Title
Bannockburn, Braveheart, or Baccara? Ethnosymbolism, nationalism, and sport in contemporary Scotland

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Abstract

This article critically reflects upon the symbolic role of sport in relation to nationalism and national identity within contemporary Scottish society. Drawing upon an ethnosymbolist theoretical approach, the article discusses: a) the mythology associated with Scottish 'national sports'; b) the existence of independent Scottish teams; and c) the evocation of ancient Scottish history and warfare within the symbolism of Scottish sport. It underlines the import of sporting issues to ongoing theoretical debates regarding nationalism and national identity in contemporary Scottish society, concluding that ethnosymbolism remains an effective theoretical explanation of the nature of contemporary Scottish nationalism.

Introduction

This article endeavours to critically reflect upon the symbolic role of sport in relation to nationalism and national identity within contemporary Scottish society, in a period where the nation's constitutional status remains front and centre in political debate. Despite their failure to secure a 'Yes' vote in the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, the sustained dominance of the pro-independence Scottish National Party in Scottish politics has ensured that there remains a strong possibility of a second independence referendum in the near future. The ongoing constitutional debate means that questions regarding the nature of contemporary Scottish nationalism, Scottishness

and Scottish national identity / identities are still prominent in the public sphere of Scottish society. Indeed, the ongoing salience of the constitutional debate has led to both academic and public debates about what it means to be 'Scottish' in the post-referendum era, with the referendum leading to contrasting articulations of Scottish national identity from pro-union and pro-independence voters, politicians, and commentators, alike.

In particular, this analysis will evaluate the utility of an ethnosymbolist theoretical approach (Armstrong, 1982; Hutchinson, 1994; Smith, 1986, 2010) by examining the role of sport in invoking a sense of Scottish national identity in relation to the symbolism of Scotland's history as an independent nation prior to the 1707 Act of Union. To this end, the article will consider the extent to which such historic symbolism remains influential within contemporary Scottish nationalism, both in the domain of sport and politics.

The article commences with a brief outline of the fundamental principles of the ethnosymbolist theoretical approach in a general sense, before offering a short review of literature specifically focused on the study of nationalism in Scotland in order to illustrate the potential analytical utility of ethnosymblism in the Scottish context. The remainder of the article is then dedicated to the study of nationalism in the domain of sport, commencing with consideration of pre-eminent literature within the broader study of sport and nationalism which have discussed the relevance of ethnosymbolism within the domain of sport. Attention then turns to the central crux of the article, focusing on the utility of ethnosymbolism to critically analyse the relationship

between Scottish sport and Scottish nationalism, centring around discussion of three core issues:

i) the mythology associated with Scottish 'national sports'

ii) the existence of independent Scottish teams, and their symbolism vis-à-vis Scottish nationalism

iii) the evocation of ancient Scottish history and warfare within the symbolism of Scottish sport

Ethnosymbolism

Ethnosymbolism constitutes one of the central theoretical paradigms in the academic study of nationalism incorporated in Smith's (2010) typology of nationalism theories, alongside 'modernism', 'perennialism', 'primordialism', and the recently-acknowledged "possible fifth 'postmodern' paradigm… as yet sketchy and fragmentary" (2010: 61) including recent theoretical developments in this field such as 'banal nationalism' (Billig, 1995) and 'everyday nationalism' (Brubaker et al., 2006; Edensor, 2002). As a heuristic tool, Smith's typology helps to illustrate the axiomatic divergence of these paradigms with reference to the historical origins of the 'nation'.

Placing emphasis on the temporality of nations, it is possible to categorise the positions of various theorists depending upon whether they argue for the pre-modern existence of nations (i.e. perennialist and primordialists), refute their pre-modernity (i.e. modernists), or attempt to accommodate both arguments (i.e. ethnosymbolists).

Despite the fact that some theorists have argued that the 'when' of a nation's origins is often indistinguishable (Connor, 1990, 2004; Ozkirimli, 2010), the historicity of the nation as a concept carries significant analytical utility for the applied study of a particular nation's development, especially where ambiguity exists as regards its historic origins as is the case for Scotland in relation to contrasting theories of nationalism, as will be explored further below.

The ethnosymbolist approach (Armstrong, 1982; Hutchinson, 1994; Smith, 1986, 2002, 2010) draws upon contrasting ideas from the modernist, perennialist and primordialist theorisations, whilst placing particular emphasis on the importance of subjective elements of national identity in determining the success or demise of a given nation. Proponents of the ethnosymbolist approach to nationalism argue it avoids the theoretical challenges face by alternative paradigms in catering for the existence of both historic and recently-formed nations, stating that the synthesis of concepts from contrasting theorisations of nationalism offers the ability to accommodate problematic examples (Smith, 2010).

The requirement to analyse the development of nations and nationalism over the 'longue duree' is therefore argued to be crucial by ethnosymbolists for appreciating the long-term developments of a particular nation (Armstrong, 1982, 2004; Leoussi and Grosby, 2007; Smith, 2010). Armstrong (1982) places emphasis on the importance of symbols, communication and myth for the gradual emergence of pre-modern nations. The existence of these three elements allows for a more cohesive sense of national consciousness, with Armstrong (1982: 7-8) contending that the "primary characteristic of ethnic boundaries is attitudinal… ethnic boundary

mechanisms exist in the minds of their subjects rather than as lines on a map or norms in a rule book". Therefore, this position contends that the successful establishment of a modern nation state depends on the strength of the national consciousness of its population (Leoussi and Grosby, 2007), providing motivational drive for securing self-determination for that particular collectivity.

The arguments of Hutchinson (1987; 1994) concerning the relationship between 'political nationalism' and 'cultural nationalism' can be used to further understand the interdependence between national consciousness and the success of political nationalist movements. Whilst 'political nationalists' adopt a pragmatic approach to achieve a sovereign state which allows for political expression by appealing to principles of self-determination, 'cultural nationalists' place greater emphasis on symbolic expression of the nation through its unique history and culture. Importantly, although these forms of nationalism differ in their end goal, Hutchinson's thesis holds that within a particular nation's historic movement towards statehood there is an oscillation between 'political' and 'cultural' nationalist movements across time, with one form often replacing the other at times of impasse (Hutchinson, 1987, 1994; Smith, 2010).

The ethnosymbolist approach has therefore been argued to offer a number of strengths with regards to its application to certain nations where the expression of 'political nationalism' and 'cultural nationalism' have displayed such oscillation without necessarily successfully leading to the establishment of a sovereign nation-state, such as the case of Scotland. Attention therefore turns below to the analytical utility of

ethnosymbolism, vis-à-vis its theoretical comparators, with regards to the study of Scottish nationalism in both the 'pre-modern' and 'modern' eras.

Ethnosymbolism and the Complexities of Scotland's Pre-Modern History

The case of Scotland provides a complex analytical challenge in relation to the theoretical paradigms of nationalism outlined above. Although the 'nation-state' acts as the fundamental starting point for 'modernist' theoretical analyses, Scotland is a prime example of a 'submerged nation' given its status within the wider state system of the UK. Inhabitants of 'submerged nations' such as Scotland can possess a tangible awareness of its existence as a distinct 'nation' on a social, cultural and political level, despite the nation's lack of parallel representation in terms of sovereign statehood (Guibernau, 1995; Smith, 1999). The lack of congruence between Scotland's 'nationhood' and 'statehood' therefore presents an interesting dimension to any application of the major paradigmatic approaches of nationalism.

Furthermore, whilst the idea of a Scottish nation can be argued to have pre-modern historical foundations, thus providing support to adherents of a perennialist or primordialist perspective (Seton-Watson, 1977), contrasting arguments have been made concerning the constructed and romanticised nature of Scottish nationalism and identity (Hobsbawm, 1983; McCrone, 1992; Trevor-Roper, 1983, 2008), lending weight to the contentions of the modernist and ethnosymbolist paradigms. Indeed, one of the major proponents of the perennialist approach, Seton-Watson (1977), pays direct attention to the case of Scotland when differentiating between 'old' and 'new' nations. He argues that the "old nations of Europe in 1789 were the English, Scots,

French, Dutch, Castilians and Portuguese in the west; the Danes and Swedes in the north; and the Hungarians, Poles and Russians in the east" (Seton-Watson, 1977: 6). Scotland is therefore held as an exemplar of 'continuous perennialism', with a history dating back to antiquity (Ichijo, 2004; Hastings, 1997; Seton-Watson, 1977).

Therefore, whilst the case of Scotland provides evidence to support the claims of perennialists, it equally presents an empirical problem in identifying when the Scottish nation came into existence. Although Seton-Watson acknowledges this conundrum, the fragmentary nature of Scotland's early history presents significant foundational challenges to his claims. Given that the earliest geographical records of the Scottish kingdom in the writings of Bede identify their location in Argyll, a small region of Scotland (Dickinson, 1961), it could be argued that the Scottish nation existed from the point at which the Scots settled there. Alternatively, it could be argued that the true origins of the Scottish nation stem from its territorial delineation through the construction of Roman frontier walls, or through the joining of the Scottish and Pictish lands by Kenneth Mac Alpin in 843, or by the signing of the Treaty of York in 1237 which legally defined the border between Scotland and England (Davies, 1990; Dickinson, 1961; Mitchison, 1970; Smyth, 1984; Webster, 1997).

The aforementioned arguments regarding the often distinguishable temporal origins of a given nation (Connor, 2004) in turn create an additional point of contention in the theoretical analysis of the historic origins of the Scottish nation. The inherent ambiguity of such empirical questions has therefore catalysed the ongoing theoretical disjunctures between ethnosymbolist and modernist theorists. In particular, Scotland's

pre-modern historical existence, in both a legal and symbolic form, poses a significant challenge to the central contentions of the modernist paradigm. Even 'radical modernists' such as Connor (1990, 2004), whose acknowledgement of the salience of 'ethnonationalism' partially accommodates the ongoing importance of pre-modern ethnic symbolism within contemporary nationalist movements, face difficulties in justifying a position that nations are a purely modern phenomena when faced with empirical evidence of 'old nations' such as Scotland. Ethnosymbolism thus offers a paradigmatic approach which accommodates such evidence, and can therefore overcome such theoretical challenges when applied to the case of Scotland.

For example, although the 1237 Treaty of York acted to establish the border between Scotland and England, the onset of the 'Wars of Independence' between the two countries at the end of the thirteenth century again represent a historical development which still carries resonance for contemporary reflections on the origins of the Scottish nation and Scottish nationalism. The ensuing 'Wars of Independence' between Scottish and English forces included a number of historical events and characters which continue to influence discourse and symbolism surrounding Scottish nationalism in the present day.

Indeed, for a number of writers, the Wars of Independence mark the first signs of a "common sense of nationhood" (Davies, 1990: 116) in Scottish society, with Scots armies fighting in the name of the country rather than in the name of their ruler (Davies, 1990; Dickinson, 1961; Mitchison, 1970; Webster, 1997). The first such example is the popular Scottish revolt led by William Wallace in 1297, culminating in the Scottish success over the English forces at Stirling Bridge in September of that

year (Dickinson, 1961; Maclean, 2000). Following Wallace, the second major Scottish uprising against English forces was led by Robert Bruce, the Earl of Carrick (Maclean, 2000; Mitchison, 1970), with Bruce's forces driving the English garrisons from Scottish territories to the north of the Forth-Clyde isthmus by 1309, and from Perth, Dundee, Dumfries, Roxburgh and Edinburgh by 1314 (Dickinson, 1961; Maclean, 2000; Mitchison, 1970). This prompted the return of a mass English army under Edward II, meeting Bruce's forces at the battle of Bannockburn in June 1314. Despite being significantly outnumbered by the English forces, the battle ended with a resounding victory for Bruce's forces and re-established the independence of the Scottish kingdom (Dickinson, 1961; Griffiths, 1984; Maclean, 2000).

The prevailing period after Bannockburn also saw the creation of the 'Declaration of Arbroath' in 1320 to be sent to Pope John XXII, which Mitchison describes as "an announcement of independence and allegiance to Bruce 'as being the person who hath restored the people's safety in defence of their liberties'" (1970: 49). The Declaration of Arbroath is again a common point of reference in discussions of Scottish political and cultural nationalism to the present day. Furthermore, other historians have cited the 1320 Declaration of Arbroath as evidence that not only did Scotland exist as a nation in a legal sense, but it also existed in the minds of members of the Scottish population as a nationalist cause (Harvie, 1998; Kearton, 2005; Mitchison, 1970). It is for these reasons, amongst others, that the ethnosymbolist position has remained influential within the academic study of Scottish nationalism.

Ethnosymbolism and Contemporary Scottish Nationalism

The ongoing relevance of the aforementioned pre-modern events for contemporary Scottish nationalism, whether as historical facts or romanticised mythology, therefore provides succour to the arguments of adherents to an 'ethnosymbolist' perspective, such as Armstrong (1982), Hutchinson (1994) and Smith (1986, 2010), who have often acknowledged the need to synthesise ideas from the modernist, perennialist and primordialist theorisations of nationalism outline above.

Smith (2010) argues that Scottish nationalism can be viewed as a form of 'ethnic revival' which draws upon the symbolism of a pre-modern Scottish 'ethnie' as a foundation for contemporary nationalist movements. Smith argues that the 'ethnic revival' in nationalist movements in industrialised Western societies such as Scotland involved:

> …a largely middle-class revolt of 'peripheral minorities' against the dominant ethnic majorities of old-established states and against their centralized governments [which] appealed to some of the older symbols, myths and memories of classic European mass nationalisms, though with a more social and often socialist programme and more limited political goals – in most cases a desire for cultural and economic autonomy, rather than outright independence (Smith, 2010: 130)

Whilst Smith's contentions regarding the existence of a singular Scottish 'ethnie' are undermined by the extensive historical evidence of the multi-ethnic nature of Scotland's ancient history, he acknowledges this issue by arguing that such 'ethnics' remain but an 'ideal-type', instead emphasising that their importance resides in the

ability to retain a symbolic status for ethnic solidarity and the myths of ancestry evident within contemporary nationalist sentiment, despite the over-simplification of such popular beliefs (Smith, 2010). It is therefore more important that an idea of singular Scottish ethnic origins exists as part of the Scottish national consciousness, even if the reality is more complex.

The arguments of McCrone (1992) lend some support to those of avowed ethnosymbolists such as Smith, Armstrong, and Hutchinson. McCrone argues that although the foundations for ideas of Scotland as a nation have clear links with territory, landscape and ethnicity, he also identifies the forged nature of Scottish symbolism in the form of tartanry and 'Kailyard' romantic literature. This position supports the attempts of ethnosymbolism to combine the deep historical foundations for ideas about the Scottish nation of the 'perennialist' and 'primordialist' schools with 'modernist' ideas relating to the construction of Scottish national symbolism. However, McCrone also lends particular support to a number of 'modernist' propositions by highlighting the emphasis on the myth-history of the Scottish nation, citing a number of commonly held myths which have influenced Scottish nationalist movements. Despite Leith and Soule's (2011) critique of his stance which firmly associates him with a modernist position, it appears difficult to pigeon-hole McCrone's position in one particular theoretical paradigm given his acknowledgement of pre-modern and modern nationalist symbolism.

In contrast, Leith and Soule (ibid) are unequivocal about their own approach to the study of Scottish nationalism, explicitly identifying their adherence to an ethnosymbolist perspective. In particular, their work is "concerned with the

contemporary political aspects and implications, an area that ethno-symbolism has not traditionally addressed and for which it has, rightly, been criticised" (2011: 9). By arguing against the modernist position that Scottish nationalist myths and symbols are simply modern social constructions, Leith and Soule claim instead that nationalist heroes such as William Wallace and Rob Roy are valid historical figures and cultural symbols, regardless of whether their associated mythology is embellished. Drawing upon the ideas of Billig and Anderson regarding the importance of symbolism, discourse and language in the study of Scottish nationalism, Leith and Soule place emphasis on synthesising their arguments with an ethnosymbolist ontological stance in order to overcome the audience homogenisation which they argue is implicit in the accounts of Billig and Anderson. Leith and Soule note that the balanced view of pre-modern Scottish mythology advocated in their ethnosymbolist position facilitates an appreciation of the nuanced nature of nationalist discourse construction, arguing that "those wishing to employ particular narratives for political purposes must do so within a symbolic repertoire accessible to those they wish to persuade" (Leith and Soule, 2011: 10). Indeed, Leith's (2012) work elaborates further on this argument, emphasising the necessity for political elites to draw upon pre-existing Scottish myths and symbols for political purposes.

Elsewhere, the work of Ichijo (2004) on the political positioning of the Scottish National Party (SNP) with regards to Europe and political integration within the European Union also draws upon an ethnosymbolist theoretical position. For Ichijo, "[t]he fact that the Scottish National Party subscribes to the medieval origin of Scottish nationhood is not surprising since it strengthens their claim of the authenticity of the Scottish nationhood" (ibid: 32), arguing that the SNP's discourse

regarding the Scottish nation's historical origins frequently invokes evidence of Scotland's pre-modern and pre-Union history to support their desire to re-establish Scottish independence. Furthermore, the relevance of ethnosymbolism for the analysis of contemporary Scottish political nationalism has been further illustrated in recent analysis of political discourse during the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence (Whigham, 2019). Echoing the arguments of Ichijo (2004, 2012), Whigham argued that SNP's discourse during the referendum resonated with an ethnosymbolist theoretical position, emphasising the pre-modern existence of an independent Scottish nation with ancient ethnic roots in order to normalise their contemporary vision of an independent Scotland and to assuage the fears of floating voters during the 2014 independence referendum.

Finally, the work of Edensor (1997a, 1997b, 2002) provides further support for the arguments of ethnosymbolist theorists regarding the importance of historical symbolism within contemporary Scottish nationalism and national identity, despite the fact his conceptualisation of 'everyday nationalism' has been argued to align with the 'postmodern' paradigm of nationalism theory rather than an ethnosymbolist position. Notwithstanding this caveat, Edensor's work on the case of Scotland specifically reflects on the relationship between popular culture and Scottish national identity in everyday life. His earlier work (Edensor, 1997a, 1997b) specifically scrutinises the extent to which Scottish historical figures such as William Wallace and Robert the Bruce have been represented in contemporary Scottish popular culture and tourism. His analysis of the mythologizing of historical figures demonstrates the potential for the political commandeering of the popular sentiments regarding Scottish identity which emanate from such cultural productions, despite their questionable

historicity (Edensor, 1997a, 1997b). The relationship between Scottish cultural and political nationalism is also argued to play out in the appropriation of the film 'Braveheart' by the SNP[1]:

> An analysis of responses to Braveheart also reveals the tension between political and cultural forms of nationalism. The SNP's development of their 'head and heart' campaign testifies to the need to appeal to an emotional sense of attachment as well as the more 'objective' economic and political arguments. (1997b: 155)

Furthermore, Edensor later highlighted that the potential political ramifications of the narratives emerging from various popular cultural representations of Scotland should not be discounted, given that the "global transmission of disembedded images and narratives may feed back into local discourses, even heightening their power over identity and imagination" (2002: 150). These arguments thus underline the importance of pre-modern history - whether accurately or inaccurately portrayed in popular culture - within contemporary Scottish nationalism, adding further support to the arguments of ethnosymbolists to this effect.

Ethnosymbolism, Sport, and Nationalism

Attention now turn to the domain of sport as a contrasting form of popular culture, and, specifically, the analytical utility of ethnosymbolism with regards to the

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1 'Braveheart' was released in 1995 by Paramount Pictures and 20th Century Fox, with the film directed by and starring Mel Gibson. The film dramatises the story of William Wallace and his exploits during the 'Wars of Independence' between Scotland and England in the 13th century. The film received critical acclaim in the form of 10 Academy Award nominations, winning 5 Academy Awards; however, the factual accuracy of the plot-line has been widely critiqued by historians.

relationship between sport and nationalism. Echoing a number of the arguments presented above, a number of academics writing on sport have highlighted the necessity to consider the importance of pre-modern ethnic and cultural factors as suggested within perennialist, primordialist, and ethnosymbolist approaches to the study of nationalism.

For example, Bairner's (2009) analysis of the relationship between national landscapes and 'national sports' is a prime example of such an argument, highlighting that a "claim that a discussion of modern sports can generate support for a qualified primordial perspective is far less absurd or irrational than initial reactions might suppose" (ibid: 224). He contends that the debate between primordialist and modernist approaches in contemporary reflections on nationalism has often led to the primordialist and ethno-symbolist approaches to nationalism being "mocked by those who prefer the modernist interpretation" (ibid: 224).

Disputing such a stance, Bairner's explication of the links between the national sports and the national anthems involved in international sports events to notions of landscape demonstrates that a purely 'modernist' understanding of nationalism in sport is limiting, and that the imagery and symbolism associated with primordialist approaches is equally evident in contemporary examples of nationalism in sport. He therefore argues that "[i]n reality… no single approach can fully explain how specific sports acquire national significance" (ibid: 229). Although Bairner's thesis clearly sets out to defend a primordialist stance, as does his more recent work on primordialism in relation sport and national identities in Britain (Bairner and May, 2021), his position arguably appears to equally align with an ethnosymbolist

theorisation of nationalism which seeks to acknowledge the pre-modern roots of nations whilst accepting the partially constructed nature of the nation as an entity (Smith, 2010). Therefore, Bairner appears to conflate 'primordialism' and 'ethnosymbolism' in places, thus blurring the supposed distinctions between these two different theoretical approaches.

Hargreaves (2000) adopts a similar position to that of Bairner in his analysis of Catalan nationalism at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. In setting out his theoretical stance at the outset of his study, Hargreaves similarly argues that adhering to a specific theorisation of nationalism is problematic:

> A synthesis of the two major kinds of approach to nationalism, the perennialist and the modernist, is required because exclusive reliance on either one of them has its dangers: the perennialists tend to downplay the importance of the structural bases of nationalism, and modernists to downplay the significance of its cultural antecedents. (2000: 12)

Hargreaves argues that a purely modernist perspective ignores the fact that "just as nationalism has pre-modern origins, so sport has its pre-modern origins in games, physical recreations and pastimes" (ibid: 12), whilst accepting that codification and contemporary organisation of sport are an outcome of modernisation processes. Similarly, Hargreaves argues that Catalan nationalism is equally influence by both ethnic and civic forms of nationalism, equating these with the perennialist and modernist schools of thought, citing the work of Llobera (1989, 1994) to contend that Catalan nationalism "was generated by the pressures of modernisation, but it also had

its roots and origins in the pre-modern 'ethnonation'" (Hargreaves, 2000: 17). As with Bairner (2009), although Hargreaves does not identify his position as such, his invocation of this 'ethnonation' lends support to the ethnosymbolist school of thought which emphasises the role of 'ethnies' as the basis for the development of modern nations, including 'submerged nations' such as Catalonia.

Although he does not explicate his theoretical stance to the same degree, Allison (2000) appears to echo the position of Hargreaves (2000) regarding the need to avoid strict adherence to an extreme modernist, perennialist or primordialist theorisation of nationalism (with Allison referring to the latter two theorisations as 'ethnicism'). Allison argues that:

> The "extreme theses of 'modernism' and 'ethnicism' about nationality
> have little appeal. It seems reasonable to say that there are real ethnic
> histories and even shared genetic traits, but that much of what makes a
> modern national consciousness or determines the identity of a given
> individual is the product of the invention and selection of tradition which
> has occurred in a modern and organized way. (2000: 350)

Allison's stance therefore appears to align partially with the arguments made by adherents to an ethnosymbolist theorisation, who argue that their approach overcomes a singular emphasis on either modern or ethnic roots of the nation by considering the role of both. However, Allison (2000) also draws upon some of the arguments of the 'ideological' and 'sociocultural' strands of modernist thought in his definition of nationalism and, specifically, nationalists per se, arguing that "[i]n general,

nationalists, as opposed to patriots, must have a political project for the nation, whether for independence, cultural preservation or aggrandizement" (ibid: 350-351). Therefore, as has been the case with other scholars in this field, his position appears to synthesis different theorisations of nationalism in his own analysis of the intersection between sport and nationalism, echoing the stance the ethnosymbolist paradigm.

Ethnosymbolism, Sport, and Scottish Nationalism – Critical Reflections

Academic analysis of the interconnection between sport and Scottish nationalism has offered a number of extensive accounts of the importance of sport to the creation and maintenance of a distinctive Scottish national identity; however, ethnosymbolism has rarely been explicitly applied to the context of Scottish sport. Nonetheless, a number of the key themes evident in past scholarship on Scottish sport and nationalism provide qualified support for the utility of ethnosymbolism as a theoretical approach, **and will be explored in more detail below**.

Ethnosymbolism and Scottish 'national sports'

Firstly, Scotland possesses a number of traditional and indigenous 'Scottish' sporting activities which have all been proposed by various supporters to have a claim to the position of Scotland's 'national sport' (Burnett and Jarvie, 2000). In this list of indigenous Scottish sports, Highland Games events have often been argued to offer an 'authentic' representation of traditional Scottish sporting culture (Holt, 1989; Jarvie, 1991, 2000). Numerous examples of these sporting and cultural festivals are staged both in Scotland and overseas, particularly in locations with historical links to

Scottish migrants. The work of Jarvie (1991) offers a detailed account of the historical development of the Highland Games at home and abroad, arguing that the Games spread in particular to North America due to the increased levels of Scottish emigration to this part of the world following the 'Highland Clearances' of the 18th century. Although Jarvie cautions against simplistic presentations of the nature of the 'Clearances' which result from the mythology of these events which exists in popular culture and history, he argues that a number of Scottish and Highland societies were established in the USA and Canada during this period as a means of integrating Scottish migrants into their new surroundings. These societies established and maintained a number of traditions associated with Highland culture, with the hosting of Highland gatherings and Games events amongst these customs (Jarvie, 1991, 2000).

Despite the attempts of the North American societies to recreate an authentic culture of 'home' for the Scottish diaspora, Jarvie (1991, 2005) identifies a divergence between the nature of Highland Games events in North America and those held in Scotland (Sim, 2011a, 2011b). During the 19th century the Games in Scotland and the UK moved towards associations with the British royalty and a sense of 'Balmorality', before being further transformed in the later 20th century by the impacts of increasing professionalism, commercialism and tourism (Jarvie, 1991, 1994, 2005). In contrast, the Highland Games events held in North America have retained a more romantic and mythologising approach to the 'authentic' traditions and symbolism of Highland and Scottish culture, in contrast to member of the Scottish diaspora in other geographic locations such as England (Sim, 2011a, 2011b; Leith and Sim, 2012). The contemporary reinterpretation of pre-modern 'authentic' Scottish culture thus

illustrates the relevance of the arguments of ethnosymbolists regarding the role of pre-modern myths and imagery with the modern symbolism of Scottishness within the Highland Games movement – and particularly so given the stark contrast the realities of modern Scottish society and sporting culture.

Furthermore, the sport of shinty has also been proposed as a claimant to the title of Scottish 'national sports' given their origins in the country. Maclennan's (2000) analysis of the sport of shinty argues that its legitimate, but often derided, claim as Scotland's national sport lies in its strong links with indigenous Gaelic heritage. Maclennan highlights the frequently-drawn links with the Irish sport of hurling; however, such a contrast serves to illustrate the declining popularity of shinty in comparison to its Irish counterpart, with the sport of shinty requiring central intervention and funding to support its continuation in the post-1945 period. The relative unpopularity of sports with distinct Scottish origins lies in contrast the Irish context, for whom sports such as hurling and Gaelic football have continued to act as important leisure activities in their new setting (Darby, 2009; Darby and Hassan, 2008).

This failure has been attributed to the lack of a Scottish equivalent to the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) (Bairner and Whigham, 2014; Bradley, 1998, 2007; Holt, 1989; Jarvie, 1993; Jarvie and Walker, 1994), with Jarvie and Walker arguing that during the period of the establishment of the GAA "Scotland… did not want to break out of the Act of Union and in this fact alone, lies one of the many reasons why a similar organisation to the Gaelic Athletic Association did not develop in Scotland" (1994: 6). Harvie (1994) draws similar conclusions regarding the lack of a Scottish

equivalent to the GAA, arguing that the lack of political organisation and support for Scottish sports such as shinty denied them the impetus required to gain in popularity and importance vis-à-vis other popular sports such as football or rugby union. Interestingly, and with particular relevance to the current reflection on ethnosymbolist theoretical analysis, shinty's authenticity as a pre-modern symbol of Scottish Gaelic heritage has therefore been overlooked within expressions of contemporary Scottish sporting nationalism, perhaps reflecting the fact that modern notions of Scottishness are often more a reflection of Lowland 'Scots' identity rather than Highland, Scottish Gaelic identity. Such evidence further undermines the simplistic representation of Scottish national identity in relation to Highland culture, tartanry and 'Kailyard' romantic evident in some aforementioned modernist accounts of the construction of Scottish nationalism (Hobsbawm, 1983; McCrone, 1992; Trevor-Roper, 1983, 2008).

In addition to the Highland Games and shinty, a number of other modern sports have been claimed to have originated in Scotland and to therefore have a position as a Scottish 'national sport' (Burnett and Jarvie, 2000; Bairner, 2009). In terms of global popularity for participants, spectators and media coverage, golf is first and foremost amongst these sports. Scotland has been widely credited as the 'home of golf', with supporters of this claim pointing to the early references of the sport's existence in Scotland in James II's 1457 decree which banned the sport (Geddes, 2000). However, these claims for Scottish origins of golf have been undermined by evidence which suggests that the sport may have been introduced to Scotland from elsewhere in Europe (Geddes, 2000; Lowerson, 1994), with Gillmeister (2002) pointing to Flemish references to 'kolf' or 'kolve' as early as 1360. Lowerson (1994) argues that the creation and active perpetuation of the myth of Scotland as the home of golf in the

pre-Union and post-Union period remains important in contemporary Scotland, with golf used as a vehicle for attracting inward investment into Scottish tourism infrastructure and active sports tourists from across the world (Bairner and Whigham, 2014; EventScotland, 2008; Whigham et al., 2021). Again, the importance of the contested mythology of golf's pre-modern status in Scottish sporting culture emphasises the ongoing evocation of the 'authentic' and 'ancient' within the discourse of sport and national identity in modern Scotland.

Ethnosymbolism, the 'Tartan Army', and 'Flower of Scotland'

Secondly, and turning attention to sports such as football and rugby union which have dominated in terms of their popularity in contemporary sporting culture in Scotland, the role of sport for the ongoing expression of a distinctive Scottish identity in the post-Union era further illustrates ethnosymbolist arguments regarding the importance of pre-modern Scottish symbolism. As has been frequently argued in past academic analyses, sports such as football and rugby union have reinforced the notion of a distinct Scottish nation due to the existence of independent Scottish representative teams – a historical anomaly within the international sporting system which has rarely afforded such opportunities to other nations who are not recognised as sovereign states (Allison, 2000; Bairner, 1994, 1996, 2001; Duke and Crolley, 1996; Jarvie and Walker, 1994).

Sport therefore constitutes an additional form of civil society which distinguishes Scotland as a nation within the sovereign state of the United Kingdom, reproducing the symbolism of the 'holy trinity' of independent Scottish civic institutions such as

the Scottish educational, legal and Church systems (Hearn, 2002; Jarvie and Reid, 1999; McCrone, 1992, 2005; Pittock, 2012). Whilst organised sports such as football and rugby union, and their respective international sporting competition structures, are unarguably modern in nature, their organisation along the lines of pre-modern nations within the United Kingdom demonstrates their potential framing in relation to the pre-modern symbolism of the Scottish nation, resonating with an ethnosymbolist position.

With specific reference to football, the most popular sport in Scotland, a number of themes have been identified with regards to the relationship between football and nationalism in Scotland. One such theme which illustrates the interconnection between pre-modern symbolism of the Scottish nation and expressions of national identity in the contemporary era is the nature of the 'Tartan Army', a descriptor for supporters of the Scottish national football team. The eponymous association with tartanry for Scottish football fans – also displayed at other Scottish sporting events and cultural events (Hobsbawm, 1983; McCrone, 1992; Trevor-Roper, 1983, 2008) – illustrates ethnosymbolist arguments regarding the display of nationalist symbolism, in this case in a sartorial sense. The 'Tartan Army' have also been frequently portrayed in a relatively positive light with regards to their lively but good-natured support for the Scottish team when attending away fixtures held outside of Scotland, notwithstanding the strong association of the fan groups with excessive alcohol consumption. Academics have therefore frequently argued that the positive reception of the 'Tartan Army' has led to a self-fulfilling cycle of fan behaviour, leading to a degree of self-caricature and performance with regards to the customs and attire of Scottish football fans (Bairner, 1994; Blain and Boyle, 1994; Blain, Boyle and O'Donnell, 1993; Boyle and Haynes, 2009; Kowalski, 2004). For Giulianotti (1991),

this has resulted in the performance of the role of the 'Tartan Army foot-soldier' by Scottish football fans, and this off-the-pitch role has been maintained in the last two decades since the time of writing despite the declining success of the Scottish football team on the pitch.

In contrast, the Scottish rugby union team has been able to maintain a greater degree of competitiveness on the pitch in recent years, notwithstanding the comparatively limited global reach of rugby union vis-à-vis football. However, this contrast in sporting success is not the only difference between rugby union and football, with differing symbolic statuses in relation to Scottish identity and nationalism associated with each sport. Rugby union has frequently been identified as possessing a more politically and socially conservative supporter base in past academic analyses (Bairner, 2000; Jarvie, 1993, 2017; Jarvie and Reid, 1999; Jarvie and Walker, 1994; Kowalski, 2004), attracting more players and fans from the middle-class and upper-class strata of Scottish society when compared to football. Although this has therefore resulted in a greater association between rugby union fans with politically conservative and unionist positions, this has not completely negated any relationships between rugby union and the symbolism of an independent Scottish nation.

Indeed, the Scottish Rugby Football Union's decision to play the nationalist-associated anthem of 'Flower of Scotland' as a replacement for the British national anthem of 'God Save The Queen' before international matches has frequently been scrutinised in this regard (Bairner, 2000; Jarvie, 1993; Jarvie and Walker, 1994). As Maguire et al. (2002) noted, the selection of national anthems in the British context has an added degree of symbolic importance, and is thus "informative about the state

of respective senses of Englishness, Scottishness, Irishness and Welshness… the national anthem of Great Britain, 'God Save the Queen', is owned by none of the respective countries that play in these matches" (ibid: 151). The symbolism of 'Flower of Scotland' has specific import for the current reflection on the merits of ethnosymbolism as a theoretical lens for anyone familiar with the lyrics – as demonstrated in the excerpt below:

> O Flower of Scotland
>
> When will we see your like again?
>
> That fought and died for
>
> Your wee bit Hill and Glen
>
> And stood against him
>
> Proud Edward's Army
>
> And sent him homeward tae think again

The penultimate line of the chorus which mentions 'Proud Edward's Army' explicitly references the aforementioned victory of Robert Bruce's Scottish forces over Edward II's at the 1314 Battle of Bannockburn, thus illustrated the evocation of Scotland's ancient history within contemporary Scottish nationalism, in line with the arguments of the ethnosymbolist position. Given that 'Flower of Scotland' has been widely adopted as Scotland's national anthem, the symbolism of Scotland's historical mythology remains prevalent within the contemporary Scottish sporting domain.

Ethnosymbolism and the 'Auld Enemy'

Nonetheless, Giulianotti's aforementioned notion of the 'Tartan Army foot-soldier' and the symbolism of 'Flower of Scotland' resonates with two inter-related issues which illustrates the evocation of historical symbolism within contemporary Scottish nationalism and national identity: the relationship between Scotland and England – the 'Auld Enemy' - and the framing of Scotland as an 'underdog' in this relationship.

On the first issue, Bairner (1994, 2000) reflects on the underlying motivations for maintaining the positive reputation of the 'Tartan Army', suggesting that one of the key motives for Scottish football fans is to distinguish themselves from English football fans, who had developed a significant reputation for violent behaviour and hooliganism in the 1980s and 1990s. Others have argued that, rather than expressing 'non-Englishness' in the way outlined above by Bairner, the relationship between Scotland and England has manifest itself in sport as explicit 'anti-Englishness' (Moorhouse, 1986, 1987; Whigham, 2014). Moorhouse's unequivocal position on the existence of anti-English sentiment in Scottish sport, and in particular football, is exemplified in his arguments that such sentiment is "what binds Scots together – a dislike of the 'English' which has historical, material and cultural roots and which is given colour and circumstance, among other things, in the regularities of the structure of British football" (1987: 200). His analysis of anti-English sentiment also paid particular attention to the role of the Home International tournament fixtures in football which were held regularly until the 1980s, with the fixtures held at England's home stadium Wembley particularly associated with Scottish national symbolism and references to historical battles between the two nations as part of the media coverage and pre-match build-up (Moorhouse, 1986, 1987).

The evocation of historical battles outlined above thus adds further weight to the relevance of ethnosymbolism for understanding the nature of nationalist sentiment in the domain of Scottish sport. Blain and Boyle (1994) demonstrated that 'national-symbolic' ideas, stories and narratives of Scotland and Scottish identity are particularly prevalent in media coverage of Scottish sport, and this is significantly pronounced in the case of football. Amongst an array of narrative tropes deployed in Scottish sports media coverage, Blain and Boyle identify certain narratives which are utilised particularly frequency, such as the representations of Scotland as the 'underdog' mentioned above. The narrative trope of Scotland's underdog status invoked in 'Flower of Scotland' in relation to Bannockburn and the 'Wars of Independence' continues to resonate within its political and sporting endeavour to this day (Whigham, 2014).

Indeed, the framing of Scotland's sporting endeavours as 'glorious failures' from an underdog with relatively scarce sporting resources in relation to their English counterparts can therefore be argued to be an analogy for Scotland's political status. This framing draws comparisons with the symbolism of Scotland's pre-Union military and political battles as a sovereign nation with its English neighbours vis-a-vis Scotland's subsequent status as a 'submerged nation' within the contemporary state formation of the UK (Whigham, 2014, 2021). Again, the use of historical narratives as a frame for conceptualising the current constitutional arrangements again illustrates the potential utility of ethnosymbolism as a lens for understanding certain elements of contemporary Scottish nationalism.

Conclusions

In sum, I have argued above that the ethnosymbolist theoretical approach possesses a significant degree of utility for scrutinising the relationship between Scottish nationalism and national identity in the domain of sport. As demonstrated above - whether through the mythology of Scottish 'national sports', the existence of independent Scottish teams, or the evocation of ancient Scottish history and warfare - the symbolism of Scotland's pre-modern existence as an independent, 'old nation' remains abundant in the context of Scottish sport, and beyond. Indeed, the central crux of an ethnosymbolist analysis of contemporary Scottish sporting nationalism is that it is impossible to understand the symbolic tropes embedded within the practices and behaviours of Scottish sports fans and national representatives without at least acknowledging the pre-modern roots of these symbolic tropes.

That being said, it should be noted that my argument is not that ethnosymbolism is the sole theoretical explanation of the nature of contemporary Scottish nationalism. Indeed, to use *nationalism* in the singular is a crass over-simplification of the nuanced and multifarious forms of nationalism and national identity in contemporary – the plural *nationalisms* would undoubtedly be more apt. For example, the anthem of 'Flower of Scotland' is but one of many songs commonly recited from the stands at sporting events, with the symbolism of Bannockburn now competing with Baccara's disco hit 'Yes Sir, I Can Boogie' in the hearts of Scottish football fans when competing at the UEFA UERO 2020 Football Championships; it is therefore important to note that not all anthemic symbolism associated with Scottish sport is linked with Scotland's ancient history. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that a significant number of Scotland's sporting representatives, as well as their fans in

stadia and at home, and equally comfortable with the duality of their nationality as both Scots and Brits (Iowerth et al., 2014). It is therefore important to stress that the expression of Scottish sporting nationalism cannot and should not be conflated with support for Scottish political nationalism, nor the cause of Scottish independence (Bairner, 1994, 2001; Jarvie and Walker, 1994; Whigham, 2021).

Nonetheless, with these caveats in mind, it is hoped that adopting a specific theoretical position in the above use of ethnosymbolism can help to further the development of theoretically-informed analyses of Scottish nationalism in the sporting context - as well as the application of ethnosymbolism and competing paradigmatic approaches in the study of sport and nationalism. Such analyses, alongside the past scholarship on Scottish sport discussed above, will in turn underline the import of sporting issues to the ongoing theoretical debates regarding nationalism and national identity in contemporary society, both within and beyond the context of sport.

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