University of Pardubice
Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Scottish Identity in *Trainspotting*
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Bachelor Thesis
2021

Univerzita Pardubice

Fakulta filozofická

Akademický rok: 2019/2020

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE
(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

Jméno a příjmení: **Veronika Plíhalová**
Osobní číslo: **H18094**
Studijní program: **B7507 Specializace v pedagogice**
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk – specializace v pedagogice**
Téma práce: **Scottish Identity in Trainspotting**
Zadávající katedra: **Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Zásady pro vypracování

Studentka se ve své bakalářské práci zaměří na vývoj literárního obrazu skotské národní identity. V teoretické části práce bude charakterizovat samotný pojem národní identita a na pozadí historického vývoje bude stručně analyzovat konkrétně vývoj skotského národního cítění. K tomu doplní i charakteristiku literárního obrazu skotské identity a jeho změn ve druhé polovině 20. století. Do tohoto literárního kontextu zasadí také Irvina Welshe, jako autora zvoleného primárního díla. V praktické části práce pak bude analyzovat jeho román Trainspotting na základě faktů a poznatků prezentovaných v teoretické části.

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:
Rozsah grafických prací:
Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**
Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

Seznam doporučené literatury:

Bell, Eleanor. *Questioning Scotland: Literature, Nationalism, Postmodernism.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
Burgess, Moira. *Imagine a City: Glasgow in Fiction.* Glendaruel: Argyll, 1998.
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Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **30. dubna 2020**
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **31. března 2021**

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V Pardubicích dne 30. listopadu 2020

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Veronika Plíhalová

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ANNOTATION

The bachelor thesis deals with national identity, and in its majority the Scottish national identity. It is divided in two parts, the first of which aims to provide theoretical background on the subject of national identity and its features, and subsequently discusses the Scottish historical development with respect to the parallel development of identity and literature. The findings are illustrated on the novel *Trainspotting*, specifically on the author and three characters.

KEYWORDS

NÁZEV

Skotská identita v *Trainspotting*

ANOTACE

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá národní identitou, a ve své většině národní identitou skotskou. Je rozdělena do dvou částí, z nichž první si klade za cíl poskytnout teoretické pozadí týkající se znaků národní identity, a dále tyto znaky analyzovat s ohledem na vývoj skotské národní identity v průběhu vývoje historického i literárního. Poznatky získané v této části budou aplikovány na román *Trainspotting*, konkrétně na autora románu a tři z jeho postav.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

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INTRODUCTION

> Choose life. Choose mortgage payments; choose washing machines; choose cars; choose sitting oan a couch watching mind–numbing and spirit–crushing game shows, stuffing fuckin junk food intae yir mooth. Choose rotting away, pishing and shiteing yersel in a home, a total fuckin embarrassment tae the selfish, fucked–up brats ye've produced. Choose life.[1]

Trainspotting, Irvine Welsh's cult classic published in 1993, is a statement on every level. Apart from its essentially indisputable reporting validity on the lives of a few young people, it encompasses the trauma of drug addiction on an individual and the environment they are living in. Welsh was labelled as "the best thing that has happened to British writing for decade"[2] and the "poet laureate of the chemical generation"[3], Danny Boyle's 1996 adaptation became "the highest grossing British-made film in the United Kingdom in history"[4] and, according to Innes, "Scotland's literary landscape has never quite recovered from *Trainspotting*."[5] The "choose life" monologue referenced above, delivered in an unmistakable tone that the novel has set for itself from the very first page, can be found online on gift items, similarly to Mark Renton plunging head-first into the toilet bowl. Readers and the audience have been given a new perspective on Edinburgh that is, in the light of the novel, reminiscent of Christiane F's Berlin in *Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo*. *Trainspotting* has been romanticized for its crudity, praised for its exposure of the world that the society is generally pretending does not exist, as is discussed within the analysis of individual characters, it has been used as a cautionary tale and dubbed controversial for its transgression; but most importantly, it defined Scottish identity in an unprecedented and inimitable manner.

It was done so in the same nonchalant way in which Welsh touches up on topics like substance abuse and depression. In less than 400 pages, Welsh has made his novel a sanctuary for people who do not, for any reason at all, identify with their nation, or feel the pride they are pressured to (similarly to Renton, whose conception of the Scottish includes portrayal like "the

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[1] Irvine Welsh, *Trainspotting* (London: Vintage, 1994), 76.
[2] Scott Stalcup, "'Trainspotting, High Fidelity'", and the Diction of Addiction," *Studies in Popular Culture* 30, no. 2 (2008): 119.
[3] "Generation Ecstasy: Forty Things that Started with an E," *The Face* (October 1995): 120.
[4] Maureen Callahan, "The Scottish Invasion," *New York Magazine* 29, no. 27 (1996): 39.
[5] Kirstin Innes, "Mark Renton's Bairns: Identity and Language in the Post-Trainspotting Novel," in *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature*, ed. Berthold Schoene-Harwood (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 301.

lowest of the low, scum of the Earth"[6]), those who the environment and essentially the nation has failed and in return, turn to drugs, as if in spite to their surroundings, families, friends and even themselves. It is a thorough, timeless report on "Scottishness" – or the presence of Scottish traits in an individual – that is relatable even now (perhaps especially now, taking into consideration the latest political development in Scotland which has proven that Scotland is not yet ready to take action towards independence) and the depth it provides was of immense use in writing of this thesis.

Similarly, scholarly literature and research on the matter of identity, national identity, Scottish history and Scottishness, along with the novel *Trainspotting*, were examined to provide answers to questions that are, however, challenging to do so. There is uncertainty surrounding the topic, and in many instances, this thesis could not have provided a satisfying answer. Still, to pose the questions is symptomatic of increased awareness of the importance of identity discourse, and although they may be left unanswered, the society's understanding of the complexity of the matter is part of the route to answers.

The unclarity lies in way in which Scottish national identity presents itself – and if dissected into further detailed fractions, following research questions arise: What is at the basis of identity formation? What has been the development of Scottish national identity with respect to Scottish history and Scottish literature? In what measure has *Trainspotting* been so significant when it comes to identity and its features? It is crucial to make these inquiries in order to gain complex understanding of identity and Scottishness, and, subsequently, be given more insight into historical events, predict future political and sociological unfoldment and generally have deeper understanding of the human psyche, both individual and collective.

In the case of *Trainspotting*, it has been proven useful to look at the matter through the prism of Irvine Welsh's persona and writing. The author to whom is dedicated a chapter in the thesis has been handling the issue of identity and specifically Scottishness with such delicacy, yet one of the reasons the novel is so popular to this day is the indifference with which its story is told, the raw aspect in addressing even the gravest of issues with palpable apathy. The allusion of vague nihilism of the narrative is partially what makes *Trainspotting* so attractive after almost three decades.

The paper's scope comprises two parts, the first discussing the theoretical features of identity and national identity at first, followed by the analysis of Scottish history. It is necessary

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[6] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 33.

to note that the discussion also captures the parallel development of Scottish identity and its subsequent representation in literature. The author deemed the combination of all three aspects to compromise the topic least; if history, identity and literature were to be analysed individually, a large portion of their relevance would be lost in the process. The amalgamation of the three best reflects their real interaction and coexistence.

The first segment explores the issue of through which measures the sentiment continues to exist and how multiple scholars observe the existence of national identity. Scottish history in brief summary is, nonetheless, the focal point of the theoretical part, with the intention of defining a number of key occurrences and relating them to national sentiment; emphasis is put on both Scotland and Scottish identity in themselves and in connection to the British status and existence.

In the second segment of the thesis, the findings and notions observed and consulted with previous research are applied on the characters of *Trainspotting* – Renton, Sick Boy and Begbie – and on Irvine Welsh. It needs to be noted that the e-version used for this research differs in the page count, compared to the physical copy of the book, and therefore, the cited pages of the two do not correspond with one another. With that being said, the purpose of such application is to explore the representation of national sentiment in literature, which is generally a medium with more fidelity towards real life than academic research, especially those carried out much sooner than *Trainspotting* came to existence. Additionally, as noted by Hermann et al., the representation of Scottish identity as seen in the novel is so unconventional that it interestingly provides a large amount of opposition towards the presented findings[7], and the academic remarkableness of such comparison is of immense measure.

The aim of both segments and the thesis per se is to inspect to what extent the analysed topic can be subjected to particular questions and eventually able to be answered. The following chapter discusses the theoretical features of national identity.

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[7] Cassandra Hermann, Marie Møller Jensen, and Tine Myrup Thiesson, "The foregrounding of place in Trainspotting: A discourse-stylistic analysis," *Globe: A Journal of Language, Culture and Communication* 5 (August 2017): 32.

1. NATIONAL IDENTITY

In order to research a particular national identity, it is essential to define identity alone, as a broader concept with its subcategories, first. It needs to be noted that it is not an umbrella term that covers or generates sub-identities; it cannot stand on its own, seeing as it is so abstract that it conveys zero information. Instead, it is being led to; all the individual identities eventually thread into and procreate the compound identity, the one that lies at the very base of human self-awareness and the idea in which humans wish to be perceived. The process is different to the usual pattern of formation; the prefix sub- indicates inferiority, the succession of items of less significance than the original one. This is not the case in identity, in which the respective items leading to complete identity are multiple. As a result, all humans embody multiple identities.

Despite the frequent usage of the term "identity" in today's society, the designated label for the collective existence of all things human is younger than could be expected. It is a term that did not begin to be used within sociology, psychology or political studies until as recently as 1965.[8] In 1999, Fearon even claims that dictionaries have not adopted the new meaning of the word and still use the old definition.[9] The author reports that in the older sense, identity is an association of a name with a person.[10] At the present time, not many people would define identity as a plain name-person equation that is described by Ricoeur and Blamey as "assigning the same phonic chain to the same individual in all of its occurrences."[11] This is a testament to the rise of individual conceptions and individualistic tendencies that took place in the second half of the twentieth century, marking the beginning of new ways people were wishing to be self-fulfilled and self-expressed.

Individualization is the process leading to developing an identity, a unit that exists across all modern sciences. They handle it with different methods of approaching. Fearon states that stripped of all the existing specifics, created or defined for the purposes of sub-identities, the simplified, yet applicable question to pose in order to extract the essence of identity is "Who am I?"[12] Based on the situation which the author of this research would find herself in and for what purposes the question would be asked, the answers differ: a woman, a student, a person

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[8] James D . Fearon, *What Is Identity (As We Now Use the Word)?*, (Stanford University, 1999), 9.

[9] Fearon, *What Is Identity?*, 8 .

[10] Ibid.

[11] Paul Ricoeur and Kathleen Blamey, *Oneself as Another* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 29.

[12] Fearon, *What Is Identity?*, 12.

of Czech nationality, a young adult, an atheist, a member of a film club, or, as Fearon notes,[13] a number in a system. This confirms that humans have multiple identities that are shifted within, depending on whether the posed question is in a conversation on gender identity, employment status or professional identity, national identity, age, religious identity, a casual conversation; or, eventually, digital identity.

The need to be as specific as possible in the description of the self is characterized by the dislike of conceptualization, speaking in abbreviations and over-simplification of identity. This is because, and Ricoeur and Blamey make note of this, individualisation and the subsequent rise of identities can only flourish without overly classifying what cannot be classified in a non-lossless way.[14] A similar point made by the authors, regarding the coexistence of languages and identity, is that while languages might differ in making distinctions within them to emphasise the individual, they all value operation rather than the result.[15] This means that languages often aid, as a by-product of the lack of impact put on the result, in the production and spread of discrimination, notwithstanding the fact that hate speech is often used to either caricaturize, disregard or degrade an individual's existence. The term "linguistic discrimination" directly connects attributes gained through external factors, such as an accent or size of vocabulary, or speech impediments, to bigotry. Overall, languages through their very nature often result in the inevitable, i.e. over-conceptualization of the spoken word and overlooking the individual whose desire is to be as individualized as possible.

One of the sub-identities forming a multiple identity is national identity. The question proposes itself: isn't the perspective above too rigid, too bureaucratic, insinuating that humans are simply being assigned identities, as if they were merely products of the system without free will? Employing this point of view, identity could be theorized to be a simple final product, a definitive item to be chosen in a store aisle, stripping it of the complexity that it undoubtedly possesses. Nevertheless, in his 1996 essay, Hall makes an attempt to dismantle this perception, emphasizing the fact that identity should be perceived as an ever-changing process rather than an accomplished fact that is finalised without any means of development.[16] Wood agrees, indicating that national identity is dynamic and "always in the process of production."[17]

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[13] Fearon, *What Is Identity?*, 12.

[14] Ricoeur, Blamey, *Oneself as Another*, 28.

[15] Ricoeur, Blamey, *Oneself as Another*, 27.

[16] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford, (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 222.

[17] Nichola Wood, "Playing with 'Scottishness': Musical Performance, Non-representational Thinking and the 'doings' of National Identity," *Cultural Geographies* 19, no. 2 (2012): 196.

Grotenhuis adds the following perception, indicating that the creation of identity is complex and not achieved via a direct route:

"[…] And yet I believe that the issue of forging a national identity should be tackled head-on in any fragile-states strategy. We should stop mystifying national identity as something mysterious that shows up without us understanding how it developed."[18]

This is more reminiscent of the idea of identity the society has today. Humans are always evolving and so are their identities, and the understanding of this development is crucial in understanding one's identity.

The aforementioned process of production is based on developmental analysis. As reported by Grotenhuis, a model for developing national identity, constructed by building blocks complementing each other, needs to be developed before the identity itself.[19] Model of such utility was formed by Stephen Shulman, a political scientist. The pillars of the process are constructed by him as follows: civic identity, cultural identity and ethnicity being primary pillars, with pillars such as citizenship, territory, religion, language, ancestry etc.[20] being secondary. All of these are central components of a draft that is later formed to be a national identity.

Opposed to the idea of identification based upon common denominator, it is possible to theorize that identifying with a nation, especially minor in the given territory – as is the Scottish nation in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – does not necessarily depend on aspects chosen to identify with, but also on the vice-versa-stance - choosing what not to identify with. Bond claims that "equally, members of minority groups may choose to exclude themselves from the identity associated with the majority"[21], meaning that developing a self-held notion of national identity does not have to come from the individual's inner values, beliefs and attributes – such as religion or practiced traditions. Instead, the development comes from what the individual willingly chooses not to be or represent. Bond suggests an identity-building process similar to that of Grotenhuis, and renames his building blocks[22] identity markers that are defined as "any characteristics associated with

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[18] René Grotenhuis, *Nation-Building as Necessary Effort in Fragile States* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 126.
[19] Grotenhuis, *Nation-Building*, 127.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ross Bond, "Belonging and Becoming: National Identity and Exclusion," *Sociology* 40, no. 4 (2006): 611.
[22] Grotenhuis, *Nation-Building*, 127.

an individual that they might choose to present to others, in order to support a national identity claim."[23] Bond argues that these characteristics include most commonly race, ancestry or residence.[24] Seeing as one's existence is extended in multiple time frames, via ancestors or one's own system of beliefs, Kiely et al. speak of supporting a national identity claim; for instance, an individual might claim to be Scottish if they were born in Scotland, if their ancestors came from Scotland, if they are committed to living and working in Scotland or if they choose to wear a kilt.[25] All of these are identity markers – and unlike Bond, who does suggest that usually they are a deeply rooted part of the individual's nature[26], the authors indicate that identity markers can be deliberate acts of displaying identify markers for the external world, upon the decision of identifying with a nation.

Generally, national identity exists in a co-dependent relation with other identities that, altogether, give rise to identity as a concept. National identity, as one of the most distinctive sub-identities, is agreed by all authors to be developed systematically, stemming from several attributes. There is disparity between the approach of Bond, Kiely et al. and that of Grotenhuis, with which they proceed in their identity markers research; as reported by Bond, most commonly they are given[27], and the rest of authors suggest that they can also be adopted, on the basis of, for example, bloodline.[28] In other words, a person does not have to be fully Scottish themselves to be able to claim the Scottish identity. This corresponds with the initial theory about the uncommon formation of identity, often being an unlikely process.

Lastly, the key thing to remember is that it is in human nature to utilize the experience gained via one's cultural background, family life or the minority experience. As stated by Hall, when touching upon the subject of cultural identity and representation, the "enunciated" position, or the viewpoint marked by said experience, cannot be omitted, and for a reason, since the heart has its reasons, as well.[29] Therefore, it is crucial to take into account the non-objectiveness that is absolutely a part of an identity narrative.

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[23] Richard Kiely, Frank Bechhofer, Robert Stewart, and David McCrone, "The Markers and Rules of Scottish National Identity," *The Sociological Review* 49, no. 1 (February 2001): 35-36.
[24] Bond, "Belonging and Becoming," 611.
[25] Kiely et al., "The Markers and Rules of Scottish National Identity," 36.
[26] Bond, "Belonging and Becoming," 611
[27] Ibid.
[28] Kiely et al., "The Markers and Rules of Scottish National Identity," 36, Grotenhuis, *Nation-Building*, 127.
[29] Rutherford, *Identity*, 223.

The next chapter deals with Scottish history and the parallel development of Scottish identity, taking into account the nation itself and the nation's existence in the United Kingdom. At the same time, references to Scottish identity in literature will be made.

2. SCOTTISH HISTORY AND ITS IMPACT ON SCOTTISH IDENTITY AS REFLECTED IN LITERATURE

Following the creation process of national identity requires an important puzzle piece for the outcome to be complete, with this piece being history; even though identity is abstract at times, analysing the past is crucial to the full understanding of its formation, existence, and prediction of future behaviour. A valuable tool useful in such analysis is literature; the one of Scotland has witnessed the development of the local national sentiment for centuries and made it possible like no other medium. Authors like James Kelman, Robert Louis Stevenson or Robert Burns voiced their perspective and views in their writing. Without doubt, with difficulty in some periods in history, demonstrating the intensity of the tie between history and literature – allowing the process to take place through channelling of characters, stories and ideas in general.

The history of Scotland is most often researched from the point of creation of Scottish identity. Broun mentions that its first trace, even if in the very onset and existing in the plainest form, dates back to the year 900, and at the same time marks the first mention of the Gaelic version of "Scotland", Alba.[30] This was significant for a number of reasons; it did not mean that the notion of identity came to be widespread and to its full extent, but rather it symbolized the beginning of Scotland's formative era that lasted from the tenth to the thirteenth century, as Broun notes.[31] Despite the historical value, the first recorded formal usage of Gaelic also offers hindsight into the connection between national identity and the usage of language.

As mentioned above, the formative era ceases to last in the thirteenth century. In fact, it was stopped by external forces, taking a toll on both the formative process and the local situation in its entirety. Broun labels the point in time "a critical period when Scots were challenged by encroachments on their sovereignty and, eventually, faced temporarily successful conquest and occupation."[32] Most remarkably, the Scots were confronted with conquering attempts coming from England. In response to these, an organized resistance movement was formed and subsequently governed by William Wallace who then went on to lead Scotland in the First War of Scottish Independence.[33] The historical development insinuates that the formation of identity

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[30] Dauvit Broun, "The Birth of Scottish History," *The Scottish Historical Review* 76, no. 201 (1997): 4.
[31] Broun, "The Birth of Scottish History," 5.
[32] Broun, "The Birth of Scottish History," 14.
[33] "The Wars of Independence," The Scottish History Society, https://scottishhistorysociety.com/the-wars-of-independence/.

was hindered with, but it is not clear whether identity development would take place, even in the times of peace.

It is so because at that point, the existence of a nationhood in Scotland was not clear nor is it even now. Brown emphasizes the fact that even though Scotland was complete in its territory after its extension to the Isle of Man and the Hebrides, there is essentially no way to speak about Scottish national identity.[34] Broun remarks that even when looking back on the formative period, the existence of national identity was disputable[35] and Nairn even argues that the sentiment had been absent until as late as the 1920s; while national consciousness in other European nations was thriving, the phenomenon came to Scotland too late.[36] On the other hand, authors like Foster, Barrow or Smout independently on each other indicate that national consciousness in Scotland was, in reality, present as early as in the fourteenth century, and that it should not be brushed off as consciousness undeveloped or primitive.[37] The disparity in the scholars' points of view demonstrates that the historical existence of developed national consciousness is still a topic to be researched, and factors such as the time period in which the research was carried out or the political persuasion of the author play a role in results of such research.

A point of view useful to examine the level of national consciousness in Scotland in the fourteenth century is the Declaration of Arbroath. Davidson discusses the Declaration, written in 1320 in the form of a letter from the Scottish nobles and King of Scots Robert I addressed to Pope John XXII, and in this discussion points out its impact on the political situation.[38] According to Barrow, the sheer scope of such claim to national independence was of significance because it was the first claim of the sort coming from Scotland, and also because of how it referred to the king and the barons – not as if they were his mere subjects, but rather constituents of an independent political entity created in order to mitigate the worsening condition between the papacy and Scotland.[39] As can be seen in the Declaration, the adamance

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[34] P. Hume Brown, "The Moulding of the Scottish Nation," *The Scottish Historical Review* 1, no. 3 (1904): 245.

[35] Broun, "The Birth of Scottish History," 5.

[36] Eleanor Bell, *Questioning Scotland: Literature, Nationalism, Postmodernism* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 58.

[37] Neil Davidson, *The Origins of Scottish Nationhood* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 47.

[38] Davidson, *The Origins of Scottish Nationhood*, 48.

[39] G.W.S. Barrow, *Robert Bruce And The Community Of The Realm Of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1976), 430.

of the assertion is that the King is rather at mercy of the nobles, should any issues on his side arise, and not the opposite. It asserts the following:

> […] we are freed by our tireless leader, king, and master, Lord Robert […] And now, the divine Will, our just laws and customs, which we will defend to the death, the right of succession and the due consent and assent of all of us have made him our leader and our king. […] But if he should cease from these beginnings, wishing to give us or our kingdom to the English or the king of the English, we would immediately take steps to drive him out as the enemy and the subverter of his own rights and ours, and install another King who would make good our defence. Because, while a hundred of us remain alive, we will not submit in the slightest measure, to the domination of the English […][40]

Davidson summarizes the assertion of the Declaration by claiming that Robert the Bruce was essentially told by his nobles that he would have no mandate unless the people gave it to him. It is indisputable that the nobles' claim on the power over the King and existence of authority was significant for the local political situation and for the further unfolding of historical events.

Notwithstanding the local political significance, a question arises – to what extent did the Declaration aid in the subsequent development of national consciousness? Scholars do not necessarily agree on the matter. For instance, Barrow states the following in regard to it:

> It meant, rather, the totality of the king's free subjects, but also something more than this: it meant the political entity in which they and the king were comprehended. It was in fact the he nearest approach to the later concept of a nation or a national state that was possible in an age when, according to older and still deeply-entrenched belief, a kingdom was, first and foremost, a feudal entity, the fief – and therefore in a sense, the property – of its king.[41]

While Barrow credits the Declaration with this claim, Davidson does not endorse this outlook, noting that to ascribe value of such extent to the Declaration would be misrepresenting its real motives and assigning them to false nationalism.[42] More precisely, he takes a clear stance by stating that the application of "the term 'nationalism' to these beliefs does not simply obscure their real motives, but establishes a false identity, or at least a false continuity, between the forms of consciousness available to them and those – almost inconceivably different – available to modern Scots."[43] Overall, there is discrepancy in the historical importance Davidson and Barrow assign to the Declaration of Arbroath. There is, beyond doubt, historical value within

[40] "Declaration of Arbroath," Wikisource, last modified April 3, 2020, https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Translation:Declaration_of_Arbroath.
[41] Barrow, *Robert Bruce,* 430.
[42] Davidson, *The Origins of Scottish Nationhood*, 50.
[43] Ibid.

the document itself, but the proportions of the true extent are likely distorted, as it is not clear in what measure the value is made excessive by historians and bended to the image of nationalism that is being proposed in the individual studies.

What followed the Declaration is also disputed by scholars. As noted by Freeman, there was, in fact, a process taking place that analogy could be drawn from, in comparison to a more symptomatic meaning of "revival."[44] However, this is disputed by Jack who claims that there was no such thing as the attribution of "Scottish" or "national" to literature created from fourteenth to seventeenth century in the Scottish territory; in actuality, the author deems the implication of nationalism, with literary critics during the period of time hardly comprehending the concept as is done so now, to be incorrect.[45] Overall, there are notable differences between the research findings, illustrating the general inconsistency in the matter of national identity that is discussed previously.

In light of such finding, it is necessary to examine the point in time when identity and its reflection in literature did clearly begin to flourish. Such time comes with the unification of 1707, specifically with the Act of Union which was nothing less than a milestone in both Scottish and English history. Although the Scottish Parliament was recessed[46], as debated by Lawson, the treaty, as Combes et. al note, made it possible for Scotland to retain its own local systems of education, law or health.[47] Nonetheless, according to Smout, one thing that Scotland could not retain was its economic system, and its economic independence was thus largely compromised in favour of England.[48] The author notes that the treaty also encompassed the inclusion of 45 Scots to the House of Commons and 16 Scots to the House of Lords,[49] so the end result, largely unpopular at the time, was Scotland keeping some of its systems, the gaining of 61 seats in the English Parliament, and the unfavourable synthesis of both nations' economic systems. Notwithstanding the formal attributes of the treaty and the general atmosphere in Scotland at the time, the treaty marked a moment in time when Scotland began to create a

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[44] F.W. Freeman, "The Intellectual Background of the Vernacular Revival before Burns," *Studies in Scottish Literature* 16, no. 1. (January 1981): 160.

[45] R.D.S. Jack, "Which Vernacular Revival? Burns and the Makars," *Studies in Scottish Literature* 30, no. 1 (1998): 10.

[46] Kirsten J. Lawson, "Scots: A Language or a Dialect? Attitudes to Scots in Pre-Referendum Scotland," *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies (HJEAS)* 20, no. 2 (2014): 144.

[47] Emma Coombes, Sally Hibbert, Gillian Hogg, and Richard Varey, "Consuming Identity: The Case of Scotland," *NA - Advances in Consumer Research* 28, no. 1 (2001).

[48] T. C. Smout, "The Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707. I. The Economic Background," *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 16, no. 3 (1964): 455.

[49] Smout, "The Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707," 456.

specific image of a nation and its subsequent representation in the literature produced the so-called Scottish Enlightenment.

One of the most prominent events of Scottish Enlightenment was a rescue mission to save the Scottish vernacular. This endeavour was dubbed the "Vernacular Revival" and its main agenda was, according to Jack, to "revive the poetic use of Scots."[50] Lawson comments on the Scots language – one of the languages spoken in Scotland along with Scottish Gaelic and English[51] – stating that it is either generally recognized as a valid language per se with strong majority over the second viewpoint, considering Scots nothing but a dialect of English.[52] According to Cairns, the usage of vernacular language at the time was a testament to rise of national consciousness, the realization of specificity of a language, variations of the language that distinguish the nation from others and employing the ideals of Enlightenment.[53] The formation of personalities is also worth noting – in the lead stood authors like Allan Ramsay, Robert Burns or Robert Fergusson. Buffoni notes that the last mentioned was frequently centring his vernacular poetry in Edinburgh; and in these uses the vernacular dialect.[54] This can be shown in an excerpt of *The Daft Days*, one of Fergusson's poems, as translated by Buffoni:

> Frae naked groves nae birdie sings
> To shepherd's pipe nae hillock rings
> The breeze nae od'rous flavour brings,
> Frae Borean cave;
> And dwynin Nature droops her wings,
> Wi' visage grave.[55]

The poem illustrates both the linguistic and patriotic aspects of the Scottish enlightenment, as Fergusson writes of Edinburgh in the time of Christmas. It verifies the point that Scottish identity was on rise around the time of the Act of Union, via measures like the preservation of Scottish vernacular in literature.

There is another medium, besides language, through which national identity in Scotland can be observed. It is Gaelic mythology; to say that Scotland has historically been and in the

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[50] Jack, "Which Vernacular Revival?" 9.
[51] "What is Scots?" Scots Language Centre, last modified 2021. https://www.scotslanguage.com/pages/view/id/6.
[52] Lawson, "Scots: A Language or a Dialect?" 151.
[53] John W. Cairns, "Institutional Writings in Scotland Reconsidered," *The Journal of Legal History* 4, no. 3 (1984): 78.
[54] Franco Buffoni, "Vernacular Experiment," *Translation Studies Journal* 3, no. 1 (2011): 15.
[55] Buffoni, "Vernacular Experiment," 16.

present still is in some way archetypal would not be too much of an oversimplification. Maclean speaks on Gaelic myth, ranging from those concerning fairies, a race of giants called Feinn to ghosts and magic, and notes that the belief in the inanimate still persists in some parts of Scotland.[56] The belief encapsulates all of nature; hills, lakes, woods and every other part of nature was assigned to have consciousness. This is especially interesting with regard to the local political situation. According to Maclean, the national mythological tradition was not existing on its own, but rather was coexisting with politics and more conventional Scottish institutions, illustrated by the example of the then Duke of Argyll who put the boar associated with one of the Scottish myths on his crest.[57] Overall, it is possible to say that the Scottish myth aided in the development of Scottish national identity and that Scottish mythology is to this day tinged with national sentiment.

A significant point in Scottish history partially parallel with the Enlightenment were the Jacobite risings, led by the descendants and supporters of the overthrown Roman Catholic king James VII, with which came a period of instability and rapid change. McLynn speaks on the topic and deems the Rising of 1745 to be especially anarchist in nature – yet there was an inherent romanticization of the old times, foreshadowing the romantic period that would take place towards the end of the century.[58] It also needs to be noted that the Jacobite risings are hard to define or even conceptualize. According to McLynn, even those endorsing Jacobitism were hardly supportive of the restoration of Stuarts per se, and while their motives are not completely clear, it appears that to the mentioned nostalgia was added value to the reality of those taking part in the risings being so dissatisfied with the state of the nation governed by the Hannoverians, they were willing to support even the Stuart cause to manifest resistance.[59] This goes to show that the rise of national sentiment was as rapid and severe as never before.

An author that was one of the major catalysts in the promotion of nationalism in Scotland in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century was Sir Walter Scott. Kerkering discusses the surge of resistance coming from Scotland following a potentially devastating currency reform that took place in 1826; Scott took the place of a spokesman for his nation,

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[56] Hector Maclean, "Gaelic Mythology," *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 9 (1880): 168.
[57] Maclean, "Gaelic Mythology," 168.
[58] F.J. McLynn, "Issues and Motives in the Jacobite Rising of 1745," *The Eighteenth Century* 23, no. 2 (1982): 99.
[59] Ibid.

albeit after having adopted the persona of Malachi Malagrowther.[60] The *Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* – advocating against the reform that Scotland would not benefit from, speaking up for Scottish banks, industry and businesses sent to the Government in the same year marked a success, as the reform was not passed, and Scott rose to popularity at extraordinary measure, so much that his portrait is, even nowadays, printed on Scottish banknotes.[61] The understanding of national sentiment had not been the same since Scott, and for that he needs to be credited.

Notwithstanding Walter Scott's impact, the nineteenth century in general marked the happening of numerous political and social changes that did not evade the process of development. In 1832, the Scottish Reform Act was passed; upon the advocacy of James Mill, new regulations allowing the Scottish louder voice were drafted to be implemented into the Parliament, but, as Ferguson notes, the Act was actually a disaster that never went as was intended.[62] In 1885, following the abolishment of a Secretary of State for Scotland in the Jacobite Rising of 1746, the position had been reopened and Charles Gordon-Lennox, 6th Duke of Richmond, was appointed for it. At the same time, the society was changing rapidly, thanks to industrialization.

The turbulent tone of the end of the nineteenth century carried itself towards the first half of the twentieth, too. With the World Wars I and II, a significant shift took place in the perception of nationalism. George Orwell makes the following assertion that splits patriotism and nationalism in two different concepts:

> By 'patriotism' I mean devotion to a particular place and way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force upon other people. Patriotism is of its nature defensive, both militarily and culturally. Nationalism, on the other hand, is inseparable from the desire for power.[63]

This is evidently the aftermath of the wars; the level of devastation caused by what Orwell refers to as "desire for power" assigned a distinct negative connotation to the term "nationalism." It also needs to be noted that the split between the two was not exclusive to

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[60] Jack Kerkering, "'We Are Five-and-Forty': Meter and National Identity in Sir Walter Scott," *Studies in Romanticism* 40, no. 1 (2001): 85.

[61] "Letters of Malachi Malagrowther," Edinburgh University Library, last modified December 19, 2011,
http://www.walterscott.lib.ed.ac.uk/works/prose/malachi.html

[62] W. Ferguson, "The Reform Act (Scotland) of 1832: Intention and Effect," *The Scottish Historical Review* 45, no. 139 (1966): 106.

[63] George Orwell, "Notes on Nationalism", *The Collected Essays, Journalism And Letters Of George Orwell* 3, (1943–1945): 411.

literature or art, but generally applied on the society per se. Nevertheless, under any term, the conceptualized Scottish national identity was not compromised and reflected in the post-war events.

Nonetheless, before the discussion on the Post War unfoldment of Scottish events is to take place, in light of the previous paragraph, fascism also needs to be referenced. The route from national identity to nationalism is generally recognized, and, according to Nairn, fascism lies at some point within the route.[64] To what extent are fascism and nationalism separable? Do they operate codependently, with one extinct goes extinct the other, or are they separate concepts? Nairn claims that fascism is in part the very nature of nationalism.[65] However, this idea needs to be observed through the prism of Nairn's general judgement of nationalism; as per the fact, his stance on it that it is corrupt and, in its modern representation, distorted out of its original shape.[66] Additionally, in his *The Break-up of Britain*, Nairn offers further insight into his estimation of nationalism, deeming it to be both "healthy and morbid", with "both progress and regress […] inscribed in its genetic code from the start." Taking into account Nairn's research, fascist tendencies may be theoretically present in nationalism and national identity, yet the merging of the two without any apparent boundaries, creating a single concept, might not seem justified in today's society. With that being said, Blaut strongly disputes Nairn's point of view, claiming that nationalism is related to fascism only symptomatically.[67] This means that nationalism is symptomatic of fascism – such as in the case of Nazi Germany, where the notion of a nation was used by Hitler to promote his ideologies, such as fascism or Social Darwinism[68] – but it does not necessarily lead to fascism, nor is it fascist in nature. Seeing Blaut's article and his disagreement with Nairn's findings, there is considerable disagreement between the attitudes of the two and the link between fascism and nationalism is still to be researched before a conclusion can be made.

Simultaneously, the contours and thoughts of national sentiment were imprinted on the page of the literary world. Scottish Renaissance, as discussed by Bell, was an interwar period that encompasses authors and works such as those of Hugh MacDiarmid.[69] The author took great interest in the work of Russian writers, namely Dostoevsky and Tolstoy; as discussed by

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[64] J .M Blaut, "Nairn on Nationalism*," Antipode 12, no. 3 (1980): 1.
[65] Blaut, "Nairn on Nationalism," 1 .
[66] Bell, *Questioning* Scotland, 58.
[67] Blaut, "Nairn on Nationalism," 7 .
[68] John Cai Benjamin Weaver, "Adolf Hitler's account of the 'Nation' and 'Nationalism'" (Aberystwyth University, 2010), 3.
[69] Bell, *Questioning Scotland,* 8.

Mackay, there was a portion of the author wishing for Scotland to participate in nationalism modelled by Russians.[70] This illustrates the point of literary impact on national consciousness; the measure of the impact is discussed by Craig in the following excerpt:

> There is a profound similarity between the modern nation, with its implication of all the people of a territory bound together into a single historical process, and the technique of the major nineteenth-century novels, whose emplotment enmeshes their multiplicity of characters into a single narrative trajectory.[71]

The excerpt implies that there is correlation between a novel and a nation, not based purely on metaphorical, celestial resemblance, but rather on an authentic set of aspects that link literature to nationality more than could be apparent at first sight. This is what allows the public and scholars to speak on and associate the two with one another with such ease, as if they were one entity – it is because they really are, to some extent, inseparable.

The twentieth century witnessed many turbulent, unprecedented events, and as such needs to be further discussed. The World Wars naturally took their toll on Scotland, as on any other nation; but there was a distinct event that took place long after them – the creation of Thatcher's broken men and children. Margaret Thatcher and the subsequent Thatcherism were respectively the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1979 to 1990 and the period in time in which she made impact on the local situation and marked with such the development of national identity in Scotland. The contours of Scottish national sentiment began to take interesting shapes upon her premiership, yet they were not unexpected. The form they took was corresponding with the development during the period of World Wars.

After the WWII, the Labour Party marked a landslide victory in the General Election. Its promise to improve the socioeconomic conditions worsened by the War was alluring, and the Conservative Party led by Churchill had suffered defeat. Nevertheless, the promises could not be kept – the economic situation was getting progressively worse with the Labour politics of nationalization, and the party was getting more and more unpopular in Scotland.[72] In response to, or perhaps a result of, nationalism was not endorsed by Labour, and Harvie even states that the Party's attitude towards nationalism in Scotland directly led to development in

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[70] Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie, and Alastair Renfrew. *Beyond Scotland: New Contexts for Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), 63.

[71] Cairns Craig, *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2009), 9.

[72] Christopher Harvie, "Labour in Scotland during the Second World War," *The Historical Journal* 26, no. 4 (1983): 922.

another direction, i.e. to the victory of the Conservative Party in 1951 and, eventually, to the election in 1979 and Margaret Thatcher's victory.[73] Nevertheless, the victory soon turned to defeat.

Thatcher was so widely unpopular in Scotland that she had been attempted to assassinate, in the Brighton bombing to which five people fell victim. But what was the cause of antipathy on Scottish side? Thatcher's personage is hard to describe. On one hand, she has avid supporters – Thatcherites – and on the other, her death ten years ago was celebrated by some. Her imposture of the poll tax on Scotland, making it a guinea pig, as Erlanger says[74], was one of the key reasons behind the beginning of the Scottish hatred towards her. The closing of mines and nationalization of the industry is another. According to Hanlon et al., the mine closures caused irreparable damage on the Scottish nation, and the difference between Scotland and England regarding mental health is both palpable and proven by science.[75] Her economic measures, in her view instilled to save the economy, were arguably ruthless.

Perhaps, it is crucial to state that Thatcher's crucial quality, as judged by the public, was her lack of empathy and general consideration of the public. Nevertheless, Scottish identity underwent several changes in its development. Davidson asserts that the sense of Scottishness rose, in response to the economic measures took by Thatcher.[76] The author claims that the Scottish resistance was especially visible because it was simply not possible to voice the opinion as loudly as in Scotland, but the opposition was present outside of Scotland, too – and therefore, it is important not to assign it with a vaguely metaphysical meaning based on the concept of identity put at risk (similar to a higher sense of purpose or mythological calling to the nation) but rather view it as an expected response to the political happenings.[77] Overall, it can be asserted that Thatcherism did, indeed, give rise to nationalism in Scotland, even if not necessarily mythological and not foreseeable in nature, but rather stemming from the PM's proceedings.

To get a better idea of Thatcher's position in Scotland, it is also important to mention an attribute that can be best describe as being deluded. In fact, Thatcher refused to see the truth

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[73] Harvie, "Labour in Scotland," 944.

[74] Steven Erlanger, "Scotland's Wee Dram of Independence," *World Policy Journal* 31, no. 4 (2014): 41.

[75] P. W. Hanlon et al., "Why Is Mortality Higher in Scotland than in England and Wales? Decreasing Influence of Socioeconomic Deprivation between 1981 and 2001 Supports the Existence of a 'Scottish Effect'," *Journal of Public Health* 27 (2005): 203.

[76] Davidson, The Origins of the Scottish Nationhood, 1.

[77] Ibid.

regarding the Scot's perception of her or acknowledge it; she felt so closely connected to the traditional Scottish values, such as hard working or being able to face situations with a stiff upper lip, that she could not and would not see the absurdity of relating to the Scottish, publicly per se. As a result, her openly voiced sympathies led to the increased hostility. This is specific for the Scottish and will be further discussed: the chasm between the nation and the English is only deepened through similar attempts to speak on the Scottish behalf or assert a position of fake relatability.

The aftermath of Thatcher's reign can be seen in recent history and even nowadays. The Devolution referendum of 1997 and the subsequently devolved Scottish Parliament, now located in Edinburgh, was a direct result of Thatcher's premiership, and to this day, the mentioned chasm is only getting deeper. Any symbiosis that might have been present between the two – as mentioned by Wilkie, the two did help shape each other in the aftermath of the Act of Union in 1707[78] and their union might have had the potential to be symbiotic – is now long gone and essentially defunct, and what the two constituents of the Empire are left with is the bitter realization that the union is not symbiotic nor profitable. Nonetheless, it seems that neither is willing to let the union split, as was proved in the 2014 referendum in which 45 percent of the voters expressed their wish to leave the "alienated" relationship, as put by Erlanger, contra the 55 percent. This "out of place" sentiment was, as Erlanger discusses, strongly affected by the events of Brexit; the Scottish, who deem themselves to be pro-European, witnessed the rest of Britain – to which they already do not feel any rational sense of belonging – take action to further alienate Scotland from the rest of Europe.[79] These all aided in the increased hostility of Scotland towards England which is subsequently reflected in the novel *Trainspotting*. Its impact on the national sentiment in Scotland will be the subject of analysis in the following segment.

With that being said, before the analysis can take place, the general situation and status of Britain needs to be noted, as well. The research of Scottish history is generally deemed to be difficult. There is a number of factors of why this is the case. There has been significant regress in retelling Scottish history by further perpetuating the British narrative, even in Scottish schools and media. This is because it is almost impossible to separate the two histories and because even if such separation were plausible, the regress in the way the education system has been retelling Scottish history is significant.

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[78] Benjamin Wilkie, "Popular Imperialism, Scottish Identity, and William Wallace in an Australian Colonial City," *Études écossaises*, no. 17 (2015): 136.
[79] Erlanger, "Scotland's Wee Dram of Independence," 40.

Tyrrell mentions: "For, like many of my generation of Scots, I received an education that contained very little by way of Scottishness. We were well and truly hidden behind Britannia's flag." This is attesting to the idea that the concept of Scottishness as such and Scottish history have been largely compromised in favour of England, although well masked behind the idea of unity.

In light of this; while British history does offer insight into the history of Scottish nationhood, the voice of science and researchers are not completely unequivocal, and within the comparison of scholarly literature, the results are often not correlating with one another. In other words, while it is crucial to the full understanding of Scottish identity, it needs to be kept in mind that to tackle the matter of British history as a whole is not unquestionably effective.

With regard to United Kingdom and the elementary subject of how it is to be approached in discourse, it would be found that scholars have been inventive with the ways in which to label the empire. For instance, Nairn's word "Ukania", labelling the "backward-looking, tradition-obsessed place and entity"[80] speaks volumes about the author's attitude towards the country that is hardly deserving of its real name, and is to be referred by a derogative term reminiscent of attributes like crude, unsophisticated or absurd in its illusion of dignity. This point is further emphasized by the origin of the term; Robert Musil, a modernist Austrian writer, is the author of "Kakania" or "Kakanien", a similar term designated to label the Habsburg monarchy. According to Musil himself, the expression comes from the compound adjective - kaiserlich-königlich, meaning imperial-royal, denoting the territorial extent of the Austrian-Hungarian empire.[81] Musil was openly expressing himself against the Austrian-Hungarian empire, exploring themes such as the pursue of monarchical values in the modern world, most prominently in his magnum opus *The Man Without Qualities*. Apart from that, the author also employed irony to capture the absurdity and the twofold nature of the monarchy. This usage can be seen in the following excerpt:

> By its constitution - he observes - it was liberal, but the system of government was clerical. The system of government was clerical, but the general attitude to

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[80] Gerry Hassan, *Independence of the Scottish Mind: Elite Narratives, Public Spaces and the Making of a Modern Nation* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014): 21.

[81] Robert Musil, "The Man Without Qualities," in *Modernism: Representations of National Culture: Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe 1770–1945: Texts and Commentaries, volume III/2*, ed. Ersoy, Ahmet, et al. (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010), par. 19.

life was liberal. Before the law all citizens were equal, but not everyone, of course, was a citizen.[82]

Nairn, parallel to the Musil's perception of the Austrian empire that he uses to express his own, is, openly confessing to believing the monarchy to be not only of backward, obsolete nature but also of dual qualities that are lacking in logic yet overflowing with irony.

The monarchy possesses a number of levers that can make the system work, making it a set of well-constructed processes. For instance, Ersoy et. al further develop the notion that "Kakania" was created to mock the Habsburg attempt to conserve an outdated, yet extremely detailed set of factors contributing to the well-kept image of the Empire; nevertheless, this process of cultivating the image required a large amount of effort put in by the monarchy. As a matter of fact, Ersoy et. al call the extensive effort "dramaturgy", which is reminiscent of a coordinated, well thought-out performance, and the steps necessary to maintain such performance for as long as the Habsburg monarchy did were summarized by the authors in the following way:

> The Empire's symbiotic dramaturgy of Catholic and Habsburg ceremonies, the enormous cast of its century-old intricate bureaucracy with its minutely defined, painstakingly differentiated roles, the role-playing in the assimilation of Vienna's multi-ethnic transplants from all regions of the dual monarchy, and the histrionic excesses of representation in competition with other empires offered a problematic historical context and an anachronistic poetics of politics.[83]

Once again, the conclusion that can be drawn from this parallel between "Ukania" and "Kakania" is that there is a general consensus of the public on how the system is to be perceived – and that the public is to be engaged in all of the system's quirks, and that even though there are attributes of the system that are making it outdated, they are not completely random, and that also needs to be acknowledged by the public.

Another attribute to keep in mind when observing Britain is that this field of research is not exclusive to outsider point of view, as could be suggested at first – after all, it is the general notion that observation requires impartiality, and that is naturally devaluated from the insider point of view. Research shows that Britain itself is progressively more interested in its existence, values and traits and the very basis of its nature. In accordance with this notion, Hassan states that Britain is increasingly obsessed with its past.[84] This obsession, however,

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[82] Robert Musil, Ernst Kaiser, and Wilkins Eithne Una Lilian, *The Man without Qualities ... Translated ... and with a Foreword by Eithne Wilkins & Ernst Kaiser* (Secker & Warburg: London, 1953), 8, https://uberty.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/musil-1.pdf.

[83] Musil, "The Man Without Qualities," par. 12.

[84] Hassan, *Independence of the Scottish Mind*, 2.

needs to be taken with a grain of salt, because, according to Hassan, it is mainly thanks to British attempting to recreate the past - in order to conjure appealing stories of present Britain.[85] Multiple authors speak on this issue; in particular, Nairn expresses himself very strongly about the techniques Britain employs to preserve the past in the present via "the super-show that cannot be dismissed as mere mass lunacy, or a never-ending profitable carnival", such as the grandiose, the outdated, the conventions that become the subject of the rituals and the object through which the super-show continues to exist.[86] In other words, the present is as blurred as it seems to be because of the distorted perception Britain continues to have of itself – with massive contribution of the ceremonial behaviour. Therefore, the study of the British past and present is made considerably difficult. Nevertheless, the fact that it is not easy to grasp the concept of the monarchy's existence is not really reflected in popular culture, and in lieu, there has been an outpour of documentaries, film and television productions and the increasing exploration of the historical and present cultural background of the UK in media discourse as a whole.

The substantial disparity in the way in which the United Kingdom is to be perceived has been, therefore, associated with the fundamentally distorted view stemming from the structure and further perpetuated by the media and the public discourse. According to Hassan, the degree of uncertainty about what the UK really represents really is considerable; what is taken into concern within these debates and discussions are its political attributes and the key evolutionary moment shaping the contemporary face of the UK, like the Act of Union of 1707, union with Ireland of 1801 or the 1947 Indian Independence Act and whether they really were of such impact.[87] Hassan claims the following:

> There is a degree of confusion about the significance of each evolution, aided by the lack of a formal designation about what the United Kingdom is as a political entity. This lack is not an esoteric point but it potentially has major consequences for the nature of the union(s) and what implications any future change has for the UK and Scotland's relation with it.

As the authors puts it, in the least esoteric way possible there is an inherent lack of knowledge on the British nationhood. Naturally, this inherent confusion has not evaded Scotland. As

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[85] Ibid.

[86] Sven E. Olsson, Untitled Review of *The Enchanted Glass. Britain and Its Monarchy* by Tom Nairn, *Acta Sociologica* 32, no. 1 (1989): 108.

[87] Hassan, *Independence of the Scottish Mind,* 20.

Davidson states, there is obvious difficulty in understanding the Scottish national development,[88] as if it its trajectory was copied from the one of England.

The next chapter discusses the author of Trainspotting, Irvine Welsh, and applies some of the observed findings on his persona and writing.

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[88] Davidson, *The Origins of Scottish Nationhood*, 47.

3. IRVINE WELSH

Most authors utilize their personal experience in their writing, naturally so, as to perceive and subsequently create in a tabula rasa state, without any background, would be impossible. Irvine Welsh, the author of *Trainspotting*, has undoubtedly imprinted his experience into his novel and its prequel and sequel, *Porno* and *Skagboys*. As a native of Leith, an area within Edinburgh, he has used the location as a resource for his writing a number of times. According to Schoene, Welsh was born September 27th, 1958 and moved to London at the age of twenty; only to move back to Edinburgh a few years later.[89] He began publishing his work in the 1990s – the collection of his earliest work was published in 2009 with the title Reheated Cabbage – with *Trainspotting* eventually coming to life in 1993. Another works of his include *Filth*, the experimental novel *Marabou Stork Nightmares* or *The Bedroom Secrets of the Master Chefs*.

Welsh had an enormous impact on the local and international literary field, contemporary popular culture and likely unwittingly on the Scottish political situation. As Schoene discusses, he had chosen the perfect time for *Trainspotting* – the mood in which the Scottish nation was finding itself in (and which Welsh captured in a way so sensitive that only a Scot at that time could do so) was at the brink of marking a change for the national politics, and thanks to Welsh's impact really did inspire Scotland to take action in the referenda of 1979 and 1997.[90] Schoene deems the most prominent reason of the novel's impact to be paradoxical, with the breaking of the Scottish tradition and "asserting a local rootedness marred by deracination, and by distilling a sense of flux and mobility from claustrophobic stagnation."[91] It appears that Welsh used the general sense of being trapped in routine and of losing the grasp on knowing one's place in his novel, and that is possibly the reason it resonated with the readers as much as it did.

There are many influences – literary or not – that come to mind when diving into Welsh's work. Nevertheless, Schoene notes that those of literary character, mentioned by Welsh himself, differ, depending on what point in his career they were asked about.[92] For instance, in the beginnings of his career, the author claimed to not have been inspired by any writers, taking a stance of a somehow "feral" child, as Schoene puts it.[93] Nevertheless, a few years later, this

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[89] Berthold Schoene-Harwood, *The Edinburgh Companion to Irvine Welsh* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 8.
[90] Schoene-Harwood, *The Edinburgh Companion to Irvine Welsh,* 1.
[91] Schoene-Harwood, *The Edinburgh Companion to Irvine Welsh,* 1.
[92] Schoene-Harwood, *The Edinburgh Companion to Irvine Welsh,* 9.
[93] Ibid.

was shifted towards more of a traditional approach, traditional meaning more conventionally appropriate for a writer focusing as heavily on Scottish themes as Welsh does, with him citing Sir Walter Scott as having had literary impact on him. Eventually, the list developed into a detailed collection including authors like James Kelman, James Hogg and Lewis Grassic Gibbon, traditional Scottish authors that are more likely to come to mind when contemplating upon the literary inspirations behind *Trainspotting*. There is, obviously, no comprehensive guide to Welsh as an author and it is impossible to say to what extent he really was influenced in his writing and by whom – and to what extent he creates a likeable narrative more fitting to an author exploring themes of Scottishness, but there appears to be some kind of a stylization or portrayal sketched by Welsh in pursuit of increased credibility of his literary work.

Be that as it may, looking beyond the issue of whether Welsh's literary background reported by him is true or false, if research was to be carried out with regard to whether Welsh employs any themes or motives from the writing of Hogg, Kelman or other traditional Scottish authors – such as Robert Burns, Robert Louis Stevenson or Muriel Spark – it would be found that there really is some kind of a correlation between his writing and that of the mentioned authors. For instance, Spark often employs the motive of predestination, one of the cases being *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*.[94] Predestination, or the lack of mobility in certain aspects of human lives caused by a prearranged set of events, leading an individual to a point that was always to be expected in one's live on behalf of fate, is a theme also present in *Trainspotting*. Gregorová discusses the origin of predestination in Scottish literature in Calvinism, promoting "damnation rather than salvation."[95] The lives of all involved in *Trainspotting* are, undoubtedly, plagued by predestination; if there is any constant in the novel, it is the return to the bleak, the humdrum – to the nihilist, even if not willingly – no matter how bright things might once look. Eventually, the damnation in *Trainspotting* is represented by drugs, poverty, the lack of knowing one's place and of belonging and the search of identity.

Similarly, in *Ivanhoe*, Walter Scott explores the motive of patriotism and two nations in combat with one another. *Trainspotting* operates with a similar motive, with the Scottish being in constant combat with the English, while also struggling with patriotism and sentiments towards their own nation. Again, the motive of searching within the community in hopes of

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[94] Leo Robson, "Muriel Spark: the Biography," *New Statesman*, August 6, 2009.
[95] Markéta Gregorová, "'Ah don't hate the English, ah hate the Scots': 35 Scotland contra England in Gray's 1982 Janine and Welsh's Trainspotting," Theory and Practice in English Studies 7, no. 1 (2014): 36.

finding remnants of a nation one is supposed to belong to, without any apparent reason or motivation at all, is prominent in Welsh's novel, likewise.

In conjunction with literary inspirations behind the novel, *Trainspotting* can also be linked to a bildungsroman. As reported by Austen, it is a generally autobiographical novel of development or formation, following the coming-of-age story of a young person, established in the nineteenth century.[96] An example of a bildungsroman in the Western format – i.e. possessing all the above mentioned features and focusing primarily on the self, not the community, contrasting with the patriotic values explored in the previous paragraph – is *Kidnapped*, an 1886 novel by Robert Louis Stevenson.[97] Welsh's inspiration from this genre and the Scottish version of a bildungsroman specifically is evident, the search within the self for what may or may not be there – the moral fibre that is once referenced in the film adaptation of *Trainspotting* – hardened by external factors and other conditions, such as the predispositions of a human to fall into a drug habit or the desire to belong, is again a theme heavily present in Welsh's novel.

As for the features of his writing and other themes Welsh employs, the most prominent of them is the usage of so-called Scottish vernacular, described by Schoene as "the register of the indigenous, 'natural' speech of the nation's people."[98] It is a device used by the author to highlight the Scottishness in his novels, eventually to make the reader feel closer to the ethos of his writing and handle the concept of Scottish national identity with more complexity. He does so because languages are closely tied to national identity – as observed by Freeman, "national languages are the unique expression of each nation's natural genius"[99] – and the Irish language, Scottish Gaelic or Welsh carry an even deeper meaning caused by the threat of Anglicization that has been leading up to the point of extinction. For instance, a particularly prominent usage of Scottish vernacular can be seen in the chapter Speedy Recruitment, where Renton is recruited for a job position and interviewed by a trainee manager[100]:

Manager: I see from your application form that you attended George Heriots.

Renton: Right...ah, those halcyon school days. It seems like a long time ago now.

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[96] Ralph A. Austen, "Struggling with the African Bildungsroman," *Research in African Literatures* 46, no. 3 (2015): 216.

[97] "Kidnapped, 1886," Robert Louis Stevenson Website, http://robert-louis-stevenson.org/works/kidnapped-1886/.

[98] Schoene-Harwood, *Edinburgh Companion to Irvine Welsh,* 10.

[99] Freeman, "The Intellectual Background of the Vernacular Revival before Burns," 160.

[100] Welsh, Trainspotting, 29.

Renton then thinks to himself the following:

Ah might huv lied on the appo, but ah huvnae at the interview.

Welsh is employing the contrast between formal, unaccentuated English – although the manager conducting the interview is likely Scottish, too – so the contrasting is made even more meaningful, in regard to Renton's perception of himself and others. Perhaps, this is done out of insecurity, to seem more intelligent. Clearly, language is Welsh's most valuable tools in creating attributes for his characters, in expanding their profundity in a natural, unforced way.

Similarly, the author also realizes the value in using dialect as a technique to extract nostalgia out of both the characters and the reader. The following excerpt comes from Craig's discussion on language in *Trainspotting* and illustrates the presented point:

"Dialect is like the empty shell of Leith Central Station where it is impossible now to spot trains: it gestures to the lost community which dialect had represented in the Scottish tradition and which has now been corrupted into fearful individualism."

Craig deems the language of the novel to be key especially in contrasting of the one and the many, the community and the individual; by doing so, Welsh embodies and lifts into the tangible what lingers throughout the novel, the loss of Scottishness and the shrinking of nation into a single individual that is, on top of everything, corrupt. Working with language is Welsh's most valuable tools in creating attributes for his characters that do not seem forced and expand their profundity in a more natural way. The usage also corresponds with the mythology still perseverant in Scottishness; there is an undeniable tinge of myth in the employment and consumption of Scottish dialect, inherently yet in an unspoken manner bowing down to the Scottish tradition. This proves the point stating that characters are given more depth through language in Welsh's writing.

In light of the next chapter, it is necessary to comment on the film adaptation's distortion that might reflect in the character analysis; as noted by Innes, the audience needs to pay close attention to how the film's attractive cinematography – the work of Brian Tufano – immerses the eye in pastel images, neon flashlights and landscape scenes, and sprinkles a bit of pathos in every scene.[101] This contortion undeniably adds a specific value to the setting, characters and necessarily results in the stripping off or watering down of some features of the novel.[102]

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[101] Innes, "Mark Renton's Bairns", 301.
[102] Ibid.

Nevertheless, there is discord in the viewpoint on the level of infidelity of the film to the novel. Whilst Innes believes the previous – i.e. that what the film's gripping soundtrack and visually pleasing facade attempt to transmit to the audience is inherently distorted, despite it not necessarily being wrong, since it is what naturally happens in adapted versions – Petrie discusses the fact that "Boyle's visual style brings about a direct cinematic translation of the vitality of Welsh's writing"[103], suggesting that the film adaptation might actually be considered the visual counterpart of the novel. *Trainspotting* might, thus, be the transformation of Welsh's visions for whose expressions he does not possess the necessary tools as a writer and doing so well.

Mark Renton is not exempt from the contorted point of view. As Innes discusses, he is not a beautiful boy emergent from the toilet, "gasping as though near death or orgasm, droplets of water clinging to his eyelashes, skimpy clothes accentuating his prominent heroin-chic bone structure."[104] Clouding of the audience's judgement might take place and they might be given the wrong notions about the character. Overall, there is a sense of warning in available materials that the film is not to be romanticized, but on the other hand, the audience is encouraged to also note that the adaptation is not completely devoid of the author's vision – depending on the scholar, contrarily, as a matter of fact.

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[103] Duncan Petrie, "Trainspotting, the Film", in *The Edinburgh Companion to Irvine Welsh*, ed. Berthold Schoene, Chippenham and Eastbourne: Edinburgh University Press 2010, 45.
[104] Innes, "Mark Renton's Bairns", 301.

4. MARK RENTON

Renton, or Rent Boy, is a character whose analysis is to be approached with caution. In the same way as the adapted version distorts the audience's perception of Welsh's vision, Renton, as the central character and a narrator of almost half the book's number of chapters, is essentially an unreliable, inaccurate narrator. The extent of contortion, as seen from both the point of view of the adapted version's audience and the reader, is indicated in the previous chapter.

The personalities and features of nationalist sentiment in Renton can be broken down to several stances from which the character can be dissected. To illustrate the characteristics of Renton, Sick Boy and Begbie, a model similar to that of Jeffers can be used.[105] The model is based on a rhizome and its structure; a plant stem similar to a root used to store nutrients of the plant, it grows horizontally instead of vertically and it needs to be noted that the structure is extremely tangled, making it hard for an untrained eye to follow. The stem exists underground; it is difficult to tell the real traits of a character with the way in which the subjective narrator, Renton or his friends, provide information to the reader. The structure, hidden from the reader, creates a plant that is made of several traits.

Renton is the central character of *Trainspotting*, and as such, is the carrier of the most prominent of motives. Welsh makes him that not because Renton is special or different – in fact, he is a true picture of an imprint his surroundings have left on him, as well as thousands of his peers – but precisely because of this. One of the themes heavily present in *Trainspotting* is the lack of impact an individual can have on their environment, and this can be seen most prominently with Renton. Any of his friends could have been in his place as the main protagonist of the novel, and the dynamic they would have with others would have been likely the same; this is important to note in this part of the segment, as it will be later referenced. Not to be mistaken; they are not identical, yet the idea is that their presence is so minute and essentially useless that it is of no purpose to be precise about the differentiation of the three. What is more, the tone of despair stemming from the inability to incorporate into the society as a functioning member – and the inability to even grasp why even attempt to become one – is present with other protagonists, too. One of Welsh's most effective qualities as a writer is that he relies on the reader's ability to relate – that they could place themselves in place of Renton,

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[105] Jennifer M. Jeffers, "Rhizome National Identity: 'Scatlin's Psychic Defense' in Trainspotting," *Journal of Narrative Theory* 35, no. 1 (2005).

Sick Boy or Spud. That is what makes the novel timeless and relatable even to the modern reader, perhaps enhanced by the general impression that not much has changed.

Scottishness, or the presence of Scottish features, values and attributes, presents itself in Mark Renton in a number of ways. The first explored is Renton's exceptional frustration – frustration that would be best described as a key aspect of his persona – and subsequent cynicism. He is deeming himself to be a failure of a person, barely more than a university dropout, his situation at home is comfortless; at the same time, and this stems from previous research, frustration is undoubtedly a part of Scottish history that cannot be overlooked. In other words, Renton is frustrated with about everything, but most of all himself: "We University drop–oot smart cunt junkies are kinky that wey."[106] He is exceptionally ruthless and cynical in his judgement of himself, but he does not exclude the rest of the planet from such sentiment. For instance, this is his reaction upon seeing the Union Jack on the coffin of his deceased brother: "Ah cannae feel remorse, only anger and contempt. Ah seethed when ah saw that fuckin Union Jack oan his coffin. […]"

This does speak volumes about the general development of the Scottish-English relationship, yet the message goes deeper than that. The excerpt shows that Renton's cynical point of view is, indeed, a part of the Scottish narrative. Farred observes the following:

> In fin-de-siècle Britain, Thatcherite England has evacuated Scottishness, destroyed any oppositional notion of the identity, by making sure that the Scots have nothing to do— except take drugs, commit acts of "nihilism" against their neighbours and their mates, and, in Renton's case, contemplate the end of the Scottish nation.[107]

Relatable to Renton himself, this goes to show that it is the most prominent Scottishness in the character. It is even possible to say that he is embedded with hatred because of everything that he has seen and that surrounds him; thus, the frustration and his nihilist outlook directly stems from Margaret Thatcher's past doings and the compromise of Scottishness that was achieved via her measures.

In the following excerpt, Renton is remarkably sceptical towards not only Scotland, but the entire concept of statehood, the concept of borders and being governed by "parasite politicians." Seeing as though Renton has "never felt Scottish", it is possible to say that he is a

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[106] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 90.
[107] Grant Farred, "Wankerdom: Trainspotting as a Rejection of the Postcolonial?" *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103, no. 1 (2004): 221.

Non-Scot, one of the three categories of Scottishness as presented by Bond and Rosie[108]; thus, someone who disregards themselves as being Scottish:

> The Britannia. Rule Britannia. Ah've never felt British, because ah'm not. It's ugly and artificial. Ah've never really felt Scottish either, though. Scotland the brave, ma arse; Scotland the shitein cunt. We'd throttle the life oot ay each other fir the privilege ay rimmin some English aristocrat's piles. Ah've never felt a fuckin thing aboot countries, other than total disgust. They should abolish the fuckin lot ay them. Kill every fuckin parasite politician that ever stood up and mouthed lies and fascist platitudes in a suit and a smarmy smile.

This is parallel to Orwell's perspective in the previous segment. In his essay "Notes on Nationalism," Orwell makes the assertion that "Nationalism is power hunger tempered by self-deception." There is evident aversion in the Scottish perception of power; obviously, as they have their own idea of what it means to be in a position submissive to a holder of power. This is particularly prominent in Renton; he is so disgusted by what he sees around himself, the exercising of power from Margaret Thatcher, Scotland being toyed and experimented with, with the Brits even changing the narrative and blurring the lines of what it really means to be Scottish, as is discussed previously – all of this results in Renton adherent of a specific, negative idea of statehood. It is not clear in what way Renton intends with to do with the concept of statehood except to abolish it, but it is rather obvious that he has absolutely no faith in the system as a whole, and strong aversion towards politicians.

The frustration of the past has merged into one with the frustration with Scotland. Scotland's existence is a painful reminder of the power manifested by the politicians, by those who deem themselves to be above, by the higher law and order of governance. With Scotland not able to gain independency – even thanks to themselves – it gets even more bitter: "Some say that the Irish are the trash ay Europe. That's shite. It's the Scots."[109]

Another inventive but extremely effective tool used by Welsh to expand the characters' personalities, as that might be often compromised in literature, and to complete the concept of a setting in which the characters find themselves in, is music. It is no coincidence that the author employs music in his writing as often as he does; as Edensor and Billig discuss, popular culture

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[108] Ross Bond and Michael Rosie, "Routes into Scottishness?" in Has Devolution Delivered? ed. Catherine Bromley, John Curtice, David McCrone, and Alison Park (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2006): 147.

[109] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 77.

provides a way in which national identity is reproduced on a daily basis.[110] Apart from reproduction via music, it is also suggested that a piece of music may possess qualities that are normally not associated with. Nonetheless, the scientific stance on this is disputable, as Collinson and Purser indicate that a piece of music can be inherently Scottish[111], while Mäkelä and Whittal argue that it is the contrary, because it is not possible for something as abstract, impalpable as national identity to be embodied in a relatively tangible artistic approach.[112] In other words, what Mäkelä and Whittal propose is that human perception of music is closely connected to intention; meaning that whenever a piece of music is linked via a chain of associations to a nationalist sentiment, it was intended by the listener in the first place, and the sentiment is not intrinsically present. Overall, the research carried out by the scholars obtained different results with divergent viewpoints on the matter, but generally it is possible to say that music and national identity are linked in one way or another.

As mentioned above, Welsh's usage of music is a crucial method of mapping the landscape of Scottishness. Renton is an avid music fan; the reader is familiar with the fact that he listens to Iggy Pop, Lou Reed, Sex Pistols, The Clash or The Smiths. Welsh is extremely attentive in making the reader feel as though music is the thread running through his novel, that he is sending a message every time a specific musician is mentioned, accentuated by the narrative devices he is using. Wood reports that music is a valuable tool in social inquiry, and this value is most prominently its ability to reflect identity; and especially to "provide a medium through which notions of identity and place can be created and lived."[113] In general, it can be said that Renton's continuous comments on musicians are used as a tool in the novel, and via this tool, the author communicates a number of Scottish features.

In the chapter Relapsing, Scotland Takes Drugs in Psychic Defence, Tommy says: "Iggy Pop looks right at me as he sings the line: 'America takes drugs in psychic defence'; only he

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[110] Tim Edensor, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE, 1995).

[111] Francis M. Collinson, *The Traditional and National Music of Scotland* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1996), John Purser, *Scotland 's Music: A History of the Traditional and Classical Music of Scotland from Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Edinburgh and London: Mainstream Press in conjunction with BBC Scotland, 1992).

[112] Tomi Mäkelä, *Music and Nationalism in Twentieth Century Great Britain and Finland* (Hamburg: Von Bockel Verlag, 1997): 9-16, Arnold Whittall, "Personal Style, Impersonal Structure Music Analysis and Nationality", in Tomi Mäkelä (ed.) *Music and Nationalism in Twentieth Century Great Britain and Finland* (Hamburg: Von Bockel Verlag, 1997): 17-26.

[113] Nichola Wood, "'Playing with 'Scottishness': Musical Performance, Non-representational Thinking and the 'doings' of National Identity," *Cultural Geographies* 19, no. 2 (2012): 199.

changes 'America' for 'Scatlin', and defines us mair accurately in a single sentence than all the others have ever done."[114]

There might be nothing pragmatically Scottish about Iggy Pop, but this corresponds with the above mentioned idea. The concept of statehood and one's perception of Scottishness is so distorted – one of the factors is, for instance, the regress in retelling Scottish history, as discussed previously – that is not given too much of importance. That is why America can be interchanged with Scotland in the verse and it makes so much sense to them; of course, America is Scotland, Scotland is America, Scotland is England, Scotland is every country on the planet.

A band on which provides grounds to demonstrate the genius of Welsh's usage of musical references is The Smiths. As reported by Murray, in 1986, Margaret Thatcher's government celebrated the defeat of the strike by the National Union of Mineworkers, protesting the closing down of British coal pits.[115] In the same year, The Smiths released their album "The Queen Is Dead", perhaps named in an attempt to honour the Sex Pistols' punk legacy. It was a message sent straight not only to the public, but mainly to the establishment. Nevertheless, it was not the first time the Manchester band voiced its attitude through its music; they had been touching up on the subject of anti-establishment, or, as Murray says, subversion of the establishment,[116] in their previous releases. A year before, they stirred up the British waters with "Meat is Murder", an album filled to the brim with insistent lyricism and explosive themes, such as in the song "Barbarism Begins At Home" that contains references to authoritarian environment in which children grow up. The band takes a clear stance, and by doing so, provides an outlet for people like Renton through music that is in its very essence unconventional, baring and consequently accusing of the establishment.

In the chapter "There Is a Light That Never Goes Out", named after the eponymous The Smiths song, Spud's personality-shaping inner turmoil is uncovered for the first time in his meditation upon an experience with a girl:

> and in the darkened underpass
> I thought Oh God my chance has come at last
> but then a strange fear gripped me
> and I just couldn't ask[117]

[114] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 32.
[115] Sean Murray, "The Smiths Were Way More Subversive Than We (and David Cameron) Care to Remember," *Pitchfork*, June 16, 2016.
[116] Murray, "The Smiths."
[117] The Smiths. Lyrics to "There Is a Light That Never Goes Out," Genius, 2021.

This reference to The Smiths' song is monumental. There is, in a fragmentary, unclear way, pathos, remorse, déjà vu and the linking of the song to Spud's sorrow is incredible writing from Welsh's side. And with that, "Morrissey's sad voice had summed up his feelings."[118] The inner turmoil often associated with Scotland is reflecting in the man's personality ever so well, it is as if the depression was staring right back at itself, as if their facial features, personality traits, dreams, goals and experiences have melted away in the favour of nihilist numbness, yet at the same time the lament of self-pity, characteristic for Scottish literature and the Scottish ethos in general.

The chapter "Bad Blood" provides another viewpoint, one that is not as poetic as The Smiths' who, even with upmost urgency, always manage to sound melancholic rather than anarchist. Sex Pistols and their "God Save The Queen" worthy of analysing:

> God save the queen
> The fascist regime
> They made you a moron
> [...]
> God save the queen
> She ain't no human being
> There is no future
> In England's dreaming
> [...]
> No future for you[119]

With each repetition of the central theme of the British anthem, this point is more evident; the Queen is made inhumane, detached from the rest of the population – which she essentially is, through one of the monarchical traditional levers that are discussed previously. As discussed in Olsson's review of Nairn's work, the, to some extent co-dependent interconnection between the ruler and the ruled, "the emotions of mutuality between ordinary and extraordinary men"[120], is often the focus of British national identity discourse. Likewise, it is the case in Sex Pistols music. The symbolism is expressed in the following ways; the H-Bomb in the fourth verse most likely refers to the Queen being a ticking bomb that could detonate at any moment, and her being a moron refers to her not fully aware of the extent of exploitation by the system she would undergo when she started her reign. With the repetition of the central theme of the anthem, its

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[118] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 109.
[119] Sex Pistols. Lyrics to "God Save the Queen," Genius, 2021.
[120] Olsson, Untitled Review of *The Enchanted Glass. Britain and Its Monarchy*, 108.

original meaning is blurred. Similarly, "England's dreaming" in the eighth verse likely refers to England's desperate pursuit of the reconstructing of its past via false narratives and the intrusive ideas of glory stemming from deception. Ultimately, Sex Pistols are questioning whether the Queen is worthy of saving; and the reference to the band in *Trainspotting* is not coincidental, but rather Welsh's attempt to transmit what cannot usually be transmitted in literature.

The extent of deceit cultivated via obsessive rituals, pompous traditions, ceremonial behaviour, unwillingness to adapt to the modern world and all the aspects of the pompous monarchy is the subject of previous research of national identity. Edensor states that national identity flourishes through grandiose, public displays, and every detail adds to the level of sentiment experienced by the public in the given occasions.[121] The band is challenging this specific aspect of the grandiosity, and by mocking the anthem, they are staying true to their portrayal of it by putting up a mirror in the Crown's face and forcing it to look. The last two lines are most likely added to enhance the tone of the stanza; the accentuated motto of the band and of punk rock culture, "no future", is perhaps the final attempt to come to terms with the fact that there really was no future. The sense of blaming, of accusing, raising the pointer finger and doing so proudly is especially prominent in the characters of *Trainspotting*. The reference in the novel perhaps a poke at the society as a whole, at the self, nonetheless, can also be interpreted as Diderotian, in a true "J'Accuse" manner.

Drug addiction is the heaviest of themes present in *Trainspotting*. The aspects of drug addiction, the "psychic defence," are purely survival; a mechanism created in order to cope with the external, the inevitable that cannot be change through the force of self, in order to protect the self from the sorrow prone to appear and completely consume the soul in the least convenient of times. It has been subjected to scientific research for a number of years and as of recently, scientists are able to provide a comprehensive, yet in no way complete outlook on drug abuse and its subsequent presentation of itself in an individual. Ostracization of the individuals suffering from substance abuse, directed from the public and even the establishment, is indisputably still existent in today's society; partially because members of the public do not have profound knowledge nor do they care to educate themselves on the topic. Ostracization exists through the lack of knowledge, is further deepened by the discomfort society holds towards the matter and aids in the systematic detachment of drug addicts from the

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[121] Wood, "Playing with Scottishness," 196.

public life. The establishment has been inactive in aiding drug addicts in decades. In the 1980s, the United Kingdom failed enormously in resolving the widespread of heroin usage and subsequent AIDS epidemic, similarly to the spread of opium use in the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, according to Leishner, the progress made by science in the past two decades has been immense, and the general notion relating to substance abuse has been changing.[122] The situation is now especially different to that of the 1980s, where Welsh situated the drug addiction pictured in *Trainspotting*.

In scientific research, environment has presented itself to be prominent in drug addiction. As indicated by Leshner[123] the crucial components of drug abuse are ones based on the social context and biological and behavioural predispositions.[124] Ali makes a similar statement, reporting that drug abuse is a result of inner friction, such as frustration and disappointment, but outer factors are undoubtedly contributing to the addiction, likewise.[125] The author also uses the term "personal maladjustment"[126], a concept that might be reminiscent of inaccurate wiring of the brain, but is actually reactive to the environment. Personal maladjustment is what leads to the frustration and disappointment, as Ali claims, from which the users seek solace.

This is in correspondence with the aspect of frustration that can be seen in the character of Mark Renton. Rent Boy, sarcastic, indifferent, employing irony to take the edge of the harsh reality of his drug addiction, is the direct result of the political and socio-economic conditions in Scotland in the years leading up to the novel taking place; essentially, all of Scottish history and aspects of national identity are employed in order to create a persona that reflects his surroundings. Thus, he is the perfect example of Scottishness in contemporary literature.

The next chapter discusses Sick Boy; it is important to note again that the analysed characters are basically interchangeable. Similarly to the lines of the statehood, as referenced previously, the psyches of the characters are blurred and it is not easy nor is it desirable to make precise distinctions between them; essentially, all that is analysed above can be applied on Sick Boy, as well.

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[122] Alan I. Leshner, "Addiction Is a Brain Disease, and It Matters," Science 278, no. 5335 (1997): 45.

[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Karamat Ali, "Causes of Drug Addiction in Pakistan," *Pakistan Economic and Social Review* 18, no. 3/4 (1980): 102-103.
[126] Ali, "Causes of Drug Addiction," 103.

5. SICK BOY

Simon Williamson, or Sick Boy, is another of the group of young men around whom the novel is situated. He is not in a much more consolatory situation than Renton, Begbie or Spud. He comes from the similar background as them – born in Leith, a member of a working class, yet there is a difference in the esteem in which Sick Boy holds himself. Simon gives the impression of extreme confidence, a natural when it comes to socializing and relationships, often talking about seemingly deep matters. He often employs cultural and musical references, and makes himself seen as if he had profound, universal knowledge.

In the same way as he is impressive to others, he is impressionable himself. His frequent mentioning of Sean Connery, for instance, is one of the manifestations of his dependence upon being perceived for what he is not. He is continuously hiding his true self, through mimicking others, hoping that he will not be seen for what he really is, and the wish to be relevant among his peers is especially prominent. In the chapter "In Overdrive", Sick Boy makes one of his frequent references to Connery; he specifically says, "Auld Sean and I have so many parallels."[127] He claims that the resemblance is thanks to his womanizing skills and their Edinburgh roots, yet there is more to his claim. He wholeheartedly believes that he really is, in one way or another, similar to the actor, that he is Hollywood encapsulated in Edinburgh. He has such high esteem of himself that even when he is seemingly joking, he is being serious – even though he seemingly mocks himself, by exaggerating the Scottish vernacular, there is no doubt in his mind that he really is too big for Edinburgh, that he possesses star-like qualities that distinguish himself from others in his community.

This phenomenon corresponds with one of the features of Scottish identity explored in the previous section of this thesis, the inherent feeling of distinction, of being unlike others. It is a general notion that Britain is especially particular in keeping certain traditions such as monarchy itself, values or features that distinguish it from the rest of Europe – through these measures, the feeling of individuality is cultivated and made possible. In a similar manner, as was discussed previously, England does not consider itself a part of Europe, deepening the chasm between itself and Scotland that is pro-European; there is an inherent feeling of distinction between the two, between Simon Williamson believing the narrative he created for himself and for the people around him.

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[127] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 14.

Another prominent Scottish feature in Sick Boy is the escapism that he finds in substance abuse, similarly to the manner with which he presents himself to the external world. Escapism is a concept easily applicable to the Scottish. For instance, the geographic conditions have played, historically and presently, a major part in Scottish escapism. The remoteness of the nation has further aided in the sentiment of distinction, as discussed above. It is possible to say that there is, to some extent, escapism both in the Scottish ethos and in Simon Williamson. Overall, it can be said that Sick Boy is defined by a number of key features that may be subsequently analysed with regard to Scottishness.

6. BEGBIE

Analogously to Renton and Sick Boy, Francis "Franco" Begbie is a valuable subject of analysis, as he does not lack depth and provides grounds for such analysis with numerous personality traits that create a dichotomic image of a person. On one hand, Begbie is malevolent, causing harm in every situation he encounters, possessing an unknown force driven from the inside that research has identified multiple times as psychopathic traits, yet the true nature of Begbie remains a mystery.

It is evident that in a way similar to the Skag Boys, Renton and Sick Boy, he suffers from substance abuse, even if his addiction differs from theirs. He detests drugs and looks down on his friends with such disregard and shallow contempt, not realising at all the state in which he is finding himself, essentially addicted to the pursue of his violent persona and alcohol; this is yet another example of escapism and the refusal to acknowledge certain situations that require solutions, and at the same time the pretension even before the self.

Begbie has, similarly to Sick Boy, created a narrative for himself, a persona that he is desperately trying to fit. He does undoubtedly show signs of psychopathic behaviour; yet it needs to be noted that is not the only component of his psyche. He is frustrated with himself and the state of being, and defending himself by employing violence; and eventually utilizing the created narrative. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that his behaviour is not purely survival, a mask or an persona entirely untrue to him, that he puts on in case of danger, but rather a continuous system of actions that stem from his predisposed attributes, such as insecurity or the need to fit in, external factors, and, finally, the need to cope. The reason behind the creation of his defence wall is proposing itself; to adapt to life in Leith.

The following excerpt discusses Begbie's characteristics, proving that there is a level of psychopathy in his demeanour, especially in his enjoyment of others' (and perhaps even his own) suffering:

> Myth: Begbie has a great sense ay humour. Reality: Begbie's sense ay humour is solely activated at the misfortunes, setbacks and weaknesses ay others, usually his friends. Myth: Begbie is a 'hard man'. Reality: Ah would not personally rate begbie that highly in a square– go, withoot his assortment ay stanley knives, baseebaw bats, knuckledusters, beer glesses, sharpened knitting needles, etc. Masel n maist cunts are too shite–scared tae test this theory, but the impression remains. Tommy once exposed some weaknesses in Begbie, in a square–go. Gave um a good run for his money, did Tam. Mind you, Tommy's a tidy cunt, n Begbie, it has tae be said, came oat the better ay the two. Myth: Begbie's mates like him.

With that being said, it is crucial to view Begbie in light of all the aspects mentioned. The source of Begbie's behaviour is not necessarily evil in its purest form; to say so, the impact of frustration on mental health of those in Scotland that is discussed previously and the extent of which is undisputed by scholars would be compromised. Such acknowledgement does not at all provide grounds for excuses or him not being accountable for his actions; nevertheless, to assume that Begbie is a supernatural, sinister being that out of nowhere came to terrorize Scotland is taking away from the fact that he was moulded that way through a series of external factors, one of which is Scottishness.

CONCLUSION

The thesis' focal point was Scottish national identity, its historical development and reflection in the novel *Trainspotting*, with the aim to analyse Scottish national identity through the prism of history and literature, and subsequently employ the discovered findings in the analysis of *Trainspotting*. The reiteration of the answers achieved in the thesis is not unambiguous, similarly to the findings themselves. First and foremost, it can be claimed that national identity creates a complex, ever-changing and multiple identity that all humans possess, no matter the identification specifics. Scholars agree upon the fact that languages are a relevant aspect of the notion of identity and confirm the fact that the aspects of national identity are still disputed, such as in the way in which an individual makes a national identity claim.

Scottish identity comes with a large number of difficult aspects, as a consequence of the union with England that has been confusing and non-beneficial for both sides. This is discussed with regard to the narrative perpetuated by the English, effectively causing regress in the manner with which the Scottish perceive themselves. There have been many milestones in Scottish history, including the well-known Act of Union of 1707, the impact of which on Scottish national sentiment is not disputed by scholars. Nevertheless, what came before the Act of Union is much less clear. Some scholars argue that the sentiment came to life fairly early; others claim that it did not happen until after the unification. Generally, the conclusion that can be gained from research is that national identity, and Scottish national identity especially, is extremely hard to define and put in specific time-framed boxes.

Nonetheless, Irvine Welsh did manage to encapsulate Scottish identity in an unprecedented manner, which is attested by popularity of the novel, ongoing till this day. The author uses a number of tools to accentuate and utilize Scottish identity in his writing. His writing is specific for its language, in a way the modern version of Vernacular revival, and the prism through which the characters observe themselves and their identity. *Trainspotting* specifically is interwoven with devices used in the thesis to grasp the concept of national sentiment.

Renton, Sick Boy and Begbie all possess attributes that do not make them easy to analyse, but at the same time, they share a lot of similarities that make them, in light of this research, more of a single entity with various oscillating characteristics with the same core rather than three separate individuals. This is, perhaps, fitting to the tone that *Trainspotting* has set for itself, and might arguably be the result of Welsh's intentions. Nevertheless, the findings

of the analysis develop the general notion of Scottish identity from a point of view of someone non-Scottish; Welsh does an incredibly good job at bringing the reader, even one not familiar with Scottishness at all, closer to the concept, and thus promoting it, in a way.

The novel's popularity stems from multiple factors; the adaptation's success certainly aided in the process, but it needs to be acknowledged that the success of one is not conditioned by the success of other, especially if there is such disparity between them – meaning that while the adapted version's triumphant existence is an accomplishment to both Welsh and the team producing it, it does and should not take away from the fact that the novel would have made a name for itself without having been adapted, and that it is a valuable analysis tool that should not be disregarded as a mere template of a box office hit.

RESUMÉ

Tato práce zabývající se primárně skotskou identitou a její hlavní motivy by měly v tomto bodě, zejména po analýze románu *Trainspotting*, nabýt jasnějších obrysů. Vzhledem k tomu, že identita jako taková je velmi těžko uchopitelná – jeden z mála nesporných faktů je ten, že se dynamicky vyvíjí v průběhu života a že každý člověk má tzv. mnohonásobnou identitu, tedy identitu složenou z dílčích "pod-identit" – nabízí kapitola zabývající se tímto tématem ne vždy jednoznačné, nezpochybnitelné poznatky. Protože jsou s identitou spjaty i aspekty, které jsou buď záměrně vybrány pro účel sebevyjádření, či vycházejí z pevně daného vnitřního řádu ovlivněného faktory jako jsou místo narození či původ daný předky, celý výzkum je zabarven jakousi abstraktní mnohoznačností. S ohledem na to by bylo nepřesné se snažit toto téma pojmout takovým způsobem, aby bylo zodpovězeno zřetelnými odpověďmi; zároveň je to nežádoucí, protože je tímto způsobem značně ubráno na celé komplexnosti tématu, a to je tak vystaveno nesmyslnému zjednodušení.

Stejně tak jako je obtížné jasně definovat identitu, není lehké poukázat na přesné, konkrétní okamžiky v historii Skotska a být schopen říci, proč je tento okamžik důležitý či validní pro rešerši národního cítění. Přirozeně se tedy tato vratkost, která by se potenciálně mohla obrátit v neprospěch této práce a zdiskreditovat její relevanci, promítla i do výběru okamžiků, které měly určitým způsobem vliv na národní cítění ve Skotsku. V tom se věda nicméně taktéž neshodne; v této kapitole je čtenáři nabídnuto hned několik úhlů pohledu na nejrůznější události skotské historie a výsledný dojem je na individuálním uvážení badatele.

Na základě této skutečnosti je však důležité podotknout, že skotská historie je nabyta událostmi, které rozhodně nepostrádají význam historický, i kdyby význam sociologický a psychologický – týkající se problematiky identity – ano. O poznání zajímavější je však tyto události zkoumat prizmatem literárním, tedy věnovat se způsobu, jakým se historie i národní cítění odrážejí v něčem, co je těmto dvěma zdánlivě nepodobné; vazba mezi nimi na první pohled nemusí působit logicky, nicméně tyto tři oblasti jsou nesmírně propojeny a proto byly propojeny i v této práci.

Na základě výzkumu provedeného v této části práce bylo zjištěno, že skotská identita je obecně považována za vzkvétající po roce 1707 s unifikací a naopak velmi sporná před jejím uskutečněním. Jedna z událostí, na kterou není pohlíženo jednomyslně, je právě Act of Union. Ta dala vzniknout například skotskému osvícenství, jehož prominentní snahou byla ta o obrození tzv. Scots, tedy jazyka, který je ve Skotsku druhý nejpoužívanější, hned po angličtině,

následovanou skotskou gaelštinou. Zároveň se jedná o zákon, který změnil vnímání identity samotnými Skoty, ať už se tento sentiment, či lépe způsob, jakým je tento sentiment dnes prezentován, před jejím uskutečněním ve Skotsku vyskytoval či nikoliv. Další z klíčových poznatků, které tato kapitola přinesla, je skutečná úroveň významu Deklarace z Arbroath. Tento význam je ne vždy vyzdvihován v problematice vývoje skotské identity; nicméně je skutečně jednou z klíčových událostí v historii Skotska. Deklarace totiž přináší první uvědomění nezávislosti jako samostatné jednotky či entity, a co více, ne závislou na panovníkovi. Je nasnadě, že nádech Deklarace se nese i nadcházejícími stoletími, ačkoliv později interferuje s výše zmíněným unifikačním zákonem.

V historii následující vznik skotsko-anglické unie je možno sledovat několik opakujících se motivů. Jedním z nich je Scottish Renaissance, tedy znovuzrození, které se událo v meziválečném období minulého století. Scottish Vernacular Revival, který je diskutován s ohledem na Scottish Enlightenment, je na druhou stranu téměř synonymním výrazem, ačkoliv jeho struktura není identická, jakož ani jeho motivy. Je to však repetitivní vzor, který byl do určité míry znovunalezen v uplynulé dekádě a s největší pravděpodobností bude recyklován i v budoucnu. V přemítání nad posledními roky ve Skotsku nesmí být vynecháno referendum z roku 2014. V jeho událostech jsou velmi věrně reflektovány obrysy skotství – jakási apatie, nepřiznaná neochota podniknout kroky potřebné k získání autonomie, jejíž nedostatek způsobuje vnitřní tření a frustraci. Jistě, není možné s jistotou tvrdit, že každý Skot se cítí nenaplněn a nespokojen ve svazku s Anglií, tomu neodpovídají ani výsledky referenda. Není také možné říci, že vztah je dnes již pouhým Stockholmským syndromem a spekulovat do takové míry či zapojovat přílišnou míru filozofické debaty. Lze však zkoumat literaturu a podrobovat analýze psaný text, úvahy skotských autorů.

Autorem zkoumaným v této práci je Irvine Welsh. Ten je bezesporu velmi aktivní ve využívání nejrůznějších motivů, ve snaze text formovat tak, že jej lze téměř považovat za určitou formu podprahových zpráv vůči čtenáři. Na rozdíl od svých postav postrádá inherentní nihilismus, atribut, který The Smiths definovali jako „humdrum" – šeď a pustotu. Zároveň i metodika, které využívá pro práci s národní identitou, je poměrně inovativní. Welsh například záměrně využívá skotského dialektu pro navození nostalgie ve čtenáři. Velmi dobře si uvědomuje faktické propojení mezi jazykem a identitou, mezi mytologií a nostalgií a skrze použití těchto asociací, které má čtenář přirozeně dobře rozvinuté, si zajišťuje, že jeho tvorba bude čtenářem rezonovat.

V Marku Rentonovi naleznul Welsh hlavní přednost svého románu. Jeho postava je klíčovým způsobem, jakým je získávána důvěra čtenáře, protože si k ní snadno najde cestu a vytvoří vztah. Jde o muže, jehož postoje k životu obecně a k národní identitě se poměrně lehce vztahují na postoje, se kterými se do jisté míry dokáže ztotožnit každý člověk; jeho perspektiva a osobnost jsou vsazeny do prostředí románu tak, že nejsou kontrastovány. Naopak, Renton a místo, kde žije, jsou v jakémsi symbiotickém, jakož i parazitickém vztahu zároveň, ne nepodobném vztahu Skotska a Anglie.

Renton, stejně jako Sick Boy a Begbie, ilustrují určité prvky skotství, které jsou diskutovány v teoretické části. Hlavním motivem jejich přítomnosti v románu je frustrace; jedná se o muže natolik zdevastované životem, závislostí, přemírou observované i prožité bolesti, a naopak nedostatkem podnětů a jakéhosi poslání. Jistě, samotné použití slova „poslání" je něco, co by Renton, Sick Boy i Begbie jen těžko kvitovali s povděkem.

Obecně se dá říci, že román *Trainspotting* se stal modlou všech, kteří hledají a nenacházejí primárně díky Welshově obratnosti a rychlosti reakce na události, kterými byl obklopen, jeho schopnosti vycítit a následně zpracovat všeobecnou náladu panující ve Skotsku, a úspěch románu může být přičten i právě se recyklujícímu motivu skotství; tedy opakující se potřebou změny, které však – i z určitého mytologického důvodu odpovídajícímu skotskému ethosu – není možno, alespoň v nejbližší době, dosáhnout.

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