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# Reveries of a Progressive Past: The Missing Scotland as Indyref Heritage

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Two months after the vote, the consensus among political and cultural commentators has persisted that the referendum debate was a time of exceptional political and cultural engagement, in which Scotland's progressive essence was realised. Fintan O'Toole's observation, a week before the vote, that 'Scotland at the moment is what a democracy is supposed to be: a buzzing hive of argument and involvement, most of it civil, respectful and deeply intelligent',[1] encapsulated the general perception at the time: namely, that the event permitted a sense of empowerment that was inextricably connected to people's conviction that their vote was going to shape history. As Loki put it, 'Democracy has awakened… we must pause for a moment and reflect on the present moment we find ourselves in. A moment we have carved out of a history we were only supposed to learn about, but never attempt to shape. We are now living in the most democratic period in recent British history'.[2] This empowerment, it was widely remarked, showed a concern with social issues which both underpinned and exceeded the nationalist framework within which pro-independence politics was conducted. Aptly, the last issue of Bella Caledonia's *Closer* to be released before the referendum proposed to articulate 'a reverie for a new Scotland based on a different set of values', committed to social inclusion, and conducive to democratic renewal.

Alongside narratives of progressiveness responding to the renewed feeling of grassroots empowerment, however, there proliferated accounts that argued for the emancipation of the Scottish psyche from a 'miserablist' outlook, and of the Missing Scotland from political disengagement. The Missing Scotland was a concept introduced by Gerry Hassan to describe a population disconnected from politics, one that could be 'found in every part of our

[1] Fintan O'Toole, 'Scotland's vote is not about Braveheart or kilts or tribal nationalism. It's about democracy' in *The Guardian*, 12 September 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/12/scotland-vote-braveheart-nationalism-democracy-independence. accessed 29 November 2014.

[2] Loki, 'The Sleeping Giant Stirs', 12 September 2014, http://lokithescottishrapper.com/2014/09/12/loki-the-sleeping-giant-stirs/, accessed 29 November 2014.

country', and which was 'over-concentrated among younger, poorer voters and those who live in social housing'.[3] In indyref discourse, the Missing Scotland came to operate as the 'other' against which the Yes campaign defined itself, partly because of the ways in which, as a constituency, the Missing seemed to embody the idea of miserablism – the attitude held to be responsible for disconnecting people from purposeful political engagement. Willie Sullivan, in his study The Missing Scotland, worried that Scottish political life itself might be threatened or even rendered illegitimate 'by the fact that large parts of our population are missing from the actual operation of our democracy'.[4] The paradox I am interested in is how Hassan's important demand that 'we see our myths as what they are, namely, myths and challenge them'[5] did not extend to the rhetoric of progressiveness itself – a rhetoric with which the discourse on the Missing Scotland was surely complicit. In imagining how the indyref will be remembered in a few decades, I want to explore the dynamics that connected the idea of a progressive Scotland to that of a Missing Scotland. In 2005, Hassan and Eddie Gibb published Scotland 2020, a project driven by the proposition that 'a useful antidote' to the fatalism that had set in after the establishment of the Scottish parliament was 'the ability to think imaginatively about the future – or "futures literacy"', within a framework in which 'Imagining a better future for an individual or for a nation is a first step in creating one'.[6] As opposed to this, my looking forward to, and thinking back from, 2034 is not meant to be an exercise in futures literacy, but a scrutiny of the progressive imagination that pits 'fatalism' against the ability to imagine 'a better future' during the referendum debate. In doing so, it will speculate as to the possible legacy of the totalizing drive of these radical imaginings, once preserved through recollection and responded to in post-referendum politics and culture.

For Alain Badiou, 'An event is not by itself the creation of a reality; it is the creation of a possibility, it opens up a possibility. It indicates to us that a possibility exists that has been ignored'.[7] Most Yes and No supporters

[3] Gerry Hassan, 'Time for some fun with our politics', *The Scotsman*, 8 November 2013, http://www.scotsman.com/news/gerry-hassan-time-for-some-fun-with-our-politics-1-3181280, accessed 29 November 2014.

[4] Willie Sullivan, *The Missing Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2014), 10.

[5] Gerry Hassan, 'A Letter to Scotland's new radicals', *Scottish Review*, 9 July 2014, http://www.gerryhassan.com/blog/a-letter-to-scotlands-new-radicals/, accessed 29 November 2014.

[6] Gerry Hassan and Eddie Gibb, *Scotland 2020: Hopeful Stories for a Northern Nation* (2005), 14.

[7] Alain Badiou with Fabien Tarby, *Philosophy and the Event* (Cambridge, 2013), 10.

would agree that the possibility created by the referendum resided in mass participation in politics and culture, unthinkable in post-democratic pre-referendum times. Most important for the purposes of the present exploration, concerned with the developing fortunes of the idea of progressiveness and of its 'other' (the Missing Scotland and miserablism) in post-referendum decades, is how, for Badiou, the significance of the event lies also in the legacy it leaves for future generations to be faithful to, in preparation for the next event. Badiou suggests that '[i]n every situation, there are processes faithful to an event that has previously taken place … The possibilities opened up by the event are still present within a situation throughout an entire sequential period. Little by little, they peter out but they are present'.[8] Which aspects of indyref politics and culture, we might ask, will the progressive imagination deem fit to be extracted and preserved as legitimate recipients of the faithfulness of future generations in Scotland? It is important to ask this, because in a context of post-vote indyref exceptionalism and re-assertion of party politics as the norm, it may become increasingly difficult to detach the significance of the referendum from the progressive flourishing it enabled.

One outcome could be a form of what Wendy Brown calls 'radical nostalgia', by which she means 'the sense of not only a lost movement but a lost historical moment; not only a lost theoretical and empirical coherence but a lost way of life and a lost course of pursuits'.[9] The loss of the vote and of post-vote independence as goals to work towards may leave progressiveness as the main unifying feature of the pro-independence movement, and the call to radical action and thought as its most telling legacy. In such a scenario, radical nostalgia would not only hasten the erasure of the uncomfortable presence of a not-yet-redeemed Missing Scotland from left-wing imaginaries; it would also prevent its critique as a concept formulated and popularised at a specific historical conjuncture. In the altered circumstances of post-referendum Scotland, the consequences of a radical nostalgia nurtured by indyref exceptionalism might therefore become responsible for the failure to develop, through contestation of the main conceptual categories organising the independence campaign, a new spirit 'that embraces the notion of a deep and indeed unsettling transformation of society', which Brown sees as necessary for the Left to emerge from the conservative and melancholy spirit fostered by radical nostalgia.[10]

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[8] Ibid., 12.

[9] Wendy Brown, 'Resisting Left Melancholy', *boundary 2*, 26.3 (Autumn 1999), 22.

[10] Ibid., 26.

An academic version of radical nostalgia, too, may assert itself. Given the lively dialogue that was forged between academics and independence movement under the umbrella of a radical campaign for self-determination, it seems likely that the academy will reproduce forms of indyref exceptionalism and endorse progressiveness as the essence of pro-independence politics during the referendum. The distinction Colin Barker and Laurence Cox make between 'academic' and 'movement' intellectuals is apposite here. They suggest that while 'social movement scholars produce knowledge *about* movements… movement intellectuals produce knowledge *for* and *within* movements';[11] and while for the academic intellectual 'the primary "community" that validates her or his work *qua academic* is that composed of other academics… The community that validates movement intellectuals is different: it is the movements themselves'.[12] During the referendum debate, these distinctions were blurred in a space where academics had the opportunity to contribute to progressive theorising and practice. After the referendum, academic radicalism may come to resemble that described by Benjamin as 'left-wing radicalism', or 'the attitude to which there is no longer any general any corresponding political action',[13] which might in turn encourage idealisation of the progressive spirit that informed the referendum.

As the second part of this article will delineate, if an uneasy tension was maintained during the indyref between glorification of progressiveness and acknowledgement of its reliance on the idea of a 'still missing' Scotland to be emancipated, post-vote dynamics can be expected to defuse this tension while fulfilling its logic through the annihilation of the Missing Scotland to the point of oblivion. In particular, the selective remembering that will accompany the radical nostalgia for indyref progressive activity will entrench the erasure of the tension between progressiveness as a principle and reality realised in the independence movement and any logic or experience resistant to its positivity. As Gordon Asher and Leigh French argued, amongst independence supporters 'What could be an opportunity for dialogue is instead functioning as a process of closure, where independence is posited as *ipso facto* "progressive"'.[14] Responding to this, the rest of this article will explore the

[11] Colin Barker and Laurence Cox, "'What have the Romans ever done for us?": Academic and activist forms of movement theorizing', *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on Alternative Futures and Popular Protest* (2001), 4.

[12] Ibid., 5.

[13] Walter Benjamin, 'Left-Wing Melancholy', *Screen*, 15.2 (Summer 1974), 30.

[14] Gordon Asher and Leigh French, 'Crises Capitalism and Independence Doctrines', *Concept*, 5.1 (Spring 2014), 1.

relationship between the idea of a progressive Scotland, as represented by the independence movement, and the idea of a Missing Scotland, defined by that constituency's non-participation in the movement. My examination will be especially concerned to unpack the ways in which the dialectic of presence absence that informed this relationship might make for a differential remembering of 'progressive' and 'missing' Scotlands in 20 years' time.

The dynamics animating the commitment to deny representative status to the Missing Scotland, and the centrality of the association of the Missing Scotland with miserablism as part of these dynamics, can be explored via the distinction Erik Ringmar makes between identity and interest representation.[15] When identity representation is considered, the rejection of miserablism corresponds to the refusal to elevate a certain section of the population (reminiscent of the Missing Scotland) to the status of full participants in Scottish society. In their treatise on miserablism, published months before the vote, Eleanor Yule and David Manderson proposed that miserablism, as a genre, revolves around the story of 'a male tragic working-class hero, often a drifter and/or "hard man" struggling with addiction'.[16] At one level, they contested this as an inaccurate version of Scottish society because, as Yule notes, 'relatively speaking Scotland is a developed, wealthy nation, despite some deprivation and inequality',[17] If miserablism has provided 'a sense of identity and a voice for the working classes', then, Yule considers, it is time to 'make space for new voices to emerge'.[18] On the other hand, Yule and Manderson's argument about the necessity of Scotland not being connected to a miserablist aesthetic framework, or to the miserablist attitude this reproduces, ties into the Ringmar's 'interest' type of representation, as miserablism is portrayed as detrimental to Scottish self-determination and flourishing. For Yule, 'the health of a nation is reflected in its creative imagination and the way in which it chooses to project itself'.[19] On Manderson and Yule's account, miserablism has 'kept [Scottish identity] down, stopping it from getting above itself.. it's the cast of mind that thinks Scotland is great… but will vote No in the forthcoming referendum'.[20] This encapsulates the extent to which if, in the progressive imagination of the indyref, the Missing Scotland was rejected

[15] Erik Ringmar, 'The Idiocy of Intimacy', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 49.4 (1998)
[16] Eleanor Yule and David Manderson, *Moving Beyond Scottish Miserablism* (Edinburgh, 2014), 22.
[17] Ibid., 20.
[18] Ibid., 22.
[19] Ibid., 20.
[20] Ibid., 27.

as an inadequate representative of a nation that was being renewed and energised by the radical politics of the independence campaign, this was only seemingly confined to the level of identity and culture, as the undesirability of the Missing Scotland as an icon was connected to its being deemed not conducive to delivering an independent, or simply a better, Scotland - from the perspective of an 'interest' type of representation.

Interestingly, while Ringmar associates the principle of identity representation with nationalism,[21] there was a resistance in the Yes campaign to presenting itself as nationalist, and a determination to be associated instead with constitutional patriotism and democratic renewal. However, what the struggle over the Missing Scotland suggests is that there was considerable concern to identify an essence, an identity, which would aptly represent an emergent (or re-emergent) nation. On the one hand, this very concern points to the nationalist framework within which the campaign operated. On the other, it indicates an intertwining between identity and interest representation that complicates Ringmar's distinction. This intertwining coloured many nationalistic responses to the Commonwealth Games 2014. As Hassan has noted, 'The Glasgow of the games was very different from… the powerful hackneyed and miserablist images of the city which have crowded out other accounts', suggesting that the 'rare moments such as the Glasgow games when our nation is portrayed' in non-miserablist fashion, provided 'an uplifting and empowering experience – which in some ways is ultimately a political one'.[22]

These discourses reproduce the neoliberal logic at work in the rejection of the representative status of the Missing Scotland. This same logic underpins what critical medical humanities theorists Lynne Friedli and Robert Stearn call the 'general conspiracy of optimism, normative cheerfulness and resilience in the face of adversity'.[23] And this validates Asher and French's concerns about Yes 'consensualism, and forced positivity from progressives generally', for 'if they were successful, they should leave us *in*, *with*, and *for* the nexus

[21] Erik Ringmar, 'The Idiocy of Intimacy', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 49.4 (1998), 540.

[22] Gerry Hassan, 'The Glasgow Games, the Great War and A Requiem for the Post-War Dream', National Collective blog, 4 August 2014, http://nationalcollective.com/2014/08/04/gerry-hassan-the-glasgow-games-the-great-war-and-a-requiem-for-the-post-war-dream/, accessed 29 November 2014.

[23] Lynne Friedli and Robert Stearn, 'Whistle While You Work (For Nothing): Positive Affect as Coercive Strategy – The Case of Workfare', December 2013, http://centreformedicalhumanities.org/whistle-while-you-work-for-nothing-positive-affect-as-coercive-strategy-the-case-of-workfare/, accessed 29 November 2014.

of capitalism / nation state / representative "democracy"'.[24] It is within this framework, I would argue, that the process whereby the Missing Scotland was *made* missing in indyref imaginings, while Yes radicals became the icon to be repackaged and transmitted to posterity as representative of the new Scotland, is best understood.

In examining the ambiguity that characterises the term 'People', Giorgio Agamben notes that 'the constitution of the human species into a body politic comes into being through a fundamental split' between 'naked life *(people)* and political existence *(People)*'.[25] The 'biopolitical fracture' that in the indyref progressive imagination separated the missing Scotland (people) from the People of Scotland involved in political life can be appreciated through consideration of how discourses of compassion, development, and participation were deployed in the indyref public sphere. Here the Missing Scotland functioned as the recipient of human rights to be delivered in ways that would realize the scenario delineated by Costas Douzinas, whereby if '*The end of human rights is to resist public and private domination and oppression. They lose that end when they become the political ideology or idolatry of neo-liberal capitalism or the contemporary version of the civilizing mission*'.[26]

When the tension between progressive Scotland and Missing Scotland is considered in relation to discourses on participatory development, research has shown how these often rely on a neoliberal logic of personalisation and blaming that undercuts their progressive credentials. What Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari describe as 'participation as tyranny'[27] can be criticised, as Frances Cleaver argues, for its 'inadequate model of individual action and the links between individual participation and responsibility', in which 'there is little recognition of the varying livelihoods, motivations and impacts of development on individuals over time'.[28] In the same spirit, in her exploration of the 'will to empower', Barbara Cruikshank argues that 'democratic citizenship is less a solution to political problems than a strategy of government',[29] within a framework in which 'Technologies of citizenship are voluntary and

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[24] Asher and French, 'Crises Capitalism', *Concept*, 5.1 (Spring 2014), 7.

[25] Giorgio Agamben, 'Form-of-Life',*Means Without Ends* (Minneapolis, 2000), 31.

[26] Costas Douzinas, 'The Paradoxes of Human Rights', *Constellations*, 20.1 (2013), 52.

[27] Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari, 'The Case for Participation as Tyranny', *Participation: The New Tyranny?*,ed.Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari (London and New York, 2001), 3.

[28] Frances Cleaver, 'Institutions, Agency and the Limitations of Participatory Approaches to Development', in Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari (eds), *Participation: The New Tyranny?*, (London and New York, 2001), 47.

[29] Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects* (Ithaca and London, 1999), 1.

coercive at the same time; the actions of citizens are regulated, but only after the capacity to act as a certain kind of citizen with certain aims is instilled. Democratic citizens, in short, are both the effects and the instruments of liberal governance'.[30] Indeed, it is difficult to read Lesley Riddoch's call to empower a Scottish people '[s]tuck with the shortest life expectancies in Europe because of self-harming addictions, grief and powerlessness'[31] as advocating the 'participation as empowerment' Asher and French called for.[32] Rather, Riddoch's narrative unfolds within the neoliberal scenario of forced positive affect delineated by Friedli and Stearn, into which the Missing Scotland as recipient of human rights was inserted by Yes radicals. This confirms Douzinas' idea that in advanced capitalism, 'Right claims reinforce rather than challenge established arrangements' as '[t]he claimant accepts the established power and distribution orders'.[33]

The unequal power positions assigned to progressive Scotland and to Missing Scotland were entrenched through the rhetoric of compassion that was supposed to evince the progressiveness of the Yes campaign. Riddoch argued that 'Correcting the inbuilt tendency towards bad health and self-harming needs compassion, understanding, long-term funding, a slow transfer of control and considerable vision'.[34] Similarly, Hassan declared that what his *Caledonian Dreaming* '[set] out to value [was] empathy', 'understanding the needs and interests of others'.[35] However, Lauren Berlant's collection of essays on compassion as '*an emotion in operation*' powerfully delineates how the idea of compassion 'implies a social relation between spectators and sufferers, with the emphasis on the spectator's experience of feeling compassion' in ways that reinforce structurally unequal power relations.[36]

Similar dynamics obtained in the public sphere of the referendum debate, despite the consensus that this was animated by an unprecedented variety of voices, enshrined in the commitment articulated by Mike Small to 'create new structures for a more participatory democracy' and, in this way, 'a new Scotland based on a different set of values'.[37] If, as Jürgen Habermas claims,

[30] Ibid., p. 5

[31] Lesley Riddoch, *Blossom: What Scotland Needs to Flourish* (Edinburgh, 2013), 303.

[32] Asher and French, 'Crises Capitalism', *Concept*, 5.1 (Spring 2014), 1.

[33] Douzinas, 'The Paradoxes of Human Rights', *Constellations*, 20.1 (2013), 59.

[34] Riddoch, *Blossom* (Edinburgh, 2013), 60.

[35] Gerry Hassan, *Caledonian Dreaming: The Quest for a Different Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2014), 27.

[36] Lauren Berlant, 'Introduction: Compassion (and Withholding)',*Compassion* (London and New York, 2004), 1.

[37] Mike Small, editorial, *Closer: A Reverie for a New Scotland* (2014), 4.

the public sphere is constituted by the 'intersubjectively shared space of a speech situation',[38] the Missing Scotland was defined by its absence from this space, and its voices by the need for others to notice their absence and speak for them. (Central to Hassan's book is the need for a discourse that 'explores and identifies, the missing voices of Scotland [that] have to be noticed').[39] In light of this, the public sphere of the indyref could be seen to resemble Nancy Fraser's rather than Habermas's public sphere. For Fraser, 'Habermas's account idealizes the liberal public sphere'; as she puts it, 'despite the rhetoric of publicity and accessibility, the official public sphere [rests] on… a number of significant exclusions'.[40] In the rhetoric of development and compassion as well as in the public sphere of the indyref, the Missing Scotland was (figured as being) *made* missing through the progressives' agency, in ways that prefigured how the totalizing icon that would be transmitted to posterity as representing the nation would be constituted. This chillingly resonates with Agamben's idea that 'our time is nothing other than the methodical and implacable attempt to fill the split that divides the people by radically eliminating the people of the excluded'.[41]

On the one hand, the democratic, political, civic side of such an exclusion from the public sphere is reminiscent of Hannah Arendt's distinction between public / political and private realms, according to which those excluded from the former are deprived 'of a way of life in which… the central concern of all citizens [is] to talk with each other'.[42] On the other hand, the fact that this exclusion took place within the public sphere of the referendum debate calls attention to the nationalist dimension of the latter, creating a scenario close to that described by Arendt, in which 'The Rights of Man… proved to be unenforceable… whenever people appeared who were no longer citizens of any sovereign state'.[43] With this in mind, my examination will turn, finally, to how the tension between progressive imagination and Missing Scotland was informed by nationalist thinking.

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[38] Jürgen Habermas, 'Civil Society and the Political Public Sphere', *Between Facts and Norms* (Cambridge, 1996), 361.

[39] Hassan, *Caledonian Dreaming* (Edinburgh, 2014), 19.

[40] Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy', *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, 1992), 113.

[41] Agamben, 'Form-of-Life', *Means Without Ends* (Minneapolis, 2000), 34.

[42] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago, 1958), 27.

[43] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego and London, 1968), 293.

Tracing the recurrence of the figure of the Missing Scotland and of miserablism in indyref culture helps foregrounds how a fictive ethnicity is produced in a Scottish context in ways that became acceptable and banal through the indyref. Étienne Balibar describes a 'fictive ethnicity' as the product of practices and discourses that work 'to make the people produce itself continually as national community… as a people'.[44] How ideas of a Missing Scotland and of miserablist attitudes were caught up in these dynamics is enshrined in Manderson's idea that miserablism is 'capable of making us – by whom I mean anyone who lives in Scotland or has Scottish connections and lives abroad or shares the Scots' "sensibility of the mind" – able to speak out in a certain way'.[45] It is also apparent in Hassan's contestation of the myths 'we' tell 'ourselves' – including '[t]he account of Scottish inadequacy and lack of confidence… which has had too much power through our history'.[46] At the same time, Balibar contests the distinction between the model of the cultural and that of the political nation by drawing attention to the political project that animates both,[47] and to the 'rule of exclusion' on which this rests.[48] These insights capture the exclusionary logic of discourses that revolved around the idea of the Missing Scotland, and of miserablism, which can be taken to be informed by the spirit of both civic and ethnocultural nationalism, yielding two specular, oxymoronic figures.[49]

For Nicholas Xenos, the oxymoronic character of civic nationalism lies in the dynamics whereby 'The nation-state has required a mythologizing naturalism to legitimate it, thus blurring the distinction between "civic" and "ethnic"'.[50] This becomes apparent when one considers the ways in which both miserablism and progressiveness were portrayed as rooted in the Scottish psyche, conceived in ethnocultural terms that inflected the political project of civic nationalism. On the one hand, within a framework reminiscent of Anthony Smith's ethnosymbolist ideal of national identity as '*the continuous*

[44] Étienne Balibar, 'Racism and Nationalism', *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*(London, 1991), 59.

[45] Yule and Manderson, *Moving Beyond Scottish Miserablism*(Edinburgh, 2014), 26.

[46] Hassan, *Caledonian Dreaming* (Edinburgh, 2014), 39.

[47] Étienne Balibar, '*Homo nationalis*: An Anthropological Sketch of the Nation-Form', *We, The People of Europe: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*, trans.James Swenson(Princeton and Oxford, 2004), 16.

[48] Ibid., 49.

[49] My thanks to Leigh French for pointing me to Nicholas Xenos' article and for his thoughts on the uneasy distinction between civic and ethnocultural nationalism.

[50] Nicholas Xenos, 'Civic Nationalism: Oxymoron?', *Critical Review: A Journal of Politics and Society*, 10.2 (1996), 213.

*reproduction and reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions*',[51] the Missing Scotland was associated with a cultural essence reproduced as undesirable because detrimental to the wellbeing of the Scottish people. This was epitomised by how Hassan connected his *Caledonian Dreaming* to Carol Craig's *The Scots' Crisis of Confidence*, which argues that 'to build a healthier, wealthier and wiser Scotland we need to change some of our mindset'.[52] Along similar lines, for Chris Bambery the radical essence of Scotland, embodied in 'the voices of ordinary Scots who have stood up and put themselves on the line in pursuit of justice, equality and the greater good', would be realised in the case of a Yes vote.[53] In specular fashion, the undesirability of miserablism infoming political projects dictated its undesirability at the cultural level. This was exemplified by how, for Mike Small, when attempting to transform democracy, the 'challenge' was 'to throw off decades of self-doubt and "learned failure" about Scotland, Scottishness and the Scots'.[54] In the debate over which aspects of Scottish culture and history should be transmitted as legitimate parts of Scottish culture lies the significance of the referendum conjuncture for practitioners in Scottish studies. Not only did the indyref foreground the extent to which the tradition that was being manufactured was simultaneously civic and ethnocultural, it forced attention to the very act of construction – the operation of what Raymond Williams calls 'selective tradition'. For Williams, 'the hegemonic sense of tradition is always the most active: a deliberately selective and connecting process which offers a historical and cultural ratification of a contemporary order'. And indeed, the rationale behind decisions regarding which aspects of contemporary culture had to be validated and which devalued was clear at a time when the pro-independence movement was under pressure to develop a positive and confident image of the 'Scottish nation'.

In calling for reflection on the forms that indyref memories will take in twenty years' time, as 'finished' objects of tradition, If Scotland introduced a self-reflexive logic in our imaginings and critical practice. If, as Williams says, 'certain meanings and practices are chosen for emphasis, certain other meanings and practices are neglected and excluded',[55] then what was the

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[51] Anthony D. Smith, *The Cultural Foundations of Nations: Hierarchy, Covenant, and Republic* (Oxford, 2008), 59.

[52] Carol Craig, *The Scots' Crisis of Confidence* (Edinburgh, 2003), viii.

[53] Chris Bambery, *A People's History of Scotland* (London & New York, 2014), 324.

[54] Mike Small, editorial,*Closer* (2013)

[55] Raymond Williams, 'Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory', *New Left Review*, 1.82 (Nov-Dec 1973), 8

rationale underpinning our decision to emphasise certain aspects of Scottish culture and neglect others? And what will the consequences be in terms of the culture that will be associated with the referendum in 2034? In encouraging us to think of the present as simultaneously future and past, If Scotland gives us the privilege of a voice in the construction of a selective tradition, but also the awareness that it was, indeed, a privilege, and one which came with responsibility.

Responsibility to whom? Reflection in cultural studies has focused on the ways in which the responsibility of the critic is 'constitutively riven' between academia and the political projects to which it attempts to contribute.[56] The referendum debate brought to breaking point the tension between the two poles in Scottish studies, I suggest. The model whereby our critical activity could be deployed at a speculative level, divorced from practical effects, was exceeded by the assumptions underpinning our practice: academics publicly participated in cultural and political discussion, realising Stuart Hall's idea that the vocation of intellectuals is 'to alienate that advantage which they have had out of the system … to put it at the service of some other project'.[57] Involvement of intellectuals such as Neil Davidson with RIC and Scott Hames with National Collective provides a measure of the success of this attempt in Scottish studies 2014.

At the same time, rapprochement between pro-independence movement and Scottish studies created a framework in which the latter had a stake in presenting the former as progressive, and will have a stake in remembering it as such. This could be problematic as in order to genuinely engage with a political project intellectuals must preserve a critical stance.[58] Scott Hames attempted to do as much in relation to the pro-independence movement, suggesting to National Collective that 'Right now, in Scotland, there are glimpses here and there of a "cracked nationalism" which ruptures its own claims and visions, which disowns any right to voice a pre-determined groupness; which embraces self-critique'.[59] This article disagrees with Hames' sympathetic perception of the pro-independence movement, but his exhortation undoubtedly provided

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[56] Paul Bowman, 'Proper Impropriety: The proper-ties of cultural studies (Some *More* Aphorisms, and Aporias', *Parallax*, 7.2 (2001), 51

[57] Stuart Hall, 'The Emergence of Cultural Studies and the Crisis of the Humanities', *October*, 53 (Summer, 1990), 18

[58] Jeremy Gilbert, *Anticapitalism and Culture: Radical Theory and Popular Politics* (Oxford and New York, 2014), 6

[59] Scott Hames, 'One Idea for a Better Scotland', talk delivered at Yestival (Edinburgh, 2014)

the cultural campaign with a sense of the direction in which it could have worked in order to realise its rhetoric of progressiveness.

My hope is that critical perspectives unconstrained by radical nostalgia for the 'progressive' alliance that brought together the pro-independence movement and intellectuals will be able, in 2034, to contest the hegemonic function of the selective tradition that originated during the referendum debate, and openly discuss the ways in which progressive ideals as much as contradictions and exclusionary principles constituted 2014 Scottish culture. Remembering the indyref means coming to terms with how contributions, including our 'crimes', could no longer be relegated to the level of theory.[60] This perception has provided the rationale behind my interrogation of the exclusionary logic underpinning the narratives of progressiveness, miserablism and the Missing Scotland during the debate. In larger terms, it suggests the need to approach the legacy of the indyref in ways that allow us to move beyond the constraints that the indyref itself imposed on critique, rather than regarding it as an unproblematic tradition of political, cultural and critical engagement.

[60] Jacques Rancière, *Althusser's Lesson* (London and New York, 2011).