Brave hearts and minds: the devolution revolution and the (re)building of the Scottish nation

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Abstract
In 1995, the myth-history presented in Mel Gibson's award winning film, Braveheart, sparked the fires of nationalism in Scotland, leading to the nation's partial autonomy. Braveheart's influence on politics, historical memory and cultural identity are undeniable, yet few historians give the film the credit it rightly deserves. This demonstrates that, while it may not have single handily led to Scotland's devolution in 1999, Braveheart did play a major role in the lead up to the 1997 devolution referendum. The film infused Scotland's society, culture, and politics with nationalistic pride. Utilizing James DeFronzo's five critical factors for revolutionary success as a framework, this project shows that Braveheart, a film about the legendary Scottish hero named William Wallace, had a vast political, social and cultural impact on Scotland, thus leading to the restoration of a Scottish parliament after three-centuries of dormancy. However, Scotland is not an independent country, as it remains a member of the United Kingdom. Therefore, this thesis also examines the ongoing nation-building, or rebuilding, process in Scotland, in the period immediately prior to the independence referendum in 2014. In all, the fact that Braveheart managed to revive, alter, and create Scotland's greatest historical and mythological hero, as well as forever change the course of Scottish political and social history, makes it one of the most influential films of all time.

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Defeating the Scottish National Party (SNP) by just 74 votes in Galloway and Upper Nithsdale, Mr Duncan was the only successful Scottish Conservative candidate at that election. With their tongues planted firmly in their cheeks, Murdo MacLeod and Jason Allardyce embellished the political joke in an article entitled 'Return of the lesser-spotted Tory' that was published the following day by the Scotsman's sister newspaper Scotland on Sunday. Next to a photograph of a smiling Mr Duncan, the two journalists wrote:

After a century of releasing once-extinct species back into the wild, Scotland last week went a step further and brought back a beast many thought was gone for good: the Scottish Tory. (Scotland on Sunday, 10 June 2001). Especially in a post-devolution era, Scottish history and Scotland deserve better than this. Scotland: The Making and Unmaking of the Nation, c.1100-1707 is certainly designed to provoke but need not be taken to indicate a nationalist view of 1707 as a moment of eclipse. Scotland's history, like all histories, resists simple generalisations. Were it otherwise, its study would not be so rewarding. ...more. I deem, it is one of the fundamental books which should be read by beginners or midlevel Scottish history readers as it has got very fruitful details in point of the selected significant events and made me love it even more with its great and regarded scholar writers. Never mind that Scottish Romanticism is a thoroughly Scottish invention which existed centuries before your Brigadoons and your Bravehearts; never mind that Braveheart remains one of only a handful of films that even attempts to present that period of Scotland's history that is intent on its cultural destruction, as depicted through the mythic lense of a Scottish minstrel? The modern mythology of Scotland, even Brigadoon and Whisky Galore and Trainspotting, is a reflection of the nation's character. he 1999 re-convening of the Scottish Parliament, after. 292 years, forms the explicit focus of Scotland: The. Challenge of Devolution, a collection of brief but infor-. mative essays exploring the new institutional contexts and. possibilities of Scottish politics. Drawn from a 1999 conference. Devolution may already form part of the historiography of. Scotland circa 1999, given much that has since changed, but, this collection nonetheless serves as a very useful, coherent and. reasonably comprehensive survey of Scottish politics at the dawn. of a new era. has argued that the Scottish nation existed, and was even. nurtured, outwith state structures. Indeed, Davison argues that. the development of a specifically Scottish national consciousness.