would suggest that this might be less in relation to a perceived homelessness as an exploration of a dual identity which can be safely explored within the land that welcomed them. As one American and Scottish woman put it:

> The first time I went to a Highland Game, and heard the bag pipes, I started to cry. I knew, that I knew, that I knew I was Scottish. The sense of pride and honour I felt was overwhelming. I am Scottish by blood and connect with my ancestors wholeheartedly.

The notion of a homeland becomes more important in times of uncertainty and social change: as one participant noted, 'Scottishness has steadily increased in popularity in the US'. Although this study suggests the homeland left behind is imagined in a 'purer' form than the one that exists today, perhaps this wish for the homeland of old creates more emphasis on the rural rather than the urban reality of a modern Scotland. Can it therefore be inferred that

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[53] Basu, 'Roots Tourism as Return Movement', 132.

[54] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London, 1995).

[55] Basu, 'Macpherson Country'.

respondents do believe their ancestors 'better' than the current inhabitants of the left land allowing for the contemporary and emerging mythology, the 'Williescape'?

It is worth noting, however, a point possibly missed by the generation of Mori poll students; that *Simpsons*' Willie is an export, an American Scot who inhabits the imagined land of contemporary America. If Willie were to be real he would surely be one of 'the poor examples of humans' not favoured by the hagiographic accounts of famous men or sought as family by those diasporic Scots seeking to connect with chieftains and worthies. As one participant argued for the re-emergence of the glories of the Scots of old, 'Scottishness has been severely dented over time by Anglicization, Americanization and Globalization' but that 'we must never try to see what we can get out of our heritage – our Scottishness – but rather what we can put into it'. However, as one correspondent to the *Times* blog wrote, 'You know you've truly made it when you've been lampooned on the Simpsons. Congrats Scotland!'.

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