

**CONTROLLING THE PAST:
SCOTTISH HISTORIOGRAPHY AND SCOTTISH IDENTITY
IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES**

Richard J. Finlay

Historians of Scotland have recently come to recognise the importance of historiography, the study of the use of history. Scholars such as David Allan and Roger Mason have shown how history was used to confer legitimacy on ruling regimes in early-modern Scotland by twisting, bending and even fabricating the historical record (Allen 1993; Mason 1987). The invention of mythical despotic kings who had to be deposed for the benefit of the nation was a useful precedent which justified the demise of Mary Stewart and legitimised the Reformation regime. Colin Kidd has shown how eighteenth century Scottish historians 'subverted' pre-Union Scottish historiography in favour of a Whig, Anglo-British constitutional history because England's historical development was seen to be more progressive than Scotland's. Whereas liberty in pre-Union times had been associated with the fight against English invasion, in the eighteenth century it was associated with the Union because it was English constitutionalism which brought civilisation and advancement to Scotland. This meant that pre-Union history was redundant as a pointer towards progress. This thesis helps to explain what Marinell Ash called the **Strange Death of Scottish History** in the nineteenth century, when Scottish history became no more than the search for antiquaries and colourful tales of the past loaded with emotional trappings (Ash 1980). Scottish history ceased to be important because it had no political *raison d'être*; it could not be reworked into a mid-nineteenth century European nationalism nor did it have any usefulness or relevance to progress. The Scots abandoned any attempt to produce a coherent historiographical consensus and settled instead for 'historical Kailyards' (Ash 1980).

*Richard Finlay is a lecturer in the Department of History, Strathclyde University, Glasgow, G1 1XQ. His book **Independent and Free: Scottish Politics and the Origins of the Scottish National Party, 1918-1945** was published by John Donald earlier this year, and was reviewed in **Scottish Affairs**, no. 8.*

Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity

The purpose of this essay is to sketch the development of Scottish historiography and point out some of the ways it contributed to political perceptions of Scotland in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It will start by examining the 'death' of Scottish history in the mid-nineteenth century and examine the relationship between the failure to produce a nationalist historical consensus and the development of Scottish national identity. The reasons for the re-emergence of interest in Scottish history in the later part of the century will be explored with particular reference to changing perceptions of the Union. The ideological impetus behind these developments will be discussed and the evolution of Scottish history in the twentieth century will be explored to examine its relationship with political developments.

HISTORY AND SCOTTISH NATIONALISM IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

Both Kidd and Ash deem the problem of not having a strong Scottish historiographical tradition as central to the failure of Scottish nationalism in the mid-nineteenth century. Kidd in particular notes how the Scots were unable to utilise their history to nationalist effect in contrast to other European countries. He states that the Scots had subjected their history to such a critical pounding in the eighteenth century that it could not furnish the necessary nationalist *mythistoires* common to other European nations.

However, Kidd and, to a lesser extent, Ash base their argument on the premise that Scottish nationalism should only be identified as a nationalism which challenges the Union and demands independent statehood. Such a narrow definition, however, precludes an examination of the ways in which the Scots could assert their nationality *within* the Union. The nationalisms with which Kidd contrasts the Scots' were all defensive. Hungary, Poland and Ireland all produced nationalist histories because they were essential in preserving the concept of nationhood. As it will be argued below, the Scots did not produce a nationalist historiography in the nineteenth century because they did not feel that their nationality was in danger. As Mason, Allen and Kidd have shown, types of history were written on demand, and the absence of a nationalist historiography in Scotland in the mid-nineteenth century could just as plausibly be interpreted as indicating that there was no demand for one, rather than the assertion that the Scots were incapable of producing one.

Ash has shown that the Scots could produce nationalist readings of history when it suited their own ends. This was the case in the Disruption of 1843

Scottish Affairs

when the Free Church trawled Scottish history to show that their case was based on sound historical principles (Ash 1980, p. 126; Bebbington 1982; Brown 1893). In any case, the proliferation of popular histories, raising statues to figures from the Scottish past, and the absence of any serious historical enquiry, might suggest that the Scots were comfortable with their historical perception. The fact that the mid-nineteenth century nationalists rarely used history, although they appropriated Scottish heroes such as Wallace and Bruce as symbolic representations of the movement, shows that sustained appeals to the past were not considered necessary to vindicate their nationhood. Indeed, James Begg was more concerned with the future:

We are sinking in our national position every year, and simply living on the credit of the past... A people that might match the world for energy, and who heretofore stood in the first rank of nations, sinking under a combination of increasing evils. (Ash 1980, p. 142)

Mid-nineteenth century nationalists were mainly concerned with improving the system of government by reinstating the post of Scottish Secretary, and removing slights to the Scottish nation and other grievances. Their acceptance of Scottish nationality as a fact which required little or no historical justification shows quite clearly that they felt, in contrast to Ireland, Hungary and Poland, no real threat to their national identity. Indeed, the almost trivial nature of the majority of their complaints, such as citing contraventions of the law of heraldry, meant that they were not taken seriously (Hanham 1969, p.77). Indeed, when such complaints were contrasted with the cultural, economic and social progress that had been made since the Union, there was a fair degree of truth in the comment of the *Times* leader which stated that 'the more that Scotland has striven to be a nation, the more she has sunk to be a province.' (Hanham 1969, p.80).

History was not used in a scientific way, but rather as a romantic appendage to the creation of a new cultural identity. Tartanry, Highlandism and the rural representation of Scotland in the Kailyard novels, were all indicative of the manufacture of a Scottish identity which had little to do with the reality of a rapidly urbanising and industrialising society, but everything to do with the appropriation of symbolic representations of Scotland which were located in a mythical past. Furthermore, because the Scottish bourgeoisie and aristocracy peddled such symbols as authentic, it follows that their historical perception would have to be hazy and haphazard for such symbolism to acquire credibility. A rigorous and scientific historical tradition would have exposed this newly fashioned identity as bogus.

Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity

Marinell Ash is correct to observe that mid-nineteenth century Scots did not want to be trapped by their history. The British Empire provided the Scots with the world stage to express their national identity. The empire provided the Scots with an opportunity to display their martial prowess. Highland regiments were distinctive in their Scottish *nationality*. Scottish missionaries exported the Scottish *national* religion. Scottish colonists founded *Scottish* communities in every part of the Empire. *Scottish* colonial governor generals ruled vast swathes of the globe. Sons of the Scottish middle-class found employment in administering the Empire. The Scottish middle-class prospered as Glasgow became Second City of the Empire on account of its economic strength, much of which was generated by imperial trade. Indeed, many of the complaints of the Scottish nationalists were a direct result of Scottish imperial success. It detracted attention away from traditional Scottish institutions such as the Church, the law and education at home which were experiencing difficulties in adapting to the emergence of a modern industrial state. The church was divided in the Disruption of 1843, the Whigs were increasingly taking their legal and constitutional precedents from England, the parochial schools were unable to meet the demands of industrial society, and the universities no longer enjoyed their pre-eminence of the 18th century Enlightenment. The institutional safeguards of Scottish identity, which had been guaranteed by the Treaty of Union and whose state of disrepair formed the focus of much nationalist discontent, were unable to compete with tartan symbolism and the Scottish imperial mission as the more effective representations of Scottish identity. Nationalists complained that people were driven overseas, but many asserted that they were attracted to better prospects abroad and that this was part of the Scottish historic character (Burton Hill 1887). Imperial taxation and the claims that not enough was spent in Scotland was a grievance, but the fact remained that the Empire made Scotland a wealthy nation (Stewart 1883).

Two points can be made about the failure of the Scots to establish a successful nationalist movement. Firstly, the British Empire provided an outlet for Scottish national aspirations. When compared with other European nationalisms of the mid- and late- nineteenth century, the Scottish experience is not all that different. It had a military and religious outlet onto the world stage in which it could vindicate romantic notions of national prowess. It was expansive, chauvinistic and aggressive, and was based on economic power. The fact that Scottish nationalism operated as a sub-section of a wider British imperial nationalism should not detract from the fact that middle class Scots had ample opportunities to satisfy conventional European nationalistic aspirations. The second point is that history was not necessary to this process. The Scottish national identity was in little need of succour from the past.

Scottish Affairs

Scottishness was determined by the here and now, not by what had once been.

FROM THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Scottish historical studies revived from the 1880s in response to three key events:

- a redefinition of Englishness in the period 1880-1920
- the issue of Irish Home Rule
- questions pertaining to the growth of a mass democracy and the extension of government.

Historians of English culture have identified the period of the 1880s as one in which Englishness was redefined to take account of a more populist image of England (Colls and Dodds 1986). The widespread use of 'England' and 'English' instead of 'Britain' and 'British' led to increasing resentment among many Scots. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, the Scottish Secretary in Salisbury's Conservative ministry of the late nineteenth century, frequently made appeals to the prime minister to use 'British' instead of 'English' when referring to the state. Movements to bolster English cultural institutions were shadowed in Scotland including the demand to establish Chairs of Scottish History and Celtic in Scottish Universities. The use of public funds to endow English cultural institutions brought claims that Scotland did not receive its fair share of imperial revenue and that its museums and galleries were underfunded (Hunter 1887). The campaign for Irish home rule re-awakened interest in the Union and the imperial structure of government. The growth of democracy and the increasing recognition of social problems led to demands for governmental action. As the Union was the linch-pin of the existing constitutional arrangement, any talk of reform of the government of Scotland had to tackle questions concerning the evolution of the Union.

Such was the lack of historical interest in the Union in the mid-nineteenth century that most of the writers on the subject in the period after 1880 felt compelled to inform the Scots of a vital aspect of their history. According to the Marquess of Bute 'the historical aspect of the Union is not nearly so well known as it ought to be, and as, indeed, it might naturally be expected to be'. The Duke of Argyll claimed: 'As an epoch, the Legislative Union with England is immensely undervalued'. And, written in 1896, James Mackinnon's **The Union of Scotland and England** was produced to 'supply

Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity

a much needed history'. In this period mainstream Scottish historians divide into two, though not incompatible, streams: those who put more stress on an assimilationist view of Scottish history and those who stressed the Union's ability to accommodate a distinctive Scottish input.

Sir Henry Craik and Sir Herbert Maxwell favoured an assimilationist view which suggested that Scotland was being increasingly absorbed into England. As one commentator noted:

The War of Scottish Independence still divides historians into hostile camps, but all are agreed in admiring the fair stand up fight that gives a dramatic finish to this romantic episode in our national life. Could it be possibly otherwise, were we, as some advise, to regard that long and gallant struggle for liberty as an unfortunate blunder, postponing the inevitable Union? (Colville 1897, p.78)

Maxwell encouraged the wrath of many Scots when he claimed that 1314 was a defeat for Scotland because it held back the process of assimilation for many centuries. Had the Scots been willing to accept the conquest of the far-seeing Edward then centuries of war would have been avoided. For Maxwell, the Union merely attained Edward's ambition. Sir Henry Craik, who was influential as Secretary of the Scotch Education Department, was not as tactless, although not by much:

It is the object of these volumes to follow the course of Scottish history from the time when Scotland was divided from its southern neighbour by well defined lines of demarcation, alike in religion and in politics, in tradition and social habit - when, indeed, the points of contact were few and unimportant - down to the period when the Scottish nation, while preserving some durable and valuable national characteristics, became as regards all its main interests and in the main current of its history, absorbed in one stream with that southern neighbour, with whom it has formed a partnership so close as to share a common life and, in the eyes of most of Europe, to be almost identical...From 1745 onwards the history of Scotland has hitherto been treated for the most part only as subsidiary to the history of the Empire, and as forming a subordinate chapter in the history of England. (Craik 1901, p. vi)

Although the Scots retained distinct characteristics, the process of assimilation was becoming so successful, Sir Henry told Parliament, that he

Scottish Affairs

believed the city of Glasgow had more in common with Bristol than Edinburgh.

Other historians and politicians such as Balfour of Burleigh, the Duke of Argyll and Lord Rosebery emphasised that the Union enabled the Scots to make a distinctive *national* contribution to the history of Britain and the Empire. As far as the Duke of Argyll was concerned the progress Scotland made with England after the Union was not due 'to anything she derived from England in the way of laws and institutions.' The Union merely granted access to opportunities which the Scottish character, shaped by its rugged history, was able to exploit (Argyll 1887, p.482). He rejected the eighteenth century, inferiorist, Whig view of Scottish history:

The wonderful start she made in the race of intellectual and industrial life was due to that history - to the older unions effected during it - to the doctrines it had embodied - to the energies it had developed - to the great principle of jurisprudence which had worked under the sanctions, and with the authority, of law. Scotland, therefore at the time of the Union, did not break with her own past. On the contrary, she kept it and cherished it, as the richest contribution she could make to the growth of one great empire, and to the polity of one United Kingdom. (Argyll 1887, p. 483)

Historians, such as Professor C.S. Terry at Aberdeen University, rediscovered favourable aspects of pre-Union Scottish history, in particular the later Scottish parliament (Terry 1905). Far from representing a break with the past, the Union was re-interpreted to show that it preserved a distinctive Scottish national ethos. This view is most clearly expressed by R. V. Dicey, Professor of Constitutional Law at Oxford, and Robert Rait, Professor of Scottish History at Glasgow University, who concluded that the genius of the Union was its ability to prevent Scottish and English hostility while combining the good feature of both nations, yet allowing Scottish and English nationality to survive (Dicey and Rait 1920). By the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, historians such as Terry, Rait, Thomson and MacKinnon, and politicians such as Argyll and Rosebery, were emphasising how the Union was able to preserve and foster separate nationalities within the one constitutional framework for the pursuit of British imperial greatness, and this was based on a *partnership* between England and Scotland.

Such interpretations allowed the signing of the Treaty to be presented in a favourable light. Argyll claimed that the Scottish commissioners were far-

Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity

seeing patriotic Scots who risked popular hostility for the greater good of the country. Dicey and Rait likewise assumed wise statesmanship to be the principal factor in the making of the Union. Such views depended on hindsight and the fortunate survival of English and Scottish national identity. By emphasising the flexible nature of the Union such historians were able to consolidate support for the constitutional arrangement by claiming that the Union preserved and contributed to Scottish national identity. Scottish grievances and English indifferences were acknowledged, but it was a small price to pay for the success Scotland had achieved since the Union.

By emphasising the perfection of the constitutional arrangement, Scottish historians worked against the idea of a separate Scottish parliament. Scottish greatness was dependent on the Union and a return to independence was impossible. Terry claimed that the Union closed forever the Scottish parliament, and historical Whiggism remained undiminished as far as the inevitability of the Union was concerned. The clearest proponent of this view was Hume Brown who argued that the Protestantism of England and Scotland and the wars with Catholic Europe brought the two nations together. The possibility of an independent Scotland was dismissed. Scotland would have lost out on constitutional and commercial development. As one critic put it:

It had made rapid strides in trade, manufactures, and agriculture. A comparison between the state of the people in the second quarter of the eighteenth, and that in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, revealed the fact that Scotland had prospered to a degree, beyond the most sanguine dreams of the men who made the Union. (Mackinnon 1896, p.505)

Scotland would have been unable to contribute to the building of the British empire which was Scotland's historical destiny. By stressing the inevitability of the Union, historians reinforced the point made by Unionist politicians that Scottish home rule was retrogressive and anachronistic:

One may venture to say that the cries for so called home rule are nothing better than lamentations over the way in which the growth of civilisation, by the very benefit it extends, limits the personal and relative eminence both of individuals and individual countries. The Act of Union is thus treated as open to censure because it has attained the very objects for the sake of which it was passed, the unity, and therefore the peace and prosperity of Great Britain. (Dicey and Rait 1920, p.345)

Scottish Affairs

Inevitability and the unstoppable force of Scottish history, all of which was presented as leading up to the Union, was used to obviate the principle of political choice.

Such notions of Scottish historical destiny were accepted by the home rulers, although they laid stress on the Union's past flexibility as a pointer that changes could be made in the future. What the home rule movement wanted was the up dating of the Union to some form more appropriate to the twentieth century. The sanctity of the Union principle had to be guaranteed and Scottish home rulers found little in the historical record which could further their claims that greater independence would bring benefits. Scottish nationality had survived the Union, and, as most were ready to admit, had prospered to an unprecedented degree. Home rule aspirations were based on removing existing grievances by introducing a domestic legislature. Yet, their appeals for the revival of a pre-Union institution, the Scottish parliament, walked an uneasy tight-rope between the past and present. It was a 'leap in the dark' and the danger that a Scottish parliament would revive pre-Union Anglo-Scottish tensions was never far from the minds of critics of Scottish home rule. Because the Union had made Scotland a great nation, home rulers and their demands for greater autonomy seemed to be going against the grain of Scottish history and threatened the very foundation upon which Scottish prosperity and progress had been built since 1707.

Although the Whig version of Scottish history was triumphant at the end of the First World War, it has to be emphasised that it did allow a positive reading of Scottish history when seen from a Unionist perspective. Beveridge and Turnbull in **The Eclipse of Scottish Culture** have examined Scottish history in this period and noted how it projected backward and negative images of the Scottish past. However, they have based their conclusions about the *inferiorism* of Scottish history in this period on too narrow a reading of too narrow a range of books. They have ignored the more favourable interpretations of Scottish history which were around, such as Charles Thomson's **Scotland's Worth and Work** or Hector MacPherson's, **The Intellectual Development of Scotland**, and likewise have taken no account of the growing nationalist histories (Bransford 1897; **Scottish Review** 1890-1918; **Scots Magazine** 1890-1894). The ability of Whig historians to accommodate Scottish nationalism has been underplayed, and few have noted the modifications which took place within in it. For example, the 'barbarity and poverty' of pre-Union Scotland was reinterpreted as 'rugged' history which gave the Scots character and drive. According to Rosebery and Argyll, Scotland's pre-Union poverty was essential in ensuring that the Scots made the most of the opportunities opened up to them by the

Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity

Union. The martial qualities of a warlike race, which had caused such internal strife before 1707, was now put to good use in the Highland Regiments which acted as the imperial shock troops of the British Empire. Similar arguments were used about the Covenanters and religious fanaticism; it was negative for some, but for others it showed the power of high principles.

Such positivism, however, was only permitted within the Unionist perspective. The 'darker' aspect of Scottish history becomes a force for good once Scotland embarks on the imperial mission, but when examined outwith this context, the impression is negative. Drawing on the work of Mathieson (1910) and Buckle (1870) the Marquess of Tulibardine told the House of Commons on 28 February, 1912:

If you compare Scotland at the time of the Union with that it is now [*sic*], you will find at that time we had not the help of England or the help of the Union or the help of the Empire as we have at the present moment. You will find that we were poor, that we were torn by factions, and that there was absolutely no scope for the inhabitants to get something better, and that we were at the mercy of every clique and every sort of faction. I say we were at are poorest at the time of the Union...Whilst we had a separate parliament there was always a conflict of political and commercial ideas, which absolutely throttled the whole colonising genius of our country.

Such a negative view of Scottish history only appeared when the Union was threatened. However, within the confines of the Union, the reading was much more positive. Bonar Law, the Scottish Canadian Unionist leader, who was proud of his Covenanting heritage, told parliament in 1912:

There is no one who will deny that Scotch character or Scotch nationality is as firmly rooted as that of any other people, and that after two centuries of the closest connections with England. It proves beyond a shadow of doubt that whatever was good in nationality can continue and even increase, inspite of union with a larger country.

The Whig view did permit a positive reading of Scottish history, but only from the perspective that Scotland would find its historic destiny in the Union and Empire.

TURMOIL BETWEEN THE WARS

Scottish national identity suffered a crisis of confidence in the inter-war period as the imperial foundations of Scottish identity were shaken by the profound impact of post-war dislocation. The empire was drifting apart, economic dislocation laid waste the notion that Scotland was the 'workshop of the Empire', emigration to the colonies was seen as a response to the lack of social and economic opportunities, the military contribution was cut-back, secularisation and popular sectarianism reduced the role of the Kirk and the appalling social conditions and slums painted a very different picture of the nation. Politicians and intellectuals debated the 'end of Scotland' and it seemed that the nation was caught in a spiral of terminal decline (Finlay 1994). For many history was all Scotland had left to prove her nationality and it had to be readapted to suit the changed circumstances of the inter-war period.

Some historians responded to the crisis of confidence by re-asserting that Scotland was a nation. As Elizabeth Haldane put it:

They say we are now but a province - an important province - but no nation. Our population is decreasing, our trade is decreasing, our great men are no more. They tell us we are suffering for our neglect of duty and our self-sufficiency in the years gone by. They tell us that the religion that was our stand by is dead, that Secularism has taken its place because our church was not faithful to its standards and let its precious heritage slip from its hands. They tell us that our vaunted education has become atrophied, that we produce machines calculated to pass exams but devoid of life and its adaptive powers. They tell us that physically we are a town bred people who have lost hold on nature and the health that nature gives. It is to combat these assertions that this book is written....we cannot be international without first being a nation. (Haldane 1933, p. vi)

For others it was already lost. George Kidd, a Unionist MP, told the House of Commons in 1919 that 'Scotland has past the stage of nationhood'. Walter Elliot, a future Unionist Scottish Secretary of State, believed that to hark back to nationalism was retrogressive; hence he was in favour of administrative devolution which was designed to improve government efficiency but not home rule because it pandered to nationalist sentiment. Historians were vital to the debate about Scottish identity in the inter-war period because they provided the raw material for defining what Scotland

Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity

was and this was the precursor for the debate as to what Scotland should become.

Scottish historiography reflected the political development of inter-war Scotland as each political faction produced its own historical reading of the past to vindicate their political beliefs. The Labour Party pushed the notion of a democratic and radical Scotland which had been under the heel of a corrupt aristocracy. Tom Johnston produced **Our Scots Noble Families** and **A History of the Working Classes in Scotland** which made useful historical propaganda for the Labour Party. James Barr's **A History of the Covenanters** adapted the radicalism of the Covenanters to push the notion of a democratic movement fighting for religious liberty. The parallels with the present were striking. Reflecting Labour's commitment to home rule at the time, these works were laden with nationalist overtones. The Scots were a democratic and egalitarian people and Labour was the natural party to represent these needs. The past was used to confer legitimacy on the present.

Left wing nationalists writing for the **Scots Independent** produced their own histories, much of it reiterating the Labour Party's view of Scottish history, but concluded that the natural democratic and egalitarian qualities of the Scots would never be realised until Scotland was free from Westminster. The corrupt aristocracy were bundled in with the English, and the Treaty of Union was pilloried for its corruption. Scottish freedom had been sabotaged in 1707 and some nationalists wanted to disinherit themselves of the imperial past (Finlay 1992). Moderate nationalists were keen to promote the perceived excellence of traditional Scottish institutions which showed the true character and worth of Scottish nationality. Right wingers such as George Malcolm Thomson and Andrew Dewar Gibb wanted to use home rule as a way to rejuvenate the imperial partnership (Thomson 1928; Gibb 1930).

For the Unionists the Union was elevated to prime position in so far as it more than anything else had made the Scots what they were. 'Before 1707, the Scots were a miserable pack of savages' was a familiar Unionist cry and they were reminded that 'it was the Union which made Scotland an imperial nation.' Unionist historians working within the universities, such as Pryde and Rait, continued to stress the inevitability of the Union. They made repeated reference to Scotland's imperial progress. Yet, one of the major difficulties of this position was that there was a break in continuity as the imperial vestiges of the Scottish identity started to go into decline. Increasingly unionism became nothing more than a sentimental appeal to the imperial past (Finlay 1994). The Unionists tried to douse the threat of nationalism, which advocated economic and national regeneration through the setting up of a

Scottish Affairs

Scottish parliament, by gesture politics. These were designed to pacify Scottish national sentiment without giving in to home rule demands. The setting up of the Scottish Office in Edinburgh, the return of Scottish historical records taken during the time of Edward I, an increase in royal visits, restoration work at Holyrood and the Glasgow Empire Exhibition of 1938 were all concessions to combat the perception of Scotland's diminishing nationhood. Furthermore, they masked the fact that the government seemed to have no real policies capable of reversing Scottish economic decline in the thirties (Finlay 1994).

THE POST-WAR ERA

The consensus produced in the inter-war period proved remarkably resilient because the main tenets of Scottish historiography, the egalitarian and democratic society, could be utilised by all political parties. The changing political culture of the post-war era directed more historical attention to the working-class, which was more of a shift in balance reflecting the growing influence of the Labour Party rather than a new perspective. History was subject to more rigorous empiricism and professionalisation, yet, more often than not, this was simply used to shore up old perspectives. Triumphant protestantism still dominated, and Burleigh could still describe Scottish catholics as 'alien' in his church history of the 1960s. Nineteenth century racial notions still survived to a large extent (Donaldson 1980).

The Whiggism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was replaced by economic determinism which served the same purpose of stressing the inevitability of British integration from Reformation, to Union of the Crowns, to the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, to Cromwellian Union, to the Glorious Revolution, to the Treaty of Union, to Industrial Revolution, and finally, to the modern British state. Such ideas tied in with the vogue of social scientists in the sixties to stress the perceived growing homogeneity of Britain and the similarities which existed in all industrial societies. The shift in emphasis to economic history left Scottish political history as a secondary by-product which focused on parochial affairs such as church politics; explicitly political notions of modern Scotland became increasingly rare. Furthermore, the tendency to focus on Scottish parochial history meant that the Scottish contribution to British development was largely ignored and British foreign, imperial and political history was examined from an English perspective.

Interest in Scottish history in academic circles emerged in the seventies as a result of the rise of the SNP. The assumptions of British homogeneity and the

Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity

force of historical assimilation were challenged, and historians were called upon to give an account of this phenomenon. William Ferguson (1977) and Pat Riley (1978) convincingly challenged the notion that the Union had been brought about by either wise statesmanship or economic forces and drew attention to its expedient nature brought about by a crisis in Anglo-Scottish relations. Christopher Harvie (1977) led the way in examining the roots of Scottish nationalism. However, explicit political studies of modern Scotland dried up in the aftermath of the devolution failure in 1979 when the Scottish Assembly did not materialise and historians were no longer needed to explain why Scottish nationalism might emerge triumphant.

Since 1979 it has been Scottish social history and early modern history which has flourished. In many ways this may be a reaction to the difficulty of finding an appropriate framework to fit in the problems of modern Scotland as a political entity. Early modernists, led by Lynch (1993) and Wormald (1981), were free to examine Scotland as a distinct political entity in this period. Furthermore, they have challenged the notion that Scotland was a backward nation. Social historians, such as Devine (1988) and Smout (1986), have found an intellectual escape hatch from the narrow parochial history of Scotland by drawing upon international comparisons. By studying Scottish history from the perspective of its people, the awkward question of Scotland's political status could be avoided as history was explained in terms of social and economic, rather than political developments. Such work has helped to put Scottish history on the international map. Furthermore, it has broken out of the straight jacket of comparing Scottish development with England's which for too long was always regarded as the historical benchmark by which Scottish progress should be measured (Kidd 1993).

The work which has dealt with political questions of nationalism and national identity has been led by sociologists and political scientists, perhaps because such disciplines are better equipped to deal with the awkward conceptual problems of Scottish national identity (Gellner 1983, Anderson 1983, Nairn 1981, McCrone 1992, Paterson 1991, Mitchell 1990). However, it does seem necessary for historians of modern Scotland to grasp the thistle and look more closely at politics and ideology because it is only by examining the political construction of modern Scotland that we can explain what Scotland is. If we use our history to explain and understand what Scotland is, then we will be in a better position to say what Scotland might become.

REFERENCES

Allan, D. (1993) **Virtue, Learning and the Scottish Enlightenment**. Edinburgh.

Scottish Affairs

- Anderson, B. (1983) **Immagined Communities**. London.
- Argyll, Eighth Duke of (1887) **Scotland As It Was And As It Is**. Edinburgh.
- Ash, M. (1980) **The Strange Death of Scottish History**. Edinburgh.
- Barr, J. (1947) **A History of the Scottish Covenanters**. London.
- Bebbington, D.,(1982) 'Religion and National Feeling in Nineteenth Century Wales and Scotland' in S. Mews (ed) **Religion and National Identity** (Studies in Church History, 18). Oxford.
- Beveridge, C., and Turnbull, R. (1989) **The Eclipse of Scottish Culture**. Edinburgh.
- Blake, G.R. (1919) **Scotland of the Scots**. London.
- Bowie, J.,(1939) **The Future of Scotland**. London.
- Bransford, V.V. (1897) 'Scotland's Patriotic Historians', **Macmillans Magazine** 76.
- Brown, T. (1893) **Annals of the Disruption**. Edinburgh.
- Buchan, J. (1930) **The Kirk in Scotland**. London.
- Buckle, H.T. (1870) **On Scotland and the Scotch Intellect**. London.
- Burleigh, J.H.S. (1960) **A Church History of Scotland**. London.
- Burton Hill, J.H. (1887) **The Scot Abroad**. Edinburgh.
- Colls, R. and Dodds, P. (1986) **Englishness: Politics and Culture, 1880-1920**. London.
- Colville, J. (1897) **By-Ways of Scottish History**. Edinburgh.
- Craik, Sir Henry (1901) **A Century of Scottish History**. Edinburgh.
- Devine, T. (1988) **The Great Highland Famine**. Edinburgh.
- Dicey, A.V. and Rait, R.S. (1920) **Thoughts on the Union between Scotland and England**. London.
- Donaldson, G. (1980) **Scotland: The Shaping of a nation**. London.
- Elliot, W. (1932) 'Scottish Politics' in the Duke of Atholl (ed) **A Scotsman's Heritage**. London.
- Ferguson, W. (1977) **Scotland's Relations with England**. Edinburgh.
- Finlay, R.J. (1992) 'For or Against: Scottish Nationalists and the British Empire', **Scottish Historical Review**, April.
- Finlay, R.J. (1994) 'National Identity in Crisis: Politicians, Intellectuals and the 'End of Scotland', 1920-1939', **History**, Summer.
- Gellner, E. (1983) **Nations and Nationalism**. Ithaca.
- Gibb, A.D. (1930) **Scotland in Eclipse**. London.
- Haldane, E. (1933) **The Scotland of Our Fathers**. London.
- Hume Brown, P. (1914) **The Legislative Union Between England and Scotland**. Edinburgh.

Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity

- Hanham, H.J. (1969) **Scottish Nationalism**. London.
- Harvie, C.T. (1977) **Scotland and Nationalism**. London
- (1990) 'The Covenanting Tradition' in G. Walker and T. Gallagher (eds) **Sermons and Battle Hymns: Protestant Popular Culture in Modern Scotland**. Edinburgh.
- Hunter, W.G. (1887) 'The Union of 1707 Viewed Financially', **Scottish Review**, Oct.
- Johnston, T. (1909) **Our Scots Noble Families**. Glasgow.
- Johnston, T. (1920) **The History of the Working Classes in Scotland**. Glasgow.
- Kirkwood, D. (1935) **My Life of Revolt**. London.
- Lynch, M. (1993) **Scotland: a New History**. London.
- McCrone, D. (1992) **Understanding Scotland: The Sociology of a Stateless Nation**. London.
- Mackinnon, J. (1896) **The Union of England and Scotland**. London.
- MacPherson, H. (1911) **The Intellectual Development of Scotland**. London.
- Mason, R. (1987) 'Scotching the Brut: Politics, History and National Myth in Sixteenth Century Britain' in R. Mason (ed) **Scotland and England, 1286-1815**. Edinburgh.
- Mathieson, W.L. (1910) **The Awakening of Scotland**. Glasgow.
- Mitchell, J. (1990) **Conservatives and the Union**. Edinburgh.
- Nairn, T. (1981) **The Break-Up of Britain**. London.
- Oakley, C.A. (1937) **Scottish Industry Today**. Edinburgh.
- Paterson, L. (1991) 'Ane End of Ane Auld sang: Sovereignty and the Renegotiation of the Union' **Scottish Government Yearbook**, eds A.Brown and D.McCrone.
- Rait, R. (1924) **The Parliaments of Scotland**. Edinburgh.
- Riley, P.W.J. (1978) **The Union of England and Scotland**. Manchester.
- Scots Independent** (1926-1934).
- Scots Magazine** (1890-1894).
- Scottish Review** (1890-1918).
- Smout, T.C. (1986) **A Century of the Scottish People**. London.
- Stewart, G. (1883) **The Progress of Glasgow**. Glasgow.
- Terry, C.S. (1905) **Scottish Parliaments, 1603-1707**. Glasgow.
- Thomson, C.W. (n.d. 1908?) **Scotland's Work and Worth**. Edinburgh.
- Thomson, G.M. (1928) **The Re-Discovery of Scotland**. London.
- Warr, C.L. (1932) 'The Scottish Church' in the Duke of Atholl (ed) **A Scotsman's Heritage**: London.

Scottish Affairs

Wormald, J. (1981) **Court, Kirk and Community**: London.
May 1994