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The scottish nationalist figure of William Wallace through popular culture

Mélissa Tyrode

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Mémoire

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The Scottish nationalist figure of William Wallace through popular culture

Présenté par

TYRODE Mélissa

Sous la direction de

LAPLACE Philippe, enseignant à l'Université de Franche-Comté

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Partie disciplinaire

Introduction

‘Aye, fight and you may die. Run, and you'll live... at least a while. And dying in your beds, many years from now, would you be willing to trade all the days, from this day to that, for one chance, just one chance, to come back here and tell our enemies that they may take our lives, but they'll never take... our freedom!’¹

These are the words of William Wallace in *Braveheart*, a movie produced by Australian actor Mel Gibson (who also performs the main character, William Wallace) in 1995. Although the movie is not entirely correct in terms of history (see later throughout the development), it glorifies the nationalist figure of William Wallace. It also glorifies his fight for freedom and independence of Scotland at the end of the 13th century when the English expansionism (under the rule of King Edward I) over Scotland and its people was at its peak.

William Wallace was born in Elderslie, Renfrewshire, in the Lowlands of Scotland, approximately in 1270 and died in London, England, in 1305 after being captured by the English because he was betrayed by Scottish knight loyal to King Edward I, John Menteith: he was therefore publicly killed in terrible conditions because he was condemned of high treason against English King Edward I. Wallace's father was Sir Malcolm of Elderslie: he and his father thus came from a lesser noble family. He has been well known in Scotland until nowadays since he is often represented as a real national hero for the country. Indeed, he inspired many nationalists after him until today for showing resistance and fighting English expansionism, especially against King Edward I's ambitions of annexing Wallace's country to England.

Indeed, in 1296, the political situation of Scotland was quite difficult since the King of England imprisoned John Balliol, the new King of Scotland at that time, and proclaimed himself

¹ <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/MovieSpeeches/specialengagements/moviespeechbraveheart.html>

Lord Paramount of Scotland. This was nonsensical for many Scots and in 1297, William Wallace gathered soldiers and started to kill English officers and the sheriff who were in Scotland at that precise moment. Two years prior that attack, in 1295, King John Baliol of Scotland signed a treaty with King Philip IV of France. Both countries were aware or victims of England's desire for expansion. They thus signed the Auld Alliance in order to combine their forces against England if it were to attack one of both countries.² This alliance was ill-received by English King Edward I since he saw this as a threat: English expansionism became even more aggressive than before the agreement and this is what caused the war.

Later on, on the 11th September of 1297, the Scots fought and won the Battle of Stirling Bridge in Scotland. This was a crucial event since never in history a weaker troop fought a stronger in terms of military devices. However, one year later, in July 1298, Edward I's troops attacked William Wallace's army in Falkirk, Scotland, and the outcome of the battle was a decisive English victory, which started the downfall of William Wallace who left Scotland and went to France to ask for support from former French King, Philip IV. The Scottish Church also asked for help from the Papacy (Vatican) and gained some support³. Therefore, William Wallace left for France from 1299 until 1303 out of several motives: first, he felt humiliation from the latest defeat at Falkirk. Then, he was tracked by the English since Edward I really wanted to have him captured and would not offer him any opportunity of surrender. William Wallace was thus captured in 1305 after John Menteith, a Scottish noble, betrayed him and informed King Edward of his location. Edward I thus had him seized and later on murdered publicly in London.

Therefore, this is how the first War of Independence in Scotland started (it lasted from 1296 until 1329) and how the nationalist sentiment was born and is still vivid today, especially after the decision of the United Kingdom to exit the European Union, since Scotland was mainly against it. Indeed, 62% of the Scots voted against Brexit⁴: the fact that the decision was acted all the same was ill-received for many pro-E.U Scots, who considered leaving the United Kingdom in order to become an independent nation. Such a political decision thus emphasised the Scottish nationalist sentiment through the image of William Wallace, which can be noticed

² <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofScotland/The-Auld-Alliance-France-Scotland/>

³ The Wars of Independence, BBC : http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/history/articles/the_wars_of_independence/

⁴ Brexit results, Statista: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/568701/brexit-results-by-nation/>

through contemporary books⁵ and through movies as well⁶. It can also be seen through politics: indeed, in 1997, a referendum on devolution was organized. Scotland voted in favour of devolution and although it is still part of the United Kingdom and therefore depends on Westminster, it has its own national parliament at Holyrood, Edinburgh, which was created in 1999 but gained more in power from 2016, after the Scotland Act of 2016. As the study will show later on in the development, Scottish Parliament only manages some national matters.⁷

William Wallace's desire for freedom and fight against the English in the 13th century gave way to the want of an independent nation. The current Scottish First Minister (since 2014) is Nicola Ferguson Sturgeon, who has been head of the Scottish National Party since 2014, a party created in 1934 but which gained more and more popularity in the 1970s, especially because of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's conservative policies and choices: indeed, she quite ignored Irish and Scottish claims and ambitions, if not dismissed them, which emphasised a nationalist sentiment from a great part of the Scottish population at that time (and of the Irish population as well, although it will not be the focus of this study).⁸

Wallace's fight inspired many generations after him, including the former King of Scotland, Robert Bruce (1274- 1329) who was king of Scotland from 1306 until his death in 1329 and who fought in turn for the independence of Scotland and who is especially known for having gloriously won the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, which opposed English King Edward II, son of Edward I, and Robert Bruce and his army.⁶ The Second War of Independence started 3 years later, in 1332, and lasted until 1357, because Edward Balliol, son of John Balliol, invaded Scotland and was supported by the English. Later on, another war known as the rough wooing broke out in 1544 when English King Henry VIII invaded Scotland. He wanted to break the Auld Alliance since he saw a threat in it. He therefore tried to marry his son Edward to Mary Stuart, daughter of Scottish King James V, and thus heir to the Scottish crown. This wedding would have allowed and emphasises English expansionism over Scotland and was therefore rejected by the Scots, which led to another between the English and the Scots.

⁵ *For Freedom: the last days of William Wallace*, David R. Ross; 2005

⁶ *Braveheart*, Mel Gibson; 1995 / *Outlaw King*, David Mackenzie; 2018

⁷ Devolution: <https://www.deliveringforscotland.gov.uk/scotland-in-the-uk/devolution/#:~:text=State%20for%20Scotland,-.The%20history%20of%20devolution,powers%20previously%20held%20at%20Westminster.>

⁸ Scottish National Party, David Broughton : [Scottish National Party | History, Policy, & Leader | Britannica](#)

The various defeats but mostly the different fights throughout history indeed emphasised the nationalist sentiment of the Scots. In order to understand such a mindset, we need to understand the definition of nationalism, patriotism, and national hero, which the study will later on develop. On the one hand, according to *Merriam Webster dictionary*, nationalism can be defined as “ a sense of national consciousness exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups” in other terms, Scotland first, not the United Kingdom or England. On the other hand, patriotism is defined as “the love or devotion to one’s country” when a hero is defined as “a person admired for their achievements and noble qualities” or as “an illustrious warrior”, which Wallace both is according to the various contemporary representations of him and according to the various tributes in his honour. Indeed, although not every nation holds on to a nationalist sentiment, they all have a national hero because of their bravery of fight for freedom. For instance, some French people pay a tribute to Joan of Arc every year on the second weekend of May to commemorate the liberation of Orleans in 1429, mainly thanks to her since she was leader of the operation. The celebration day is called “Fête Nationale de Jeanne d’Arc et du patriotisme”, particularly because she behaved heroically out of freeing France, thus emphasising a patriotic sentiment.⁹ In India, Mahatma Gandhi is considered a national hero since he peacefully opposed English expansionism in his country. In Scotland, people have chosen William Wallace as their hero since the fight for more independence is still very vivid today, particularly after Brexit. On the one hand, it revived the feeling that the Scots were not being heard and represented and on the other, it created the thought that only suburban London may influence the outcome of decisive votes. In order to remain recognizable by other nations, most of them have a national hero and usually keep on representing them as such through art (visual art, literature, etc), articles, or national tributes like national days or architectural monuments, in order to serve a particular purpose: some Scots do it by using their national culture.

But to what extent do these symbols really serve a nationalist cause? What does it even mean to be a nation and what are the origins of the phenomenon? And if nations need national heroes, why does Scotland need Wallace as its national hero? How has he been used for the Scottish nationalist cause and why did he become a mythical symbol for the claim of Scottish sovereignty or perhaps independence?

⁹ Célébration de la fête de Jeanne-d’Arc, 10^e législature <https://www.senat.fr/questions/base/1994/qSEQ940606430.html>

This is what I will be trying to explain and demonstrate throughout this study. Throughout my thesis, I will be trying to show the impact of the fight of William Wallace (and other very important factors in history which contributed to the nationalist sentiment in Scotland) and the cultural legacy he transmitted to his people and to future generations as well.

First, this study will tackle the question of the cultural legacy and try to define precisely the concepts of patriotism, nationalism and nation. This first part mostly uses theorists' speeches and articles who tried to define the concepts of nation and nationalism, such as Ernest Renan in his speech *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (1882), Anthony D. Smith in his book *Ethnosymbolism and Nationalism – A cultural approach* (2009) or Benedict Anderson with his work entitled *Imagined communities* (1983). Although they are authors with contrasted perspectives and from different periods of time, they all try to define in a complex way these notions and give us a thoughtful insight on the phenomenon of nationalism in itself, which is why these works will be used throughout the study.

Then, this study will try to show how William Wallace has been glorified and romanticized through the centuries but mostly through contemporary popular culture and how he symbolizes a undeniable argument for the Scots. This will be studied through articles, tributes, books, or movies: it will thus allow us to better understand the notion of national heroes and the traditions and elements used to create a nation. This part will essentially analyse the movie *Braveheart* produced by Mel Gibson in 1995 and the book *National heroes and Nationalism*, written by Linas Eriksonas in 1993.

Finally, this study will try to argue that nationalism and nations are constructed through popular culture, and are thus not always enlightened or truthful, but they remain significant all the same. The study will thus analyse and use theorists' works such as Benedict Anderson with his book *Imagined communities* (1983). This third part will thus try to provide an insight on the fact that national identity through a common and shared culture might be a 'myth', always through the prism of Scotland. It will also try to show how the fight for independence can sometimes use wrong arguments, especially when some of the nationalists use Anglophobia to defend their opinion, which is not the case of the Scottish National Party.

I. CULTURAL LEGACY

A) Nation and nationalism: the chicken or the egg?

Using the term nationalism to describe the events revolving around the sovereignty of Scotland from the 14th century until today would be wrong. Indeed, there are various definitions of nationalism and nation, since their origin is not clearly defined. Some argue that the concept of nation itself is quite recent since it dates back or at least was considerably emphasized in the early 20th century, right after the First World War ¹⁰. On the other hand, the British-Czech social anthropologist Ernest Gellner claims that such a concept dates back to the 18th century, a view with which most thinkers would agree. Gellner believes that nationalism strives for one culture or ethnicity under one roof, or ‘state’¹¹.

Theorists often have often disagreed on the definition of such concepts. A simple way to understand the concept of nation would be to define it as “ a community of people composed of one or more nationalities and possessing a more or less defined territory and government” (*Merriam Webster Dictionary*). Anthony Smith reminds us that it is much more complex than that since he draws a clear difference between both the concept of nation and the one of state. Indeed, he defines nation as follows:

“A nation can be defined as a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all its members. [...] A national identity is fundamentally multi-dimensional; it can never be reduced to a single element, even by the particular factions of nationalists, nor can it be easily or swiftly induced in a population by artificial means. Such a definition of national identity also sets it clearly apart from any conception of the state. The latter refers exclusively to public institutions, differentiated from, and autonomous of, other social institutions and exercising a monopoly of coercion and extraction within a given territory. The nation, on the other hand, signifies a cultural and political bond, uniting in a single political community all who share a historic culture and homeland.” ¹².

¹⁰ Hobsbawm, 1990

¹¹ E. Gellner, *Nation and Nationalism*, 1983

¹² A. Smith, *National Identity*, p. 14-15

Therefore, such a perspective implies that the state frames all the notions defining a nation; the state is thus an institution shaped by physical boundaries whereas the nation is a spiritual concept.

Let us not forget that the concept of nation was clarified by the classical modernist theorists working on it after the Second World War, such as Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson, and Eric Hobsbawm who all claim that nationalism arose with modernization during the late 18th century. At that period, the term ‘race’ started to disappear alongside the process of decolonization and self-determination of the dominions. A way to explain this is the fact that for some of those modernists, a nation is built through technological and social progress, which for Karl Deutsch was essential to achieve industrial modernity, and with it came ethical ideals, such as giving up the notion of race and starting to consider the ethnic groups as nations. For them, the construction of nations is a recent phenomenon and the cohesion between the members from a same community as well as the homogeneity of their national identity are fulfilled through ‘different forms of socialisation’. Such a modernist theory implies that the pre-modern theories are not fully considered, thus giving more credibility to the modernist culture than to the pre-modern one.

Another approach which could be used to define these concepts is ethnosymbolism which can be defined as “the study of nationalism that stresses the importance of symbols, myths, values, and traditions in the formation and persistence of the modern nation-state”¹³, used by theorists such as Anthony D. Smith. Like Gellner, he agrees that nations are quite recent or at least have been recently reinforced, but his approach uses a more history-oriented perspective. Indeed, by stressing the importance of symbols, values and traditions, he considers the memory of the studied communities, which modernist theory does not. Anthony Smith worked on ethnosymbolism as a response to modernist theories. According to him, modernists do not precisely define the very origin of a particular nation and therefore finds their theories incomplete, which he tries to compensate with his approach. Nevertheless, Gellner answered Smith’s critical opinion by stating that on the one hand, the cultural dimension in modern societies was transformed and improved by economic and scientific changes and on the other hand, ethnosymbolism could lead to adjust the past of a nation to one’s advantage: according

¹³https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46406650_Nationalism_and_Ethnosymbolism_History_Culture_and_Ethnicity_in_the_Formation_of_Nations

to him, Smith's approach is quite dangerous since it could lead to making up a fake past. Both of their approaches will be useful for this study, contrary to primordialism.

Primordialism is a social concept using a pragmatic perspective, defining nationalism by the existing ties between the individuals of a community, depending on religion, culture, and language, which is quite straightforward to understand and can thus be a dangerous interpretation of nationalism. Indeed, such an approach could lead to a fictitious national identity that only a few could belong long, thus creating cohesion issues, if not racism. Besides, Ernest Renan is firmly opposed to such a perspective. In his work *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*' (1882) Renan defined the concept of nation, an essential work if one is to understand the theories revolving around nationalism: he started his speech by strongly contrasting the notion of race and the one of nation, which he considered a significant mistake obstructing the enlightening of those interested in such notions. He argued that "modern nation is, therefore, the historical result of a number of facts that have converged in the same direction"¹⁴ and therefore proved that using the term race to define a nation is wrong by reminding his audience, for instance, that France is Celtic, Iberian and Germanic but still, it remains France regardless. Therefore, there is no such thing as 'pure race' and the blood that runs through the veins of the individuals in a community is far from sufficient to attest that they form a nation.

Some, like Eric Hobsbawm, state that it was nationalism and the state that engendered nations, not the other way around; and to carry out such a desire, nationalists had to invent myths, traditions, suitable history and the like.¹⁵ Another way of putting it would be to state that according to him, nationalism is prior to the concept of nation, a view shared by most modernists. The construction of a nation is thus complex and the notions revolving around it are constructed over time and depend on historical turns of events. "Over time, the mythical elements of figures and narratives become accepted by nations and solidified in popular culture"¹⁶. Those mythical elements are chosen by the people themselves in order to feel a common sense of belonging and are thus represented through popular culture.

B) The birth of a 'Scottish Psyche'

¹⁴ E. Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* ; 1882, p.4

¹⁵ E. Hobsbawm, *Nation and Nationalism* ; 1995, p.55

¹⁶ K.D. Parry, *The formation of heroes and the myth of national identity* ; 2020, p.7

In his book *For Freedom: the last days of William Wallace*, David Ross mentions the notion of the Scottish psyche¹⁷ and emphasises it with the pronoun “we” throughout the whole book. According to him, Scotland’s fate is in a way linked with William Wallace, which is in itself a mythical symbol of Scottish nationalism. This book provides an insight into the life and fight of William Wallace for an independent Scotland, from his capture to his death and legacy afterward, from a very passionate and patriotic perspective. David Ross argues that for most Scots, William Wallace is the figure that binds them together and is a representation of Scottish unity, as well as other Scottish traditions. David Ross’s perspective illustrates Smith’s approach since he uses one of the Scottish symbols of the past to define Scotland as a united nation. Nonetheless, William Wallace was born in the lowlands of Scotland and the battles he won were also in the Lowlands (the battle of Falkirk and the Battle of Stirling for instance). Arguing that William Wallace is a representation of the Scottish unity is quite inept, since at that time, the Highlanders might not have felt devoted to him the same way the Lowlanders did. The Highlanders could thus contest such a view.

The formation of Scotland itself dates back to Viking invasions throughout the 8th century which led the former two peoples of the territory, the Picts and the Gaels to unite with each other and create the Kingdom of Scotland. Indeed, the Kingdom of Scotland was unified in 843 by Kenneth I, also called Kenneth MacAlpin. He was King of Dal Riata, which was a Gaelic Kingdom in the North West of Scotland and the North East of Ireland, from the 5th century until 843. He thus became king of both Scots and Picts. At that time, Scandinavians raids were more and more important in Dal Riata; it is thus presumed that the Gaels and the Picts merged to form a stronger kingdom, ready to face the treat.¹⁸

In a way, the invasions were the very own reason for the formation of Scotland. England officially started invading Scotland four centuries later, from the end of the 13th century under King Edward I, leading to the Scottish Wars of Independence. Edward I was King of England from 1272 to 1307 and was also known as ‘Edward Longshanks’ or ‘The Hammer of Scots’. At that time, England and Scotland were independent from each other but that would not last: the context allowed The Hammer of Scots to invade Scotland. Scottish King Alexander III (King of Scots) died in 1286, after a successful reign of peace ruling over Scotland as well as

¹⁷ D. Ross, *For Freedom – The Last Days of William Wallace* ; 2005, p.2

¹⁸ YouTube video, *The Sea-Kingdom : Dal Riata & the Birth of Scotland*; 2017 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=di6_-pM7-CQ

economic stability. Nevertheless, there was not any suitable heir for the Scottish throne: Alexander III's only heir, Queen Margaret, was just a child when she died. From 1286 to 1292, Scotland was therefore ruled by the Guardians of Scotland, until a suitable ruler would in turn take the throne. The Crown of Scotland was thus vacant and in 1290, thirteen people claimed the throne, of whom John Balliol, Robert Bruce, and John Hastings for instance. Since there was no clear agreement on who would take the lead, the threat of a civil war was quite real. Therefore, the Guardians of Scotland asked English King Edward I to handle the issue. Ambitious as he was, he claimed that he shall thereon be called Lord Paramount in Scotland, gaining more and more power over Scotland and considering it as a colony.

“The claimants to the throne, who had much to lose by antagonizing Edward, generally agreed to acknowledge his superior lordship over Scotland. But a different answer to his claim to lordship was given by the “community of the realm” (the important laymen and churchmen of Scotland as a group), who declined to commit whoever was to be king of Scots on this issue and thus displayed a sophisticated sense of national unity.”¹⁹

At the same time, John Balliol was named king of Scotland by King Edward I in 1292, which later on allowed him to hold Edward I's ambitions back by signing a treaty with France. Indeed, this treaty is called the Auld Alliance and it dates back to 1295, when Scottish King John Balliol signed an agreement with French King Philippe le Bel: this agreement stated that in case England would attack one or another country, both countries would fight England back. From this moment on, Edward I started to invade Scotland as a way to protest against such an alliance, thus creating the First Scottish War of Independence that would last from 1296 to 1328.

William Wallace rose as a true leader against English invasions. As a reminder, William Wallace was born near 1270 in Paisley, Scotland, and was murdered in August 1305. He started to fight against English rule by burning down Lanark, Scotland, which was ruled by an English sheriff, who was killed by Wallace and his men. William Wallace later on fought and won the battle of Stirling Bridge against the English, which is still honored and commemorated today, in particular with the erection of the Wallace Monument in Stirling. William Wallace showed himself a true leader of Scottish troops and was thus considered a hero that would lead Scotland to break free from English expansionism; he was knighted and was elected Guardian of the Kingdom to thank him for his commitment. He was later on captured because of the betrayal

¹⁹ The Wars of Independence, Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/place/Scotland/The-Wars-of-Independence>

of John Menteith, and publicly killed in London in appalling conditions. In a way, one could therefore argue that Scottish nationalism was born from the national will for independence and freedom. It might have been necessary to face the violent invasions throughout the centuries and the survival of Scotland's sovereignty depended on the creation of a common goal and culture, which is in Wallace's case fighting battles against the English. That way, they could defend themselves and preserve their freedom as most countries would defend themselves against the danger of invasion: this process would thus be international in the making of a nation. Besides, Benedict Anderson claims that 'the gage and emblem of the nations' freedom is the sovereign State', reminding his readership that the concept of sovereignty was born during the Enlightenment and the Revolution since at that time nations dreamt of being free²⁰ and of having the ability and authority to govern themselves.

Let us now come back to David Ross's perspective: it can be explained by the fact that William Wallace won the battle of Stirling Bridge on the 11th of September of 1297, which is itself a symbol of victory against English expansionism and oppression during the First War of Independence. David Ross also draws a parallel between English expansionism and violence over Scotland 700 years ago and English political influence and management over Scotland nowadays, depriving it of self-determination and independence. As a reminder, Scotland depends on two parliaments; the British parliament and the Scottish one since a referendum on Devolution was voted in 1979 and allowed the Scottish parliament to open in 1999. There are 129 members in the Scottish Parliament: the dominant is the Scottish National Party, known as SNP with 69 members in Parliament and whose current leader is First Minister Nicola Sturgeon. Then, there is the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party with 31 members, the Scottish Labour Party with 22 members, the Scottish Green Party with 7 members, the Scottish Liberal Democrats with 4 members and a last member who does not have any party affiliation²¹ Both governments handle different topics; the Scottish parliament manages devolved matters such as Education, Health and Social Services, and Environment while the UK government focuses more on Defence and National Security or Foreign Policy for instance. The Scottish Parliament is allowed to handle specific matters, but not all. Regardless of both fields, such a divergence serves the nationalist cause if one chooses to tackle the matter from a patriotic perspective; it indeed gives credit to nationalist arguments in favour of total independence. The

²⁰ B.Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; 1983, p.7

²¹ Current party balance, The Scottish Parliament: <https://www.parliament.scot/msps/current-party-balance>

SNP members thus outnumber the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party's members; still, members of the Conservative Party are in favour in keeping the political union between the nations of the United Kingdom, whereas the SNP members are not. Furthermore, in 2014, a referendum on the question of independence was organized; 55,3% voted against independence. In other words, more than 2 million voted against while 1,6 million voted in favour of independence²² The Scottish Parliament is therefore quite divided on the question of Scottish independence, as are the Scots themselves.

C. Nationalism and patriotism in *Braveheart*: between history and traditions

In *Braveheart*, the viewer can notice that in a way, everything revolves around freedom and sovereignty as indisputable and necessary rights. *Braveheart* is a 1995 movie produced by Australian actor and producer Mel Gibson. It looks back at the life of Scottish knight William Wallace and focuses on his fight for an independent Scotland. Although the movie contains lots of historical inaccuracies that will be tackled in the second part of this study, the movie stays very interesting in terms of symbolic.

Indeed, the plot is about the weakened Scotland of the 13th century, because of English rule and oppression and stages 'Edward Longshanks' within the first minutes of the movie. The movie starts with William Wallace (performed by Mel Gibson) as a child and peasant boy, whose brother and father leave their home to fight the English and never come back, having been killed in the fight. When little Wallace realizes that he lost his family because of the fight against the English, it is staged through the staging that he will fight in turn against the English to avenge his family and to gain freedom from the English rule. This determination is all the more present when his childhood friend, Murron Maclannough, whom he marries later on in the movie, is killed because she resisted English soldiers who tried to rape her. From this moment on, William Wallace seeks revenge and freedom, always remembering his lover thanks to the thistle she gave to him as a child.

²² Scotland Votes No, BBC <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/events/scotland-decides/results>



This thistle is rather symbolic since it was given to him during the funeral of his family when he had not started his fight against the English yet. The viewer can thus construe this gift as a mission given to Wallace: the thistle has indeed been the National Emblem of Scotland for centuries, though it cannot be dated back. Although it might be a legend amongst others, it is said that in the 13th century, Norsemen tried to attack Scottish clansmen by surprise by removing their shoes and thus walking barefoot on Scottish grass. However, the ground was covered in thistles, hurting the walkers' feet who shouted out of pain, thus waking up the Scottish clansmen. The thistle was thus chosen as an emblem and a symbol of protection and is still nowadays noticeable on Scottish houses, monuments, brands' packaging, etc.²³ The fact that Murrin gives a thistle to William as a child probably means that his mission lies in protecting Scotland in his turn. This is emphasised by the close-up shot displaying the exchange and the intensity and emotion in both their looks: it makes the scene even more serious and essential to the purpose of the movie, thus adding a patriotic hint to the plot.



²³ The Thistle – National Emblem of Scotland, Historic-UK <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofScotland/The-Thistle-National-Emblem-of-Scotland/>

There are other symbols and allegories of Scottish traditions in *Braveheart*, starting with the title of the movie: Braveheart is a nickname given to Robert the Bruce, King of Scotland from 1306 to 1329. Before dying, he asked that his heart would be taken to the next crusade so that he could accomplish the duty he dreamt of. Scottish knight James Douglas thus fulfilled what Robert the Bruce asked: he went on a crusade and before one of the battles started, he threw Robert's heart and shouted '*Lead on, brave heart, and I will follow thee!*'. Furthermore, all the Scots wear kilts in the movie, another Scottish tradition, more precisely from the Highlands. Indeed, 'the kilt has come to signify a natural and unmistakable masculinity'²⁴ In the movie, before the battle of Stirling Bridge, William Wallace shouts to his fellow men '*Alba gu bràth*', meaning '*Scotland forever*' in Scottish Gaelic. The language is therefore crucial in terms of emphasizing Scottish traditions as well.

David Ross said "*Braveheart* is a representation of where the Scots' duty lies"²⁵: indeed, *Braveheart* displays significant Scottish traditions around William Wallace, making it a true Scottish movie. Furthermore, according to D.R. Ross, the Scots feel dedicated to the cause of their own country and don't seem afraid to die since William Wallace is a true leader in the movie and states that dying for one's country is more worthy than not fighting at all and therefore being deprived of freedom: such a statement is quite patriotic if not jingoistic, so are many scenes in the movie. This perspective leads us to define both patriotism and jingoism as the Scottish people represented in the movie have the same sense of belonging to a common culture and country and they all fight together no matter what to free their country from English oppression. According to the website *Merriam Webster*, patriotism can be defined as the "love or devotion to one's country". Nevertheless, the movie could also be considered jingoistic, meaning an even stronger sense of patriotism, if not chauvinism. Indeed, the symbolism of dying for freedom is quite 'divine'; in the picture, men put Scotland above their own lives, as if they would find redemption by doing so.

²⁴ The Kilt, The Met Museum

https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/kilt/hd_kilt.htm#:~:text=The%20kilt%20as%20we%20know,in%20the%20late%20sixteenth%20century.

²⁵ D.R. Ross, *For Freedom, The Last Days of William Wallace*: 2005, p.10

II. THE CREATION OF A HERO AND HOW IT APPLIES TO WILLIAM WALLACE

A) What is a hero?

As a reminder, a nation is a spiritual phenomenon that gathers a certain number of historical or romanticized factors to create a common sense of belonging. One of those factors is the creation of a national identity, especially through the creation and commemoration of the same popular figures or heroes. But what exactly is a hero? There are various definitions of the notion. Indeed, *Merriam Webster* defines it in four different ways; first, a hero is “a person admired for achievements and noble qualities” or a person “who shows great courage”. A hero can also be defined as “a mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability” or “an illustrious warrior”. A hero can be “the central figure in an event, period, or movement” as well.

Although some heroes stood against tyranny and inequality in peaceful ways, such as Gandhi in India or Malala in Pakistan, let us focus on the ‘illustrious warrior’ type of hero, that we will also call ‘warfare hero’. Throughout time, different nations have recognized a warfare hero as their national hero; Scotland has chosen William Wallace for instance, a true warrior as he created the Schiltron technique and led troops against the English. France has chosen Joan of Arc who also fought against the English in France. Both heroes died in atrocious conditions: Joan of Arc was accused of heresy and was therefore burnt alive by the English while William Wallace was accused of being a traitor to his King (supposed to be Edward I) and was thus

hanged, disembowelled, beheaded, emasculated and quartered. His quartered body parts were dispatched here and there in both England and Scotland. Such a morbid exhibit was supposed to hush the Scots and their fight for freedom, but it actually led to the opposite: from that moment on, Scots have considered Wallace as a true hero who gave his life for the cause. Indeed, both Joan of Arc (although she is not as acknowledged a hero as Wallace) and William are considered martyrs who would rather die than yielding to the English invader, thus granting them such a timeless heroic status.

Furthermore, these heroic warriors are still commemorated today through art. Indeed, architecture pays a tribute to those heroes through the erection of monuments in their names; Joan of Arc is celebrated through the erection of statues (on the Place du Martroi in Orleans, France, in Rouen, in Paris, etc), and so is William Wallace. The Wallace Monument, erected in the 19th century out of a patriotic sentiment, is 69 meters high and stands on top of the Abbey Craig, a Scottish hill overlooking the place where William Wallace used to spy on the English before the Battle of Stirling Bridge. The location of the Wallace Monument is thus quite strategic and emphasises the importance of both the Battle of Stirling Bridge and the hero behind the victory, granting him a unique grandeur and reminds us of Wallace's status in 1297, since he was appointed Guardian of Scotland after his memorable victory at the battle of Stirling Bridge (along with Andrew Moray, who led the Scottish troops as well). Literature also pays a tribute to Wallace; from James Coleman's tribute in his book entitled *Remembering the Past in Nineteenth-Century Scotland: Commemoration, Nationality and Memory* (2014), through the patriotic book of David Ross *For Freedom: the Last Days of William Wallace* (2005) to the emblematic song written by Robert Burns entitled *Scots Whae Hae* (1784). All these pieces of art convey the impression that the memory of William Wallace shall never die, and that Scotland is forever grateful for his achievements. But as Daniel J. Boorstin stated, "The hero was distinguished by his achievement; the celebrity by his image or trademark. The hero created himself; the celebrity is created by the media. The hero was a big man; the celebrity is a big name."²⁶, thus providing us with a different perspective and leading to wonder about the reliability of such cultural elements.

²⁶ Daniel J. Boorstin, *From hero to celebrity*, 1962, p.61

The fact that a 13th century hero is still commemorated today is thus legitimate but slightly questionable if he is used as a symbol for the fight for Scottish independence. Indeed, the social and political context of Scotland is totally different: the 13th century violence due to English invasion does not exist anymore, or at least differently. Is William Wallace truly a symbol that could be used in the fight for Scottish independence? From Boorstin's perspective, we could wonder if the heroes of the past give insight on contemporary societies; are the commemorations of such heroes only due to the image or trademark used to give credit to a nationalist cause?

B) The hero as a symbol for the construction of national identity

In the previous part, we tried to explain what a hero is and began to give insight into how heroes serve societies. First and foremost, if we are to attest that a hero is a symbol for the construction of a national identity, we should define the concept itself. In this instance, the national identity can be defined as “A common culture, understanding of the past, and aspiration for the future that binds a group of people together and fosters a sense of belonging to a nation”²⁷. The phenomenon can be perceived as the sharing of the same emblem, the same language, the same flag, and the same symbols. In a nutshell, the elements constructing national identity should allow foreign nations and people to recognize it. National identity allows the nation to exist and be acknowledged amongst others.

Let us demonstrate that a hero is a symbol for the nation and thus contributes to constructing a recognizable national identity. Indeed, “heroes provide an insight into the society within which they are constructed”²⁸. The term ‘constructed’ is quite puzzling, because it means that heroes are not just heroes because of their existence. In fact, they are rather an agreement between the individuals of the same community who decided to recognize them as such. A reason to explain such a decision would be to state that they were suitable for the image these individuals wanted to display and suitable for the common spirit they wanted to belong to. From

²⁷ National Identity, IGI Global: International Academic Publisher <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/national-identity/43883>

²⁸ K. D. Parry rephrasing Crepeau's thinking, *The formation of heroes and the Myth of National Identity*, 2021, P.3

that perspective, heroes are only one of the various symbols used to create cohesion and recognition, which is quite strategic.

But why is the hero one of these symbolic factors for the construction of a national identity? How does it serve that purpose? According to R. Crepeau, “Heroes show us who we ought to be, and we make them a hero because we wish to be what he is”²⁹. From the first English invasions at the end of the 13th century to the different ideologies between the English and the Scots, Scottish nationalists have wanted to identify with Wallace because he was brave enough to fight for freedom. Let us not forget that he is considered a martyr who died for his nation: when thinking of Wallace from a Scottish nationalist perspective, one could say “Dulce et decorum est Pro-Patria Mori”, in other words, that “it is sweet and fitting to die for one’s homeland”³⁰. Maybe the nationalists use him as a symbol in order to demonstrate that who they ought to be is individuals living in an independent nation, meaning that as long as Scotland is not be independent, they will keep on fighting for their freedom. Nonetheless, using William Wallace as an example for the contemporary nationalist cause is quite tricky if one looks at the context, but efficient in terms of symbolics. The role he played in Scottish history is undeniable, but should one not see him as the starting point of the fight for freedom rather than a guide to follow in the 21st century?

Besides, one could attest that if the individuals from the same community identify with the same hero because it is a representation of the history they have in common, they play a part in the construction of a national identity. From that perspective, their national identity would be defined by a common history marked by the same hero, whatever type of hero they may be. Indeed, if the sense of belonging is wanted by a large number of individuals from the same community, the individuals thus agree on choosing a particular type of hero to represent their cause. This is what occurred throughout time in Scotland with William Wallace: the Scots wanted to show the English that they would always be brave enough to prevent them from depriving Scotland of its freedom.

Heroes are thus a strong symbol for the construction of a national identity: Scotland seems to have started affirming its national identity when Edward I invaded Scotland and massacred one of its individuals. In a way, these events determined Scotland’s timeless aspiration for

²⁹ R. Crepeau, “Sport, Heroes and Myth”, *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 1981: Vol. 5, No. 1, 23-31

³⁰ Horace, Odes, III.2.13

freedom and sovereignty. As L. Erkinosas stated, “national heroes provide the testing ground for measuring national identities”³¹. Wallace both represents and creates Scottish national identity, but how is he used in popular culture?

C) The creation of a hero through *Braveheart*

As James Mackay would state in his study *William Wallace, Brave Heart*,

“The admiration and gratitude of the generations which immediately followed, intensified by national sentiment, led his countrymen to exaggerate many of Wallace’s deeds and they imbue him with personal qualities belonging rather to the realm of romance than of reality”.³²

This quote is highly reminiscent of the movie *Braveheart* since by knowing more about the Wars of Independence and the achievements of Wallace, one can thus wonder about the gap between who William Wallace was and what he represents for Scottish nationalists. In the movie, Wallace is immediately portrayed as an orphan kid whose dad fought against English rule. He stands as a Highlander, as a poor farmer who fell in love with a girl from his village. He is even displayed as a man of value whose only desire is to avenge his lover after she was killed by English soldiers. Besides, this romantic behaviour is quite appreciated by his wife and later on, after his wife’s death, by French Queen Isabelle de France (performed by French actress Sophie Marceau in the movie), who is married to the future king of England, Edward II. However, these elements are not historically accurate since Wallace was not born in the Highlands but in the Lowlands of Scotland, precisely in Elderslie, near Glasgow. Moreover, he was not an orphan kid nor was he a farmer; instead, he was a member of the lesser nobility in Scotland. His support for Robert the Bruce in the movie is quite loyal and striking but in real-life, he supported his opponent, John Balliol. Moreover, he never knew Isabelle de France since she was born in 1295. She was thus only two years old when William Wallace started the War of Independence: therefore, the love story between Wallace and Isabelle de France in *Braveheart* is pure fiction. First, it contributes to representing him as a coveted hero in

³¹ L.Erkinosas, *National Heroes and National Identities: Scotland, Norway and Lithuania*, 1993: p.21

³² J. Mackay, *William Wallace, Brave Heart*; 1995

Scotland. Then, the union between him as a Scot and Isabelle de France as a French could be interpreted as the union between France and Scotland through the Auld Alliance.

All of these representations are meant to romanticize Wallace and his humane emotions and figure through his fight against English expansionism: indeed, the viewer easily feels empathy for a character that is humane and who struggled a lot throughout his life (from being an orphan to witness his wife's death) because of the English dominance over his country. The blame is thus put on the English who play the role of the villains, which is quite true historically. Nonetheless, some behaviours in the movie are fake and used to make the spectator feel hatred towards the English. For instance, 26 minutes after the beginning of the movie, something dramatic happens. Morrison (performed by Tommy Flanagan), a man from Lanark, gets married to a woman from the village. The scene of the wedding displays joy and a sense of community until which is emphasized by the bagpipes and the Scottish traditional Ceilidh dances. All of a sudden, the English arrive on their horses and claim the Prima Noctae right. The Prima Noctae is the 'right of the first night', meaning that Feudal Lords are allowed to have sexual intercourse with women on their wedding night, before sharing it with their husbands. Morrison thus gets angry after the English, since the law was put into effect by Edward I, and from that moment on in the movie, he will have a revengeful spirit like Wallace's when his wife was murdered thereafter in the movie. This is not historically accurate, neither in Scotland nor elsewhere in Europe, although women are often victims of rape in the context of war. The Prima Noctae thus serves a particular purpose: when witnessing such violence from the English, the spectators prefer being of the Scots' side. Furthermore, after William Wallace's wife (Murrin) is killed by English soldiers, he seeks revenge and is displayed as frightening fighter. At 47:07, William Wallace comes back to the village in which his wife was killed. He proudly rides his horse, unarmed, alone. The eye level shot, the low angle, the slow-motion and the suspenseful music contribute to making him awe-inspiring, powerful. The English broke his peace by killing his wife; he therefore rises from the flames, a subtle metaphor to illustrate that he is craving for revenge. A few minutes after his arrival in the village, he kills an English soldier with a hammer³³, which could ironically be interpreted as the fact that from this moment of the movie, he has become the hammer of English.

³³ Extract from *Braveheart*, 50:09s.



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Furthermore, William Wallace is displayed as a great lover, a great friend, a great warrior, a great son and child and even a great speaker. Before the Battle of Stirling, William Wallace gives a speech to his troops. While doing so he rides his horse and that emphasises his grandeur: he is as elevated as a guide would be. The speech he gives as well as the staging of the footage is significant since it gives us insight on the representation of Wallace as a symbol.

Wallace: Sons of Scotland, I am William Wallace.

Young soldier: William Wallace is 7 feet tall.

Wallace: Yes, I've heard. Kills men by the hundreds, and if he were here he'd consume the English with fireballs from his eyes and bolts of lightning from his arse. I AM William Wallace. And I see a whole army of my countrymen here in defiance of tyranny. You have come to fight as free men, and free men you are. What would you do without freedom? Will you fight?

Veteran soldier: Fight? Against that? No, we will run; and we will live.

Wallace: Aye, fight and you may die. Run and you'll live -- at least a while. And dying in your beds many years from now, would you be willing to trade all the days from this day to that for one chance,

³⁴ Extract from *Braveheart*, 47:07-48:00s

just one chance to come back here and tell our enemies that they may take our lives, but they'll never take our freedom!

Wallace and Soldiers: Alba gu bra! (Scotland forever!)³⁵

First of all, he calls his soldiers' attention by shouting 'sons of Scotland', which is deeply symbolic and inspirational for his fellows. Indeed, he recognizes all his audience as the same group, sharing the same family. Scotland is thus their mother and is a metaphor for their common goal. Furthermore, he stands as a reassuring figure for his men, giving the strength to remain serene. He therefore seems to know how to gather his men's spirit to create a sense of cohesion. Then, the fact that one of the soldiers tells him that the real Wallace is 7 feet tall shows that he doubts that he is actually the real Wallace, which the hero himself emphasizes by reporting the rumours he heard about him. This is quite interesting because it confirms that Wallace is perceived as a myth and that the narratives in his honour are more important than himself as a person. He is thus displayed as a very popular hero, so much that people can no longer recognize him on the battlefield. Interestingly enough, his personality and achievements correspond to a mythical hero, that is to say to a hero who only exists in stories.

In *Braveheart*, Scottish traditions are almost central. From the kilts, the Scottish accent to the blue paint, the movie is full of traditional representations that nevertheless do not belong to William Wallace's time. When he rides his horse before the Battle of Stirling Bridge for instance, his face is painted in blue, which is a subtle illusion to the supposed Picts' body painting traditions. The Picts were the people living in Scotland before the Romans and who used to paint their bodies in order to look more impressive and threatening on the battlefield.³⁶ This tradition nevertheless disappeared before Wallace's time, and thus represents a heritage for the Scots of the 13th century, which is cleverly used and displayed through Wallace's face and his soldiers': he has all the characteristics of a fearless hero, and so do his soldiers.

³⁵ Extract from *Braveheart* and script of William Wallace's speech:

<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/MovieSpeeches/specialengagements/moviespeechbraveheart.html>

³⁶ The Picts, Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pict>



Moreover, the more or less geometrical shape of the painting on William Wallace's face is quite reminiscent of the Flag of Scotland, also called The Saltire or Saint Andrew's Cross.

Braveheart thus focuses more on the personal and sentimental life of William Wallace than on his political achievements as a hero, shaping him as a mythical hero. In the movie, the history of Scotland is wronged and rather than representing William Wallace as a man with political conviction, he is displayed as a passionate man who gave his life for freedom, which in a way was not useful in the following years. As K. D. Parry would state, “narratives of the heroes often become more important than their actions”³⁷, which is the case in *Braveheart*. The historical inaccuracies do not matter if one is to focus only on the symbolic of it. Therefore, *Braveheart* does not relate the biography of William Wallace and the dynamics around it him. It rather recounts the construction of his significance for the Scots, which is quite central for the nationalists.

³⁷ K. D. Parry, *The formation of heroes and the myth of national identity*: 2021, p.7

III. Is Scotland an ‘imagined community’?

A) The tenuous boundary between democratic nationalism and authoritarian nationalism

As the study revealed throughout the previous sections, historical events and narratives of a nation or a national hero are sometimes exaggerated or made up by nationalists to enhance the nationalist sentiment. Through the analysis of the historical inaccuracies in *Braveheart*, we established that the English are portrayed as true villains, thus emphasizing the hate towards them. King Edward I is called ‘Edward Long Shanks’ which was a name used by both the English and the Scots to discredit him because of his physical appearance. Besides, he was surely ruthless and firm in real life; that can be asserted through his invasion in Scotland. Nonetheless, he is very much depicted as a barbaric, despicable and revolting character in the movie; indeed, he is depicted as a sexist character when telling French Princess Isabelle “You may return to your embroidery” (1h53min) after she went on a mission for him in order to negotiate with William Wallace. Then, his son Edward II asks his wife Princess Isabelle:

Edward II: You brought back the money?

Princess Isabelle: No. I gave it to ease the suffering of the children of this war.

King Edward I: That’s what happens when you send a woman.³⁸

Indeed, he makes a sexist comment while laughing, undermining her ability to think politics as she is a woman.

Furthermore, his son Edward II is displayed as being homosexual, something intolerable at that time, although he might truly have been so according to historians³⁹. Indeed, Edward II

³⁸ Extract from *Braveheart* (1:53:00 – 1:53:29)

³⁹ K. McAdam, *The fall of Edward II: Failures in kingship and masculinity, the letter of Manuel Fieschi and the cult of resurrected celebrities*; 2017

seems quite torn between his father's expectations of a promiscuous life and his passionate relationship with his lover, which discredits his political ambitions as well. In addition, the violence lying in the Prima Noctis concept is a strategic representation of the English who seem far less moral than the Scots themselves who are yet said to be considered as 'savages', particularly through their clothes and lifestyles, including Wallace's own. Indeed, there are two scenes quite striking and which display the English as true villains. The first one is 26 minutes after the beginning of the movie, when the English arrive at Morrison's wedding. The medium shot displays the Scots on the left, by foot and unarmed who seem smaller than the English on the right, who ride their horses and who are armed. The English are fewer but they seem to be more powerful than the Scots, they appear to overcome them.



The second scene occurs 38 minutes after the beginning of the movie. The scene opens on William Wallace and his wife, Murrin, who are being intimate. The music is soft and both characters seem to be bound together by the web of gestures and glances they give each other. Nonetheless, 3 minutes later, when Murrin walks away from Wallace to get back to work, three English soldiers who've noticed their intimacy appear and start harassing and chasing Murrin. One of them, known as Smythe (performed by Michael Byrne), starts trying to rape her. The soft music is therefore quickly replaced by a suspenseful and ominous one. She falls on the floor, stuck under Smythe's body and unable to move. Smythe is almost displayed as a devil, pulling out his tongue and insulting her by calling her 'bitch'. He even knocks her when she tries to defend herself from this attack, shaping him as an immoral English character.



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If *Braveheart* is meant to be a nationalist or patriotic movie, it displays a despicable representation of the English; rapists, sexists, immoral beings. It is thus important for the viewer to understand that it is a patriotic interpretation. Indeed, Edward I started the war out of his desire for expansionism. However, Edward I was king and thus represents the English political system at that time. Displaying the English as ruthless, barbaric, immoral beings to denounce Edward I's ambitions at that time is understandable but dangerous. Indeed, Mel Gibson seems to lump together a series of Anglophobic clichés, but one should make a clear difference between the violent and unfair convictions of a political system (represented by Edward I and his soldiers in *Braveheart*) and the impartiality or obedience of the individuals depending on such a system (the English, generally speaking).

One should also make a difference between what Linas Eriksonas calls civic 'democratic nationalism' and 'authoritarian nationalism'⁴¹. Civic democratic nationalism could be interpreted as the sovereignty of one's nation: for instance, it could be seen through the devolution of the Scottish Parliament or through the respect for the Scots who do not feel the need to express a nationalist sentiments⁴². As an individual, nationalism is thus perceived as a choice. Nevertheless, an authoritarian nationalism would consist in showing hatred towards the English in the 21st century for what they did to Scotland in the 13th century, for instance. But it could also occur in more trivialized ways, simply by forcing one's population to agree to the requirements of the nation. On the 24th June of 1856, during the Bannockburn Day (a festival meant to celebrate the victory of the Scots during the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314), the earl of Elgin warned of "how little a nation gains from forcing foreign institutions, foreign laws, and a foreign religion on a reluctant and high-spirited people", alluding to the Scots' brave opposition when the English started to invade Scotland⁴³.

⁴⁰ Extract from *Braveheart* (00:41:11s)

⁴¹ L. Eriksonas, *National heroes and national identity: Scotland, Norway and Lithuania*, 1993, p.19

⁴² C. Marlborough, [Scottish independence: Tony Blair admits devolution 'weaknesses' failed to 'end argument' over nationalism | The Scotsman](#)

⁴³ A. Ross, *Wallace's monument and the Resumption of Scotland*, 2000, p.89

Furthermore, when trying to define what makes someone belong to a nation, the confusion between the term 'race' and the term 'nation' is very dangerous and is a grave mistake according to Ernest Renan⁴⁴. Indeed, he tries to define nations by providing historical as well as sociological facts. According to him, historians have tried to show that race is not something permanent. By definition, a race is subject to changes when migratory movements lead to racial mixing. Defining one's belonging to a nation by their race (in other words their origin) is false, therefore race should not be worthy of any argument in politics. Of course, the Scottish National Party do not use Anglophobia to prove their nationalist cause.

As Benedict Anderson would state, it is considerably complex to precisely define the concept of a nation without being torn between rationality and fantasy. In his book *Imagined Communities*, he states that nations rely upon three paradoxes. First, he states that historians try to analyse nationalism with an 'objective modernity of nations', while nationalists will do it by using a 'subjective antiquity of nations', therefore making the definition of a nation all the way more complex and divergent depending on the perspective. Then, he states that nowadays, everyone has a nationality. It is internationally admitted as a 'sociocultural concept' that everyone belongs to a nation. Finally, he states that there is still a clear distinction between the 'power of nationalisms' and their 'philosophical poverty and even incoherence', as a way to undermine some of the nationalists' arguments: Benedict Anderson means that although nationalism influences the individuals of the nation, their substance is often weak, if not wrongly thought. One can thus wonder about the complexity of trying to precisely define the concept of nation; would not it be a myth that individuals from the same community create and in time, turn to their advantage?

B) Creating the myth

"Nationalism is not the awakening of the nation to self-consciousness; it invents nations where they do not exist."⁴⁵ Indeed, the study already proved that nationalism was born before nations since it is almost the starting point of the process of creating a nation. Benedict Anderson defines nationalism and gives clues on its emergence in his publication *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983). Through this book,

⁴⁴ E. Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*, 1882, p.1

⁴⁵ E. Gellner, *Nation and nationalism*, 1964, p.169

Benedict Anderson gives the reader an insight into the creation of nation and nationalism. He reminds us that nationalism is a set of artefacts and in order “to understand them properly we need to consider carefully how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meanings have changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy”⁴⁶. The meaning of this statement confirms Gellner’s statement: these artefacts and historical factors are adaptable and usable to illustrate one’s political ideology. This is what we showed through the romanticization of William Wallace in *Braveheart*. Benedict Anderson firmly attests that nations are imagined communities because according to him, “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”⁴⁷. Such a statement is significant and leads us to consider Ernest Renan’s reflection on the construction of nations through oblivion. According to him, “Forgetting, I would even say historical error, is an essential factor in the creation of a nation and it is for this reason that the progress of historical studies often poses a threat to nationality.”⁴⁸. Digging into the past at the very origin of political formations calls them into question. Nonetheless, he also argues that “Unity is always brutally established”. Therefore, “the essence of a nation is that all of its members have a great deal in common and also that they have forgotten many things”; by doing so, members of the same community consciously choose to agree on what events are to be used in the political field and which are not, proving that nations are indeed imagined communities and that their creation relies upon a consensus between different members of a community.

Furthermore, one could consider that the process of national construction relies on education and language, since by learning the same things through the same language, the individuals in a community can identify and become closer to each other, thus creating homogenization and cohesion. First, one could think that Scottish pupils learn a lot about Scottish history. However, Andrew Ross states that:

“These are all sites of romantic history [(Loch Lomond, Stirling Castle, etc)], much prized by the modern tourist industry, yet they had little hold over me as a child. In large part, this had something to do with the strange death of Scottish history itself. For one thing, I was never taught any of it at school. In the 1960s and 1970s, the history that was deemed most important for us to know and learn was the reformist growth of the British state in the 19th century”⁴⁹

⁴⁶ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 1983, p.4

⁴⁷ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 1983, p.6

⁴⁸ E. Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*, 1882, p.3

⁴⁹ A. Ross, *Wallace's monument and the resumption of Scotland*, 2004, p.86

It thus shows the reader that learning about Scottish history was not a priority at that time. Margaret Thatcher was the British Prime Minister at that time, and the devolution of the Scottish Parliament had not occurred yet. One can realize that the history you hear of is the history that suits best a particular period. For instance, teaching the history of the growth of the British state in the 19th century served well Margaret Thatcher's intentions of a solid and unified United Kingdom. From this perspective, history then seems to be first and foremost a consensus, whose exposure is malleable according to what time one lives in. Then, language spoken in the same community is often used by the nationalists in order to create a sense of common belonging as well. In Scotland, many people used to speak Gaelic, which needs to be put in perspective. Indeed, some are very critical of this belief, such as Andrew Ross who states that "This fake Gaelicism, entirely foreign to most Scots, brought on a plague of tartan kitsch for which there has existed no known antidote until recent times." ⁵⁰. His statement is endorsed by Scotland's Census; a study was carried out in 2011 to establish the percentage of languages in Scotland. The report is clear, there are almost 5.5 million inhabitants in Scotland, of whom 5.1 million aged 3 and over can speak English versus 58.000 who speak Gaelic. ⁵¹ Furthermore, Wilson McLeod states that:

At the same time, the link between the Gaelic language and Scottish nationalism — in the conventional sense of the term in Scottish parlance, i.e. support for the establishment of a Scottish state independent of the existing United Kingdom — is a weak one. Support for Scottish independence by no means signals a commitment to Gaelic, and speaking Gaelic by no means signals support for Scottish independence." ⁵²

Therefore, there are not many people who can speak Gaelic, making the language a manipulative tool that can hardly be credible when justifying of Scottish nationalism. Ernest Renan in his speech *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (1882) confirms this perspective by stating that although people speak different languages, they can have the same feelings and thoughts since they remain humans in the first place. Such a view is quite interesting since it proves that language cannot be considered a political tool, since according to him "The political importance that one attaches to languages comes from the fact that they are regarded as indications of race"⁵³.

⁵⁰ A. Ross, *Wallace's Monument and the Resumption of Scotland*, 2004, p.92

⁵¹ Languages, Scotland Census <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results/at-a-glance/languages/#:~:text=Just%20over%2057%2C000%20people%20said,the%20population%20could%20speak%20Gaelic>

⁵² W. McLeod, *Gaelic in contemporary Scotland: contradictions, challenges and strategies* ; 2006, p.6

⁵³ E. Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, 1882, p.8

Conclusion

Despite the two Wars of Independence and William Wallace's resilient spirit which was passed on through generations (be it Robert Bruce in the 13th century or the current Scottish National Party as well as the Scots themselves), Scotland is still part the United Kingdom since the Act of Union in 1707. Nonetheless, claims for Scottish independence are all the way more important nowadays, in the post-Brexit context with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson denying Scotland another referendum on independence. Every time Scotland tries to become independent, there seems to be serious challenges that prevent it from doing so, thus emphasizing the Scottish nationalist sentiment.

Using William Wallace as an emblem for the nationalist cause is quite strong since it represents the very origin of the fight itself; it links the past to the present and proves that although the context is not the same, the desire for freedom is still very much shared by the Scots. Overall, William Wallace lost his fight against English expansionism but is the spearhead of such resilience in the Scottish spirit. He won the privilege to be kept in memory and be paid a significant tribute through the erection of monuments in his honor but mostly through *Braveheart*. It appears that Mel Gibson's goal was not to recount the history of William Wallace and thus be a realistic movie, but rather to revive a nationalist sentiment and to be a patriotic movie, which is quite successful.

“All profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristics amnesias. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring

narratives. [...] Awareness of being embedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications of continuity, yet of ‘forgetting’ the experience of this continuity engenders the need for a narrative of ‘identity’”⁵⁴

Partie didactique

Le sujet du nationalisme écossais et de la lutte pour l’indépendance écossaise est ambitieux voire hors propos pour un niveau collège. Ayant deux classes de 6eme à charge, je n’ai pas pu et ne pourrai pas réaliser cette séquence avec mes élèves. Elle est donc hypothétique, ou du moins réalisable pour plus tard si l’occasion se présente. Ce sujet est en effet plus adapté à un niveau lycée, il sera donc destiné à une classe de cycle terminal.

Pour éviter des concepts trop compliqués à ce stade de la scolarité, la séquence ne traitera pas tout à fait du nationalisme écossais, ou de la lutte pour l’indépendance écossaise ni de la représentation héroïque de William Wallace, du moins pas dans le détail. En effet, la séquence portera sur l’identité écossaise (Scottish Identity); elle traitera donc de ces trois concepts à la fois, avec un accent sur les traditions écossaises.

Ancrage de la séquence dans les programme:

Titre	Scottish Identity
Problématique	How do Scottish symbols and traditions shape Scottish identity?
Niveau visé	La séquence s’adressera à des élèves issus de cycle terminal, plus précisément à une classe de première.

⁵⁴ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 1983, p.204-206

	<p>Le niveau du CERCL pour une classe de première est le niveau B2. La séquence se concentrera principalement sur l'expression orale en continu. Le CERCL stipule donc que l'élève doit être capable de faire une description détaillée, un exposé méthodique d'une gamme étendue de sujets.</p>
<p>Axe</p>	<p><u>Thème</u>: Gestes fondateurs et mondes en mouvement. <u>Axe</u> : Territoire et mémoire. <u>Justification</u> : Le bulletin officiel de Janvier 2019 justifie l'axe Territoire et mémoire en attestant que :</p> <p>« La mémoire d'un individu ou d'un peuple trouve son reflet dans le patrimoine ; héritage dont l'évolution dans le temps témoigne de la relation que chaque peuple entretient avec son passé et, par extension, la manière dont il se projette dans l'avenir. À travers la notion d'héritage, les histoires individuelles se confondent avec le destin collectif. »⁵⁵</p> <p>Le choix de cet axe est donc approprié lorsqu'on évoque la question de l'identité écossaise ; les écossais nationalistes partagent l'idée qu'ils ont en commun le même héritage et qu'ils doivent le léguer aux futures générations, notamment à travers la promotion de leur culture.</p>
<p>Prérequis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Être au fait du Brexit et du premier ministre britannique, Boris Johnson. - Être au fait de la géographie écossaise (dans les grandes lignes).
<p>Tâche finale</p>	<p><u>Intitulé</u>: “ <i>You’re a member of the Saltire Society (a society charged with the promotion of Scottish culture). You were asked to give a speech on Saint Andrew’s Day (Scottish National Day) on the 30th of November. In your speech, you will have to promote Scottish identity for the Saltire Society’s website. Make a video to illustrate your speech with key symbols and characters contributing to the construction of Scottish identity. Justify why it is important to promote them in the 21st century;</i>”</p> <p><u>Déroulé</u> :</p>

⁵⁵ <https://eduscol.education.fr/document/24679/download>

	<p>Les élèves doivent réaliser une vidéo de 2 à 3 minutes de manière individuelle.</p> <p>Il s'agit d'une tâche en expression orale en continu.</p> <p>Ils doivent donc mettre en avant l'identité écossaise à travers leur discours mais aussi à travers les photos de symboles (le chardon, le drapeau écossais), de monuments nationaux (Wallace Monument, Palace of Holyrood) ou encore de personnages issus de la culture ou de l'histoire écossaise (William Wallace, Robert Bruce).</p> <p><u>Période de l'année :</u></p> <p>La séquence se déroulerait idéalement à la fin du mois de novembre, afin que les élèves puissent s'intéresser à l'actualité liée à la St Andrew. Cela pourra par conséquent être plus immersif pour eux.</p> <p><u>Justification :</u></p> <p>La réalisation de la tâche finale en vidéo est plus intéressante qu'un passage de tous les élèves en classe, ce qui rend la séance (voire deux séances) très chronophages pour le professeur et pour les élèves.</p> <p>De plus, l'outil vidéo permet de soulager les élèves du poids du groupe de classe. Les élèves développent alors plus facilement leurs compétences oratoires et répondent mieux aux attendus phonologiques de la séquence.</p> <p>Pour finir, la tâche finale s'inscrit dans une approche actionnelle puisqu'elle lie un contexte pédagogique à un événement et à une association qui existent réellement en Ecosse. En outre, elle s'inscrit dans un contexte politique actuel : les élèves doivent justifier la promotion de la culture écossaise, notamment en disant que le débat sur l'indépendance écossaise est très actuel et qu'il mène donc à un besoin de la mettre en avant.</p>
<p>Tâche intermédiaire</p>	<p><u>Intitulé:</u> <i>"In groups of two, present a key symbol from Scottish identity"</i></p> <p><u>Déroulé :</u></p> <p>Les élèves doivent réaliser une présentation d'une minute à 1 minute 30 maximum en groupe de 2.</p> <p>Il s'agit d'une tâche en expression orale en continu.</p>

	<p>Ils doivent faire des recherches et présenter un symbole écossais en donnant son origine, son influence sur la société écossaise, sa représentation dans la culture populaire (si elle existe), etc.</p> <p>La présentation sera illustrée à l'aide d'un diaporama que les élèves auront réalisé.</p>
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Objectifs de la séquence:

Linguistiques	Grammaticaux	Lexicaux	Phonologiques
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Le <u>present perfect</u>: il sera essentiel pour faire le lien entre le passé et le présent de l'Ecosse. - Proposition infinitive en WANT : Nicola Sturgeon wants Scotland to become independent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>L'identité nationale</u>: <i>identity, community, patriotic, proud, recognizable, to identify with, etc.</i> - <u>La royauté</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Le <u>DO emphatique</u> afin d'amplifier un sentiment positif à l'égard de l'Ecosse.
Culturels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Les symboles écossais. - Les guerres d'indépendance en Ecosse. - Les commémorations nationales (St Andrew's Day, monuments nationaux). - Les héros des Highlands dans la culture populaire. - Quelques repérages géographiques en Ecosse. 		
Citoyens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Le concept d'identité nationale. 		

	- La politique britannique.
Sociolinguistiques	- L'accent écossais : "Scottish Standard Accent".
Méthodologiques	- Créer une frise chronologique. - Faire une vidéo de promotion pour les valeurs et traditions écossaises.

La séquence se déroulera en 6 étapes + le rendu de la tâche finale par voie numérique ou par clé USB.

Séance 1 : Découverte de la séquence

1^e étape : Diffusion d'une vidéo de promotion sur l'Ecosse⁵⁶

2^e étape : Brainstorming sur l'Ecosse en groupe de 4.

Consigne: What is Scotland famous for?

Productions attendues: les élèves disposent de l'outil numérique Kahoot.

2^e étape : Compréhension écrite sur les symboles écossais.⁵⁷

Cette activité aura lieu après la phase d'anticipation/ de brainstorming. Pour ce faire, les élèves seront répartis dans différents groupes ; l'activité se déroulera en îlot de 4 élèves. Chaque îlot disposera d'un texte. Les élèves le plus en difficulté intégreront le dernier îlot. Le document étant plus court, il sera plus abordable et plus facilement restituable lors du retour en classe entière.

1. Compréhension globale :

Consigne : Read the document and sum up what it is about.

Production attendue - Exemple du document 1 (1^{er} îlot) : The document is a text from the website VisitScotland.com. It deals with the thistle, a national symbol.

⁵⁶ Scotland. A Spirit of its Own, 2016 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCjqrKu5IY>

⁵⁷ Uniquely Scottish, <https://www.visitscotland.com/about/uniquely-scottish/>

Quand tous les élèves ont répondu à la question de compréhension globale, se déroule la mise en commun en classe entière. Chaque îlot dispose d'un porte-parole, qui restitue à l'ensemble de la classe le sujet de son texte.

2. **Compréhension détaillée :**

Consigne 1: Read the document and pick out information on the origin of the thistle/ tartan/ St Andrew's cross / bagpipes. Les élèves se concentrent uniquement sur le symbole qui leur a été attribué.

Production attendue - Exemple du document 1 (1^{er} îlot) : *The symbol origin of the thistle is due to a legend.*

Consigne 2 : Read the document and explain what the symbol is important for Scotland.

Production attendue - Exemple du document 1 (1^{er} îlot) : *The thistle is an important symbol for Scotland because it represents of the highest honours of the country. Besides, it is often used in garden, monuments, sports teams, etc.*

3. **Retour en classe entière et trace écrite** : Le porte-parole de chaque groupe répond aux deux questions de compréhension détaillée.

Production attendue – trace écrite : Scotland is a country proud of its traditions. It has various symbols, of which four are important.

→ Les 4 symboles seront donc décrits par les élèves concernés.

4. **Devoirs** : Webquest ! Find information on William Wallace / Black Agnes / Robert Bruce. Chaque élève se verra attribuer un personnage historique sur lequel faire des recherches informatiques.

1^{er} îlot : Compréhension écrite sur le chardon.

THISTLE



1. Mysterious origins:

A legend has it a sleeping party of Scots warriors were saved from ambush by an invading Norse army when one of the enemies trod on the spiky plant.

His anguished cry roused the slumbering warriors who duly vanquished the invader and adopted the thistle as their national symbol.

2. A badge of honour:

The thistle has been an important symbol of Scottish heraldry for over 500 years. It also represents one of the highest honours the country can give an individual.



3. It's everywhere:

Thistles aren't just found in gardens, parks and in the countryside. Keep your eyes peeled and you will see the insignia emblem cropping up all over Scotland, from the strip of the international rugby team and football clubs, to local businesses and major organisations and corporations, to the uniforms of police officers.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/about/uniquely-scottish/thistle/>

2^e filot : Compréhension écrite sur le tartan.



TARTAN AND KILTS

1. Tartan :

- It's a fabric made up of horizontal and vertical stripes in different colours, on a coloured background.
- The interwoven stripes are known as a sett.
- It originated in the Highlands.
- The first mention of tartan in Scotland was in 1538.
- Originally, clanspeople used local plants, mosses and berries to dye the wool.



2. Kilts:

A kilt is a piece of tartan, worn around the waist. Today, kilts are often worn:

- At weddings, by the wedding party and guests.
- At Highland games, by athletes and spectators.
- At ceilidhs (traditional dances), by dancers and the band.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/about/uniquely-scottish/kilts-tartan/>

3^e îlot : Compréhension écrite sur le drapeau écossais.

SALTIRE AND ST. ANDREW



1. The Saltire :

This is the Saltire - a blue flag with a white diagonal cross.

- It's believed to be the oldest flag in Europe.
- The flag uses an azure background, known as Pantone 300.
- Alongside the royal flag, the Lion Rampant, the Saltire can be seen flying in the crowds of international sporting events, on churches and on national and local government buildings.



2. St. Andrew:

- St Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, and has been for over 1,000 years.
- We think he was a fisherman and one of Jesus' first Apostles.
- He was sentenced to death by crucifixion by the Romans in Greece, but asked to be crucified on a diagonal cross as he felt he wasn't worthy to die on the same shape of cross as Jesus.
- This diagonal cross is now used on the Scottish flag - the Saltire.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/about/uniquely-scottish/st-andrews-the-saltire/>

4^e îlot : Compréhension écrite sur la cornemuse.



BAGPIPES

As you travel around Scotland, iconic sounds of the bagpipes will fill the air, and it's likely you'll hear a parade of pipers before you see them. You'll come across pipers on high streets entertaining passers-by, in parades, at Highland games and during festivities throughout the year in Scotland, as well as at gigs and music festivals.

<https://www.visitscotland.com/about/uniquely-scottish/bagpipes-traditional-music-ceilidhs/>

Séance 2 : Découverte du Highland Hero

1^e étape- Expression Orale en Interaction : Mise en commun des devoirs (webquest sur Black Agnes, William Wallace et Robert the Bruce). Les élèves se rassemblent par groupe de trois : les trois membres du groupe doivent avoir fait des recherches internet sur un personnage différent.

2^e étape – Expression Orale en Continu : Anticipation. Projection de trois images: James Fraser dans *Outlander*, William Wallace (interprété par Mel Gibson) dans *Braveheart* et une peinture de Black Agnes.

Consigne: Observe the characters and compare!

Production attendue: *There are three characters from Scottish history. They all look proud. They seem to be Scottish warriors, etc.*



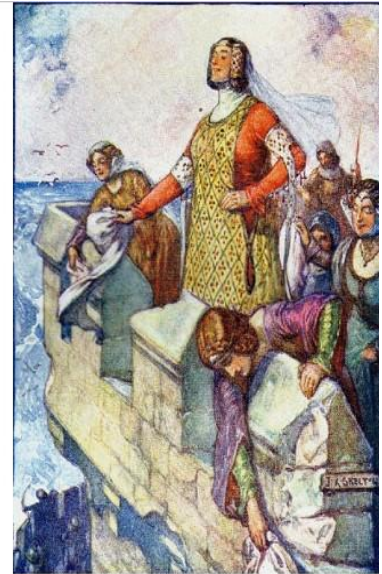
James Fraser
in *Outlander*

Source: Hit The Road 1^{re} (2022)



William Wallace
in *Braveheart*

Source: Film poster (1995)



Black Agnes

Source: Scotland's Story, H.E Marshall (1906)

3^e étape – Compréhension écrite ⁵⁸

Picture in your mind's eye the Scottish Highlands: the gorgeous lochs, the dramatic landscapes... the fearsome, swoon-worthy¹, kilted men. From 19th century popular fiction to Hollywood blockbusters, audiences of the world have been enraptured² by the rugged image of the highlander. But what are the true origins of this legendary man? The birth of this hero can be traced back to 1296, when English forces invaded Scotland and sparked³ the Wars of Scottish Independence. The conflict went on until the early 14th century with neither side able to claim decisive victory. From this dark and bloody time, however, several brave Scots became renown for their bravery. One of the most famous Scots of that period was the patriotic knight⁴ William Wallace, who defeated the English army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge and later became the inspiration for the 1995 film *Braveheart*. Perhaps less famous but certainly no less important was 'Black Agnes', the Countess of Dunbar who successfully repelled English troops when they tried to seize Dunbar Castle. Finally in 1357, Scotland once again emerged as a sovereign nation, thanks to the heroic efforts of Robert the Bruce at the Battle of Bannockburn. Robert was crowned king, and the Scots thus gained a reputation for being ferocious warriors. Unfortunately, by the 19th century, Scotland was once more a subject nation to England, and many of its cultural traditions were on the brink of extinction — until Sir Walter Scott stepped onto the scene. Born in Edinburgh, Scott was a respected historian and writer as well as a fierce⁵ advocate of Scottish culture. In 1814, he penned a historical romance titled *Waverley*, which became a huge success. *Waverley* and Scott's subsequent novels, such as *Rob Roy* and *Ivanhoe*, remain important works in the canon of Scottish literature, and did much to establish the legend of the fearsome, dashing highlander that continues to capture our imagination to this day.

1 ici, beau à défailir • 2 émerveiller • 3 start • 4 chevalier • 5 ferocious
Deborah Chu, *The Myth and Romance of the Highlander*, 2019.

1. Compréhension globale :

Consigne : Read the document and sum up what it is about.

Production attendue: The document is an extract from *The Myth and Romance of the Highlander*, which was written by Deborah Chu in 2019. It deals with the birth of Highland heroes and their representation in popular culture. It also mentions Scotland's past with England, which is quite tumultuous.

⁵⁸ Manuel Hit The Road 1^{re}, Edition 2022, p.152

→ Quand tous les élèves ont répondu à la question de compréhension globale, se déroule la mise en commun en classe entière.

2. Compréhension détaillée :

Consigne 1: Read the document and pick out information on people. Explain why they are significant for Scotland.

Production attendue: *The text mentions three characters from history ; Scottish knight William Wallace, Queen Black Agnes and Scottish King Robert the Bruce. The representation of Highland heroes dates back to 1295. William Wallace/ Black Agnes/ Robert Bruce has been considered a hero because...*

→ Cette étape permettra aux élèves de compléter la compréhension écrite par les connaissances qu'ils auront acquis à travers la webquest et la mise en commun en classe.

→ Elle permettra aussi de rebrasser le present perfect, qui est l'objectif grammatical de la séquence.

Consigne 2 : Read from 1.6 to 1.11. Pick out information on the event and explain the outcome of it.

Production attendue: *The Highland hero was born in 1295, during the Scottish Wars of Independence. They fought against the English but there was no decisive victory.*

→ Cette deuxième consigne permet d'anticiper la séance 4.

3. Retour en classe entière et trace écrite : La trace écrite est issue des repérages et productions orales des élèves

Séance 3: Tâche intermédiaire – Expression orale en continu

Les élèves passent au tableau par groupe de 2 pour présenter un symbole écossais.

Séance 4: Scottish Wars of Independence – Compréhension orale

Cette séance se déroule par groupe de 3, chaque élève dispose d'une tablette. Elle consiste en une compréhension orale de la vidéo 'Scotland History in 5 minutes'⁵⁹ puis d'une restitution en groupe à l'aide d'une frise chronologique qui retrace les grands points de l'histoire écossaise. Cependant, une durée de 5 minutes est beaucoup trop longue pour ce genre d'activité. La vidéo sera donc coupée en trois parties :

- **Partie 1** : de 2,29 à 3,23 minutes. Cette partie se concentre uniquement sur l'origine des guerres d'indépendance écossaise et du contexte politique du pays avant que les conflits éclatent.
- **Partie 2** : de 3,23 à 4,06 minutes. Cette partie se concentre surtout sur la continuité de la guerre d'indépendance notamment à travers le combat du roi Robert Bruce, etc.
- **Partie 3** : de 4,50 à 5,35. Cette partie se focalise sur l'urbanisation et l'industrialisation de l'Ecosse à partir du 18^e siècle et de la montée du nationalisme.

1^e étape- Compréhension orale :

Chaque élève se verra donc attribuer une partie. Pour que chacun.e puisse accéder à la vidéo qui leur a été assignée, ils disposeront d'un QR code qui les enverra directement sur le lien de la vidéo. La partie 3 traitant d'une époque plus contemporaine et moins compliquée due au peu de personnages et de dates mentionnés, on pourra la proposer à l'élève le plus en difficulté du groupe.

Les trois élèves disposent de la même consigne:

Consigne: Listen and watch the video. Identify as much information as possible on the dates, characters and events.

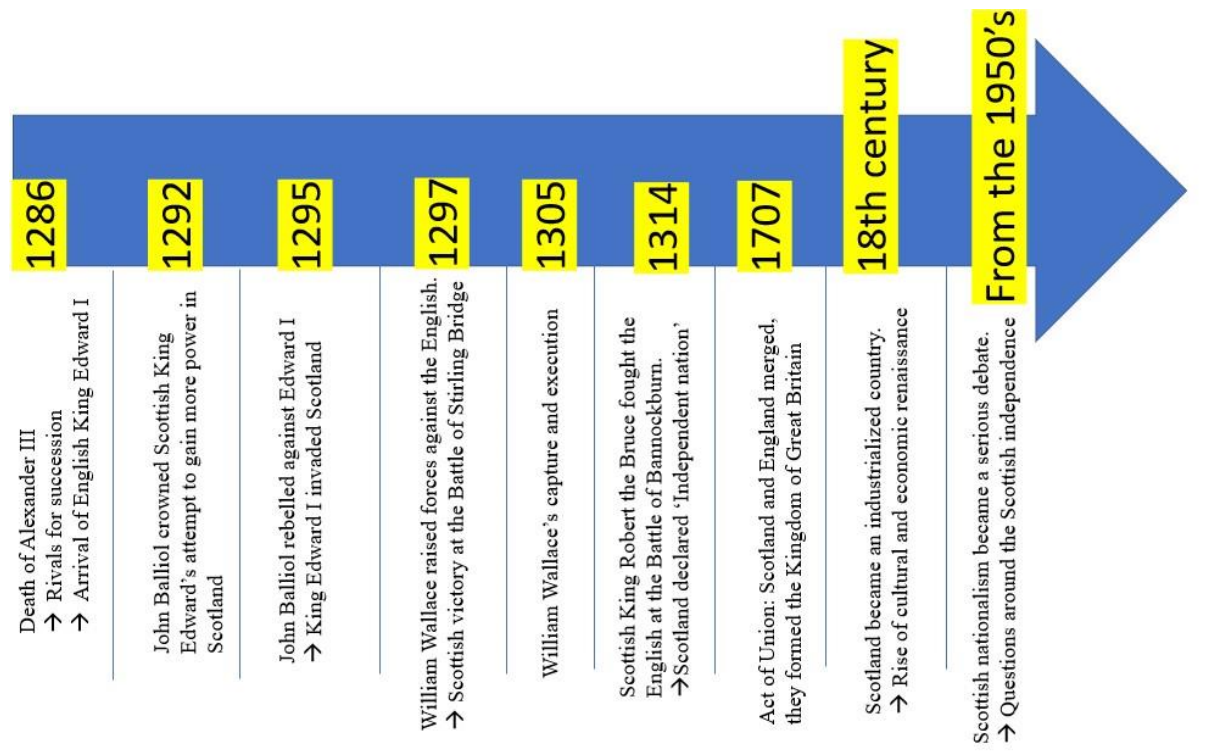
➔ A ce stade, les apprenants écoutent leur document chacun de leur côté. L'utilisation de tablettes permet non seulement de mettre les sous-titres, mais surtout de revenir en arrière pour saisir un repérage qu'ils leur échapperaient. De plus, ils peuvent écouter le document autant de fois qu'ils le souhaitent, ce qui permet une prise de notes assurément plus complète.

⁵⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wd0Vzk6OBQk>

2^e étape- Expression Orale en Interaction et Frise Chronologique:

➔ Pour cette étape, les apprenant.es font un retour en groupe qui leur permettra de résumer leurs parties respectives. Cette étape leur permettra de créer ensemble une frise chronologique

Production attendue :



Devoirs: *Webquest* : conduct a research on the referendum for Scottish independence in 2014.

Séance 5: Independence in the 21st century

1^e étape- Expression Orale en Continu : Projection d'un meme issu de twitter ⁶⁰. Cette étape servira de feedback quant aux devoirs donnés mais également d'anticipation à la deuxième étape de la séance.

⁶⁰ <https://twitter.com/timthetman/status/512961771007926272>



Consigne : Look at the picture and react!

Production attendue: The document is a meme. The picture is from the movie Braveheart. William Wallace (performed by Mel Gibson in the movie) has just found out about the outcome of the Referendum on Scottish Independence in 2014. He states that Scotland has voted against its own freedom. This is a hidden political message to denounce the outcome of the vote.

- ➔ La production attendue est certes ambitieuse mais elle part du principe que les élèves ont effectué la webquest sur le référendum de 2014, ils auront donc des connaissances nécessaires préalablement à l'exploitation de ce document iconographique.
- ➔ Les productions orales des élèves serviront de petite trace écrite avant de commencer la compréhension orale.

2^e étape- Compréhension Orale : Vidéo du discours de la première ministre écossaise.⁶¹



⁶¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/video/2020/jan/31/nicola-sturgeon-independence-best-for-scotland-post-brexit-video?fbclid=IwAR20Hf620tiypAY4WMMXDuc-uUVfQPEOgkDF04NEdwBto7-nNiS0pj6fETY>

1. Compréhension globale :

Consigne : Listen to the document and create a wordcloud.

Production attendue: Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland, Independence, Post-Brexit, etc.

- ➔ Les élèves notent uniquement des mots sur une feuille, qu'ils compareront à ceux d'un camarade. A ce stade, il ne s'agit que de simples repérages sur le contexte (qui, quoi, quand, où).
- ➔ Restitution en classe entière et création d'un wordcloud au tableau.

2. Compréhension détaillée :

Consigne 1: Listen to the document and identify Nicola Sturgeon's ambition for the future of Scotland.

Production attendue: Nicola Sturgeon wants Scotland to be an independent country. She wants Scotland to have its own parliament and government.

Consigne 2: Listen to the document and explain the UK government's position on such an ambition.

3. Retour en classe entière et trace écrite à partir des productions des élèves.

3^e étape- Expression Orale en Continu :

Consigne 1: Listen to the document and choose 15 seconds of Nicola Sturgeon's speech. You will have to reproduce it to your classmate; sound as convincing and Scottish as possible!

Cette étape est rapide et se déroule en fin de séance. Les élèves sont répartis par groupe de 2 et disposent d'un QR code qui les emmène sur le lien de la vidéo du discours de Nicola Sturgeon.

Ils peuvent donc l'écouter en autonomie et autant de fois qu'ils le souhaitent afin de respecter au mieux la consigne donnée.

Séance 6: Tâche finale

Un tutoriel pour créer une vidéo avec le logiciel Adobe Spark aura été donné en amont. ⁶²

Barème de la tâche finale :

	A2	B1	B2
Réalisation de la tâche	<p>Production orale trop courte.</p> <p>Contenu hors-propos.</p> <p>La présentation orale n'est pas illustrée à l'aide d'images.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">2pnts</p>	<p>Production d'une longueur convenable. Présentation qui tente d'utiliser les connaissances de la séquence mais qui pourrait être plus riche.</p> <p>Des éléments visuels viennent illustrer le propos.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">5pnts</p>	<p>Production d'une longueur satisfaisante. Présentation qui contient de nombreux éléments culturels de la séquence et qui également au-delà.</p> <p>Le discours oral est illustré à l'aide d'une vidéo originale et pertinente.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">8pnts</p>
Prononciation	<p>Accent français très prononcé, le propos n'est pas intelligible.</p> <p>Pas ou peu d'effort pour convaincre.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1pnt</p>	<p>Des efforts pour tenter de parler un anglais authentique, prononciation correcte qui tend vers l'authenticité malgré quelques erreurs au niveau de l'intonation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">4pnts</p>	<p>Prononciation quasiment authentique, avec un effort pour imiter l'accent écossais.</p> <p>L'intonation est très convaincante.</p> <p>Le discours oral est marqué de pauses entre chaque argument.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">6pnts</p>
Recevabilité linguistique	<p>Langue très simple, les points linguistiques de la séquence ne sont pas mobilisés et de nombreux barbarismes subsistent.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1pnt</p>	<p>Syntaxe correcte. Les phrases sont compréhensibles et les points linguistiques de la séquence sont globalement réutilisés.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">3,5 pnts</p>	<p>Pas ou peu d'erreurs, les points linguistiques de la séquence sont réutilisés avec soin. Le discours est bien articulé et très intelligible !</p> <p style="text-align: right;">6pnts</p>

⁶² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RtJp3w5yJgE>

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