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SCOTLAND'S DIASPORA STRATEGY: THE VIEW FROM THE CURRENT AMERICAN DIASPORA

by:

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Abstract

Since devolution in 1999 and the establishment of a Scottish Government able to engage directly with the Scottish diaspora, a distinct diaspora strategy has been developed. It has tended to have an overly economic focus, in contrast with other countries like Ireland, which have adopted a more flexible approach, embracing cultural and heritage groups within the 'ancestral diaspora'. Research within Scottish diaspora organisations suggests that Scotland would benefit from a strategy which acknowledged in a more direct way the contribution which heritage groups can make to the homeland, for example through conservation projects, ancestral tourism or simply by being ambassadors for the country. It would also benefit from being less centrally managed, thereby giving diaspora organisations a more participative role.

Keywords

Diaspora policy, Scottish Government, ancestral tourism, hyphenated identity

Introduction: The Scottish Diaspora

The term 'diaspora' was associated originally with forced resettlement, for example of the Jews from Palestine, or Africans taken into slavery. Key to understanding the nature of these diasporas were firstly the forcible banishment of these groups from their homelands and, secondly, the continuing importance which the homelands held for them (Brubaker 2005). But in recent years, the term 'diaspora' has been used more loosely to cover a range of emigrant groups, many of whom have been largely assimilated into their host societies. The term itself has therefore become a social construct in which a diaspora reality is based on a range of factors, including a sense of national or group identity, feelings of belonging, mythology, history, memory and dreams (Shuval 2000).

Different types of diasporas have been identified by writers such as Safran (1991) and Cohen (1996) and, in seeking to summarise the thinking on diasporas, Butler (2001) has pointed out that most scholars agree on three basic features. The first is that, after dispersal, there should be a minimum of two destinations; this reflects the original meaning of the term as a 'scattering'. A second feature is that there must be some form of relationship to a homeland, be it real or imagined. Thirdly, there must be a self-awareness of the group's identity as a diaspora community, with links to each other as well as the homeland. This can act as a form of boundary maintenance vis-à-vis the host society or other diaspora groups (Brubaker 2005).

As for migrants themselves, Radhakrishnan (2003) identified three stages in their narrative of ethnicity. First, in an initial phase of assimilation, immigrants may suppress their ethnicity in the name of pragmatism and opportunism. Second, immigrants might reassert their ethnicity, partly perhaps to keep memories of the homeland alive. Thirdly, individuals may adopt a more hybrid or 'hyphenated' identity

combining both a national (host society) identity and an ethnic (homeland) identity. In our research, we are concerned with the hyphenated group, the Scottish-Americans.

There is now a wide recognition of this phenomenon of hyphenated identities, for example in America, Canada and Australasia, all essentially immigrant nations with a propensity for diaspora connections. Beginning with Glazer and Moynihan's (1963) landmark study, researchers such as Nagel (1994) and Hollinger (2000) have shown that there is a widespread and growing interest in ethnicity, with hyphenated Americans *choosing* to retain their ethnicity rather than being assimilated into an undifferentiated American society. They might still *feel* a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group and declare themselves to be a member, albeit that such an ethnicity is essentially symbolic (Gans 1979). It echoes Waters's (1990: 150) comment about a 'particular American need to be "from somewhere"'. Individuals concerned may join defined ethnic organisations, participate in events or socialise with others from the same background and this has contributed to a growing diaspora consciousness.

Much of the diaspora literature focuses on relationships with the homeland and this relationship is demonstrated in various ways. Diasporas may travel home, remit funds to relatives 'back home', they may support political movements and, indeed, may even retain a vote in their homeland (Esman 2009). In fact, as Shuval (2000) points out, diaspora relationships are essentially triangular ones, involving the diaspora group itself, the host society, and the homeland which may be real, virtual or imagined, in a multitude of individual perceptions. The relative strengths of these different relationships depend on a range of factors, including the attitude of the host society to the homeland, the degree to which the diaspora has been made welcome within the host society, and the attitude towards the diaspora by the homeland itself.

Within some homelands, attitudes to diasporas have often undergone significant change and Brinkerhoff (2009) highlights the ways in which homeland governments can provide an 'enabling' environment with which diasporas can engage. Thus, the then president of Ireland, Mary Robinson, in an address to the Houses of the Oireachtas in 1995 argued strongly that Ireland should cherish its diaspora. She referred to the huge numbers of Irish people living across the world, and suggested that Ireland needed to respond to desires for dialogue, interaction and practical links involving trade and business (Robinson 1995). A diaspora therefore can be seen as a significant potential resource. In practice, it has tended to be the perceived economic potential of the diaspora connection which has driven the development of many diaspora strategies

Scotland, like Ireland, has a huge diaspora, although estimates of its size vary tremendously. MacAskill and McLeish (2006) suggest a range from 40 to 80 million people, in comparison to a 'home' population of five and a quarter. Carr and Cavanagh (2009) simply refer to the diaspora as 'running into the tens of millions'. Either way, the numbers are huge, relative to the size of the population in Scotland itself. Although the Scottish diaspora may be found in all parts of the world, the largest groupings are generally acknowledged to be in North America and Australasia. Data from the 2010 United States Census, for example, showed that 5.5 million people in the US claimed Scottish ancestry, representing 1.7% of the

population. In Australia in 1978, around two million people (12.3% of the population) claimed Scottish ancestry (Prentis 2008).

The diaspora is extremely varied. It contains Scots who have grown up in Scotland and then emigrated – often referred to as the ‘lived’ diaspora, as they have actually lived in the country. But by far the largest group is the ‘ancestral’ diaspora, consisting of those whose connection with Scotland is a more distant one, resulting from the emigration of an ancestor. The strength of the connection of these ‘ancestral’ Scots also varies. Some value the Scottish identity while having only limited knowledge of what modern Scotland is actually like, while others visit Scotland on a regular basis (Basu 2007, Sim 2011). Despite a generational distance from Scotland, many ancestral Scots see themselves as having a stakeholder interest in the homeland:

The diaspora’s interest in Scotland is the product of generations of Scottish ancestors born on Scottish soil prior to each emigrant’s departure ... Our ancestral interest in Scotland runs in the blood. Ours is a lesser interest than that of those living in Scotland today, yet we cherish our own inheritable legacy and perpetuate our connections to Scotland and our clan lands through clan and family organisations. We also provide financial and volunteer resources for dozens of important arts, culture and clan lands preservation projects in Scotland (McIntosh 2013: 114)

Much of the literature on the Scottish diaspora (Hunter 1994, Devine 2011, Harper 2012, Buelmann *et al* 2013) is historical and explores the emigrant experience over the years. In this paper, however, we are concerned with a current diaspora in the context of Scottish Government diaspora policy, and the relationship between that diaspora and the homeland.

Development of Diaspora Strategies

Boyle and Kitchin (2011: 4) define a diaspora strategy as ‘an explicit policy initiative or series of policy initiatives enacted by a sending state, or its peoples, aimed at fortifying and developing relationships with expatriate communities, diasporic populations, and foreign constituencies who share a special affinity’. For many countries, ‘arguably, the main intended goal of diaspora strategies is economic development’ (Kaim 2013: 380) while Leblang (2010: 584) states, more bluntly, that ‘familiarity breeds investment’. He argues that diaspora networks act as an important conduit for portfolio and foreign investment between diasporas and homelands.

Some countries have developed diaspora strategies to try and counter a perceived ‘brain drain’ when talented individuals emigrate; such countries may have experienced difficulty accessing the capital and skills needed to succeed in the global economy (Larner 2007). Thus some strategies focus specifically on ‘overachievers’ (Kuznetsov 2013) while, in the case of New Zealand, the development of a strategy was part of that country’s neoliberal transformation and expatriates were seen as being useful in counteracting ‘the feared market failure of brain drain’ (Gamlen 2011: 5).

But strategies have become increasingly varied and many have moved on from a purely economic focus. Aikins and White (2011: 4-5), while recognising that diaspora

relationships can be used to drive exports and inward investment, point out that culture 'is the underlying glue that can bridge diaspora strategies' and suggest that many countries have not developed sufficiently in this area. They argue for the involvement of members of the diaspora itself in meetings, fora and policy making, suggesting that they can contribute significantly to 'defining their home country's value proposition and nation brand'. Focusing specifically on Ireland, Aikins, Sands and White (2009: 4) suggest that culture is the great 'Gateway to Ireland' and has a powerful role to play in connecting with the 'Global Irish'. They state that:

Whereas a small number of exceptional people in the diaspora can make a considerable difference, the potential now exists for the first time to connect with very large numbers of the diaspora. These approaches are not mutually exclusive'.

This more cultural focus has led to developments in diaspora tourism and Timothy (2011) and Basu (2007) refer to the large numbers of tourists revisiting homelands to undertake genealogical research or to visit sites of personal meaning. Some homelands operate 'homecoming' events; initially these may have been locally organised, such as Shetland's 'Hamefarins' in 1960 and 1985 (Callahan 1998) and the Orkney Homecoming of 1999 (Basu, 2004). More recently, they have been organised at a national level, such as the Welsh Homecoming of 2000, run by the Wales Tourist Board (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride, 2002), the Scottish Year of Homecoming in 2009 (Sim and Leith 2013) and again in 2014, the 2013 Gathering in Ireland, and the Birthright Israel and Israel Experience programmes for Jewish youth from across the globe (Timothy 2011).

The development of diaspora tourism is an example of the shift in the relationship between diasporas and homelands. It reflects the fact that, over the generations, many diasporas may still wish to visit the home of their ancestors, without having a desire to move back themselves. It also, of course, has significant economic value, reflected in the diaspora strategies of several European countries (Collyer 2013). In Ireland, for example, it has been a growth industry (Nash, 2002) and large scale Irish kin reunions are held each year where people of Irish descent congregate by the thousand (Timothy and Boyd 2003).

As a result of devolution in 1999 and, more specifically, the creation of a Scottish Government that could directly interact with the Scottish diaspora, Scotland has now been able to develop its own diaspora strategy, following in the footsteps of countries such as Ireland. We now examine this strategy in more detail.

Scotland's Diaspora Strategy

The desire for an ongoing connection between the Scottish diaspora and the homeland has been aided by the political changes within Scotland itself. The ability for direct communication, post-devolution in 1999, has allowed Scotland to begin to follow in the more successful footsteps of other homelands in reaching out to their diasporas. Such a strategy reflects a vision shared and supported by all the major political parties within Scotland, namely that of greater, improved visible links between Scotland and Scots overseas, especially involving the diaspora in the homeland itself.

Although international relations are, strictly speaking, reserved to Westminster, Scottish governments have actively sought to create a broader international profile. Engagement with the diaspora is a core element in this, albeit with a specific slant towards North America. The then First Minister Henry McLeish attended Tartan Day celebrations in New York, as did his successor Jack McConnell. The related policy focus was on the development of 'an international network of Scottish influencers that can assist Scottish economic success' throughout the world (Scottish Executive 2001: 2) and this led to the establishment of the GlobalScot network. Essentially, this exists to build an international network of individuals with business and entrepreneurial skills who can contribute to the Scottish economy and to develop synergies between the growing confidence of Scotland and the involvement and return of the diaspora (MacRae and Wight 2011). It has been seen as something of a model for leveraging highly skilled professionals (Danson and Mather 2014) and clearly links to the ideas of Kuznetsov (2013).

Despite the Government's focus on business, however, it became clear that this was not necessarily the chief interest of many members of the diaspora. In 2003-4, for example, the Scottish Parliament's European and External Relations Committee undertook an inquiry into the promotion of Scotland overseas and received a significant number of submissions either from or about the diaspora¹. What was striking in the responses was the large number of individuals who referred to issues of heritage or ancestry and, in particular, Tartan Day as being the event that most engaged the diaspora in America. Despite the attendance of successive First Ministers at this event, it was still believed that the Scottish Government could do more to support it. Subsequently, the Scottish Government (or Executive as it was then known) commissioned research into improving its engagement with the United States (Scottish Executive 2006; TNS System Three 2007).

Another strand in this wider International Strategy (Scottish Executive 2004) was the establishment of the Fresh Talent Initiative to try to halt, and reverse, the 'brain drain' and to ensure Scotland's population did not continue to decline (SP Official Report, 24 February 2004, Col 5941); the initiative ended in 2008 when the Westminster Government brought in new immigration rules based on a points system, although the present Scottish Government is seeking to revive it in some way.

From 2007 onwards, the SNP-led Scottish Government continued the work of its predecessors, seeking to build on the ties of the diaspora, envisaging members as a potentially significant economic resource for Scotland and Scottish products throughout the world. The Government commissioned several reports discussing, defining and considering the nature of its relationship with the diaspora. Rutherford (2009) identified eight areas of possible value that the diaspora represented to the Scottish Government, namely investment, transfers, trade, tourism, knowledge transfer, international influence, immigration and circular migration. He also sought to disaggregate the diaspora into different groups. These included the *lived* diaspora – individuals born in Scotland who have migrated from it, or who have lived and worked or lived and studied within it; the *ancestral* diaspora – those who can trace their heritage and familial roots to Scotland; and the *affinity* diaspora, which consists of those who feel a connection to Scotland, who may be active through cultural or extended family groups, or who may simply be attracted to the heritage or culture of the country (Rutherford 2009).

A strategic direction has now developed within the Scottish Government, and a policy, the *Diaspora Engagement Plan*, was issued in 2010. However, although steps have been taken towards the development of a targeted diaspora strategy within Scotland, the policy itself has been subject to only limited academic analysis (for example, see Leith 2014), and considerations of the contemporary Scottish diaspora also remain limited (Leith and Sim 2014).

The *Diaspora Engagement Plan* outlined for the first time the Scottish Government's 'ambitions for harnessing the power of Scotland's Diaspora' (Scottish Government 2010: 1-2) and was clearly influenced by Rutherford's approach. Interestingly, while the document spoke of a 'mutually beneficial' set of relationships, the diaspora was seen as a potential 'resource', which could 'contribute to the Government's core purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth for Scotland'. The three ways in which this could be achieved were identified as bringing the diaspora to Scotland to 'live, learn, visit, work and return'; promoting Scotland to the diaspora itself; and to 'manage' the reputation Scotland had with the diaspora, as 'an independent-minded and responsible nation'.

Perhaps because of the primary focus on economic growth, the Plan was targeted particularly at the 'lived' diaspora – those who had been born or who had lived in Scotland and then emigrated – and the 'reverse' diaspora, namely immigrants to Scotland. The Plan also highlighted those organisations or agencies which were identified by the Government as 'key delivery partners'. These included Visit Scotland, the Saltire Foundation, Scottish Enterprise and GlobalScotiⁱⁱ and they would present the opportunity to 'raise awareness of contemporary Scotland's strengths and culture'.

The Plan highlights the economic and communication aspects of engagement with the diaspora, along the lines suggested by Brinkerhoff (2009) and Leblang (2010). The focus on the lived diaspora is presumably because of the international exchange opportunities they represent (Carr and Cavanagh 2009) and perhaps because this part of the diaspora is often thought to be more aware of and positive towards Scotland (TNS 2007). The strategy is one that many other governments have followed and Brinkerhoff (2009) highlights the potential economic impact of the diaspora and points out that it can provide a significant source of skill transfers and wider civic experiences as well. As she indicates, establishing an environment in which the diaspora can contribute to the homeland, 'even in relatively more mature democracies' (Brinkerhoff 2009: 89), requires new forms of thinking, and structures and policies need to be developed specifically for such aims.

Significantly, and in contrast to other countries which are developing a more cultural and tourism focus in their diaspora strategies, Scotland's Plan paid only limited attention to the 'ancestral' diaspora, although this is undoubtedly its largest element. We would suggest that the contribution of the ancestral diaspora has been insufficiently recognised and indeed, the ancestral diaspora itself appears to believe this to be the case. To be fair, the Plan (2010: 2) did highlight this as an unfinished task and identified as a priority to 'work with Visit Scotland to develop a delivery plan to improve connections and service delivery around ancestral tourism opportunities and build connections with Affinity and Ancestral Diaspora groups'. Subsequently,

Visit Scotland have established an Ancestral Tourism Welcome Scheme, and of course, major initiatives like the Years of Homecoming have been targeted directly at ancestral Scots.

In the last four years, Scottish Government Ministers have continued to visit the diaspora, particularly in North America, and have usually ensured a presence at Tartan Day events. Alex Salmond, for example, visited the USA in 2012 in connection with Scotland's hosting of the Ryder Cup two years later, and in 2014, was a keynote speaker at an energy summit in New York.

Nevertheless, our research within Scottish diaspora organisations suggested that they still felt that some of their interests (particularly in ancestry and heritage) were insufficiently valued within Scotland and that there was little recognition of the contributions which diaspora heritage bodies could make to the homeland. In consequence, the present research sought to explore this apparent 'disconnect' between the view which Scotland and, more specifically, its public bodies have of the potential contribution of the diaspora – and the diaspora's own view of the homeland connection.

Methodology

Data for this research was collected in three ways. Some diaspora organisations which operate across North America were contacted by email and asked to complete and return an electronic questionnaire; in practice all the responses came from the USA. Some organisations were contacted and interviewed in Scotland. Other organisations operating on the east coast of the USA (particularly in the Washington DC and Pennsylvania areas) were contacted during a research visit during July 2014 and interviewed there. We focused on the eastern USA for our interviews as this is where the largest and longest-established diaspora organisations are located, although emailed responses came from the whole country.

Interviews were held with office bearers and took around 45 minutes. As well as direct questions on the Scottish Government's diaspora strategy, a range of related questions were asked concerning the relationship (both existing and desired) between the organisation and its members, and the Scottish homeland.

In all, data from 43 organisations and individuals was collected, consisting of completed questionnaires and interview transcripts, as well as additional material provided by the organisations to us. The organisations themselves included clan societies; St Andrew's societies; heritage groups; arts / cultural organisations with a focus on music, dance or language; business groups; and educational organisations. Thus our focus was inclusive of both economic, cultural and heritage entities. Slightly to our surprise, we received 20 responses from clan associations, rather more than anticipated. We believe this was because of the 2014 Year of Homecoming and the associated clan gathering in Stirling. As a result, clan associations appeared particularly engaged in thinking about their relationship with the homeland.

In discussing the views of the diaspora organisations below, we make use of quotations from the responses received, although these are anonymised to preserve confidentiality. In all cases, we are reporting responses from office bearers of the

organisations concerned. The individuals concerned were therefore speaking to us in an 'official' rather than a personal capacity.

Reactions of the Diaspora

As we note above, the interviews covered a range of issues. We report here on three themes which emerged most frequently, namely the awareness which individuals had of the Scottish Government's diaspora strategy, the importance of Years of Homecoming and a strongly-held view of what they believed a diaspora strategy should contain. We deal with these in turn.

Awareness of and reactions to diaspora strategy

Levels of knowledge of the Scottish Government's diaspora strategy varied, but there was an almost universal awareness of some of its manifestations, such as the Years of Homecoming. Some respondents believed that their impact had been greater in Canada, where the Scottish diaspora was thought to be stronger, while others felt their impact in the USA had been limited by competing 'noise' from other sources, for example Irish diaspora groups. Referring to the difficulties of organising a diaspora musical event:

We could book a Scottish group. We could book them tomorrow. We could book Dougie MacLean for Christ's sake. But they won't pay the price of admission. If we book an Irish group that isn't even known over here, they come out of the woodwork (St Andrew's Society 1).

In this instance, it was noted that the Irish Tourist Board had sponsored events within the state and suggested that a similar action by Scotland would help in raising the country's profile.

We have already noted that Scotland's diaspora strategy has had a focus aimed at the homeland economy. This had been the experience of those organisations which had had dealings directly with the Government; they felt that the diaspora was viewed primarily for the resources which it might provide for the homeland – and there was some resentment of this.

I would hope for stronger links but Scotland has to come up with a way to make us feel like we are more than a 'cash cow' to them (clan association 1).

We want to feel that our input is valued and that our opinions are respected. The only people that many of us have dealt with from Scotland are commercial marketers whose only interest is the spending habits of our membership (clan association 2).

There was also a strong feeling that, in focusing on the economic links with the diaspora and the 'movers and shakers' within Scottish-American business, the ancestral diaspora was being undervalued. In attempting to distinguish between the different elements of the diaspora, for example, Rutherford (2009:3) states that:

The ancestral diaspora is made up of individuals who can trace their heritage to Scotland. They could be second generation migrants, or of ancient historical descent, but they draw a strong link to Scotland as part of their family history. However, they have not lived in Scotland, and so may not have first-hand experience of the country and culture beyond being a visitor.

While this assertion may be true of some members of the ancestral diaspora, many office bearers of diaspora organisations found it insulting and dismissive, as significant numbers travel to Scotland on a regular basis and are well informed about the homeland.

Perhaps Americans romanticise about their original roots, but we recognise that today's Scots have moved on from the *Braveheart* world. The diaspora has moved on as well, becoming adventurers, entrepreneurs, businessmen, service providers, professionals, etc. ... We understand that if Scots visiting the USA only wanted to stay in an American Indian tepee, it would be rather tiresome. The appeal for [us] is to have opportunities, via the written word or person-to-person visits, to become acquainted on a modern, personal level as well (clan association 3).

Clan associations were also quick to point out that they have often made significant economic contributions to Scotland, for example through heritage projects:

I think personally the best type of connection would be co-operation on improvement projects focused in Scotland. For instance, we contributed to the Friends of Kilfinan's vault restoration project that was a 50/50 funding of private donations and government assistance. We care so deeply about our landmarks and I think the Scottish Government does too – so why not talk about other ways we can assist in Scotland? (clan association 4).

There was undoubtedly a widely-held view that the relationship between the diaspora and the homeland has not been sufficiently nurtured by the Scottish Government. Concerns about the relationship appeared to be strongest within organisations with a heritage focus, and within Scotland, this has been recognised by the clans themselves:

Some thriving transatlantic clan associations have no equivalent over here. As a result they have no points of reference in the home country ... Few [in Scotland] look with any great enthusiasm at their North American counterparts and too many feel superior. They feel they are the real Scots and they can find the tigerish enthusiasm of the diaspora hard to handle. As a result the opportunity to harness the immense good will that the descendants of the emigrants feel towards Scotland, their country of origin, is sometimes rebuffed and dissipated (Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs 2008)

This possibility of being rebuffed was raised in our interviews. One interviewee spoke of one of their members who had discovered a Scottish ancestor, of whom he was proud and argued that this pride should be nurtured and harnessed and not undervalued.

We have a member who's very proud that he's one two hundred and fifty sixth Scottish but dammit, he's got a kilt and that's his overwhelming connection. It's that proportion of his heritage that excites him the most. And that's what we like to encourage. That's the enthusiasm that could be harnessed through the Embassy, through the organisations, but don't stifle it, put it down, or denigrate it (St Andrew's society 2).

This search for ancestry reflects the work of Waters (1990) and her account of Americans' search for an ethnicity with which they wished to associate. A Scottish ancestry appears to be a relatively attractive one.

Years of Homecoming

For many members of the diaspora, the Years of Homecoming have been hugely significant and have provided a focus for return visits to Scotland, either to participate in a major event such as The Gathering in 2009 in Edinburgh's Holyrood Park, or to undertake family research (Sim and Leith 2013). They have also been a significant element in the Government's diaspora strategy. A number of respondents, however, expressed their disappointment at what they perceived as a scaling down of Homecoming and the absence of a large clan gathering in 2014.

For the Scottish Government, the 2009 Year of Homecoming was a success but The Gathering (2009) Ltd, the company responsible for the Edinburgh event, actually went bankrupt, with Scottish Government loans required to keep it solvent during its activities. While acknowledging this, diaspora organisations pointed to the overall success of 2009. Indeed, an economic evaluation of the Homecoming suggested that it brought 72,000 additional tourists to Scotland and the net additional expenditure which they generated was £53.7 million (Ekos, 2010). One interviewee believed that he had personally spent around \$1500 (over £900) in four days in Edinburgh (excluding his air fares), so believed that the financial difficulties of the Gathering had to be viewed in the wider context of visitor numbers and visitor expenditure.

There was widespread criticism of the absence of a significant clan gathering in 2014 and a belief that the Scottish authorities did not appreciate the value of such events in attracting back clan organisations. The position is best summarised by the Council of Scottish Clans and Associations (COSCA) (2014), which was extremely critical of both the downsizing of a clan gathering at Stirling's Bannockburn celebrations in June and the decision to hold the UK's Armed Forces Day in the city on the same weekend:

At worst, this was a deliberate political ploy to draw attention and attendance away from Bannockburn (which appears to have been viewed by some as something of a 'pro-independence rally'). At best, it was a secretive, poorly made and badly handled decision that complicated and distracted from both events, at an overall location with limited infrastructure (COSCA 2014:3-4).

This view was certainly one that was widely held within the diaspora. Hence:

Politics is preventing Scotland from allowing the Scottish diaspora to come home and we're saddened by that. Politicians are preventing us from celebrating our heritage (heritage body 1).

The 2009 Homecoming was incredibly successful and highly acclaimed in the US among the diaspora. I do not believe those in Scotland who did not participate can understand the groundswell of future possibilities it created within the diaspora. I was at a COSCA conference last year and a Scottish Government rep said 'It is not the role of the Scottish Government to hold Highland Games'. I concur, but he clearly did not understand the diaspora perspective (clan association 5).

In this case, the respondent was suggesting that the Scottish Government could adopt an enabling or promotional role to support a clan gathering as it did for the Ryder Cup and the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014; the Government did not need to be directly involved in delivery.

What does the diaspora want?

Given that a number of the diaspora organisations we interviewed were critical of Scottish Government diaspora policy and its perceived failure to acknowledge the contribution of the ancestral Scots, we spent time exploring in more detail what was sought from the relationship with the homeland.

A significant number of interviewees thought that the ancestral diaspora and the role played by heritage organisations, clan associations and the like was insufficiently acknowledged by the Scottish Government. They believed that they were sometimes dismissed as being 'lesser' Scots than the lived diaspora:

I would suggest that the Scottish Government stop thinking of those of Scottish descent who live outside of Scotland as 'Scots wannabes'. That is a pejorative expression, one of disparagement (clan association 6).

Indeed, a number of organisations spoke of the contributions which they believed they could make to the homeland. Some spoke of being 'ambassadors' for Scotland, for example a pipe band in Pennsylvania who believed that, in playing at various festivals, they were 'flying the flag' for Scotland. And Strathern and Stewart (2001) have suggested that the diaspora, in promoting tartan and the kilt as symbols of Scotland abroad have actually done much to strengthen them at home. Certainly the kilt has grown enormously in popularity within Scotland itself in recent years, becoming *de rigueur* for both formal and informal occasions. This represents a significant shift from the experiences of Scottish-Americans returning to Scotland for a clan gathering in 1977 and being met with some ridicule, not least for their devotion to the kilt and bagpipes (Steinberg 1981).

We have already referred to the financial contributions which many clan associations make towards the restoration of castles and other ancient monuments associated with their clan. Others spoke of more practical support which they could offer.

You've got a Scottish 'exile' group, an organisation with a Scottish focus one way or the other and we can offer some kind of support, information, connections to our members when they go to Scotland. I know, for instance that the Robert Burns World Federation are in the process of trying to organise a tour guide for different people coming over to Scotland so we can show Robert Burns sites (cultural organisation 1).

One clan organisation had attended the Bannockburn Live celebrations in Stirling in June 2014 and had been surprised by the number of homeland Scots who had approached their tent to ask about their clan ancestry and for advice on genealogical research. Of course, such an interest in genealogy is growing, as the popularity of television programmes like *Who Do You Think You Are?* has demonstrated. But the organisation suggested that they and others within the diaspora, who have experience in ancestral research, could play a part in supporting the growth of genealogical tourism, an area in which Scotland is acknowledged as being a leading player (Birtwistle 2005).

All interviewees stressed the enormous reservoir of goodwill that existed towards Scotland within diaspora communities, at both a personal level, within diaspora organisations and within American circles of influence. For example, when interviewing within Washington DC, several organisations referred to the Friends of Scotland Caucus which had been established within the US Congress by Congressmen Michael McIntyre of North Carolina and John Duncan of Tennessee, both of whom have Scottish ancestry. The Caucus provides important networking opportunities during events such as Tartan Day, when Scottish Government Ministers are in the US capital.

In terms of more specific links between the diaspora and Scotland, there was a desire for clearer information on potential contacts in the homeland. This might take the form of a Diaspora Office within the Scottish Government, with either a physical or virtual presence, which could act as a kind of gateway to information sources on Scotland. Some organisations wanted the Scottish Government to provide a package of information to expatriate societies, on available resources, contacts for tourist organisations, public bodies, ancestral research links and the like, because for many diaspora visitors, it may not always be clear where to start.

The St Andrew's Society would like to open the window to closer relationships with Scotland, whether it's with educational institutions or whatever. But how do you formalise that, I don't know ... So as Scotland becomes more interested in Scots beyond the seas, there's never actually been any way of contacting anyone. There wasn't really anything until recently with the Scottish Parliament. But if we were over in Edinburgh, we need someone to contact, to take us along to the Parliament, meet the politicians, cultural people, historians, it's about getting to know each other. So, like, when we were at the Gathering in 2009, we had days in Edinburgh but nobody there to contact (St Andrew's society 3).

Some of the magazines hint at potential resources but there doesn't seem to be coherent information on who to contact, what criteria must be met, etc (clan association 7).

Another body suggested the establishment of an award to be given to individuals who enhanced diaspora relationships:

Scotland might consider creating an award that the diaspora could strive for. Most of our activities are driven by volunteers and being given an award or recognition would go a long way to strengthening enthusiasm (clan association 8).

In summary, there was quite a wide knowledge of the Scottish Government's diaspora policy within the diaspora itself and a widely held belief that there existed a strong reservoir of goodwill towards the homeland. However, there were also concerns that the diaspora was viewed primarily in economic terms and that, even here, the economic value of the ancestral connection and ancestral tourism was being undervalued. Interviewees pointed to a perceived downgrading of the Year of Homecoming between 2009 and 2014 and, in particular, the international clan gathering. These concerns clearly have implications for the ongoing relationship between the Scottish homeland and the diaspora.

Discussion and Conclusions

Our research uncovered two main difficulties with the Scottish Government's diaspora strategy, the first being its essentially economic thrust. Brinkerhoff (2009) highlights how this is often the case within the developing world, but it is interesting to see a core world nation such as Scotland engaging in the practice. While this may be understandable, given the relative newness of diaspora engagement strategies in Scotland, there is clearly a danger, expressed by some of our interviewees, that the diaspora is viewed merely as a 'cash cow' for the homeland.

Possibly because the strategy has only been developed in the last ten years, the Scottish Government has tended to play a very direct role in its management and it appears to be overly bureaucratic, in marked contrast to the Irish approach.

The Irish approach to its diaspora is relatively successful, particularly with respect to business, because it is light and flexible in structure, gives ownership and freedom to its members, and is developmental without being muscular ... Scotland, in contrast, has pursued a strategy that is more muscular, state-centric and centrally managed. If it is true to say that the Scottish diaspora is less well articulated and organised, then there might be good reason for this. The Scottish Government might usefully reflect on the position and role of the state in managing diaspora initiatives, conduct research into already existing diaspora networks, and consider complementing existing state run schemes by seeding, serving as midwife, and performing a husbandry role for wider social and economic networks amongst the Scottish diaspora (Ancien, Boyle and Kitchin 2009: 2).

While we would agree that the Irish diaspora is extensive and well organised, it is also the case that there are significant numbers of well organised Scottish diaspora entities who are keen to be more involved in relations with the homeland, so it may be that a looser, more flexible Scottish diaspora strategy might allow this to happen.

Even diaspora organisations involved in business appeared to feel that the Scottish Government's approach was too centralised and that fundraising needed to be driven from North America.

Culturally, we're different. Take the whole area of philanthropy which I'm deeply involved in, both here and there. One of the roles that we're constantly asked to play is to help Scottish organisations fund raise in the United States. And first of all, you have to deal with the misconception in Scotland, that the streets [here] are paved with gold, that money is ready for the asking. You just have to say you're a Scot and the doors are open. It's not true ... I had a huge, huge problem with the Scotland Fund, when it was started up, because I said 'basically, you've got the programme arse backwards'. If you're going to raise money for Scotland, it has to be driven out of America, by Americans. It can't be driven out of Scotland, by Scots (business organisation 1).

Another respondent believed that fundraising simply had to be organised within the diaspora itself, if only for logistical reasons:

I don't think it's driven from the Scottish end. I think it's driven from the American end ... If you're trying to do something in a particular location, then trying to drive it from 5,000 miles away, it doesn't make any sense ... I do believe from a purely functional point of view, if this was a business, then why if you're trying to do field sales, would you run it out of headquarters? So a move operationally over here would not only expand it in New York, but then would give the leg up to expand it in other places (cultural organisation 2).

Possibly as a result of its over-centralisation, some organisations felt that the Scottish Government was possibly doing too much itself and not involving other bodies. They believed that they were not always receiving adequate support and this view represents a second problem with the diaspora strategy. For example, an educational institution spoke of its efforts to connect with its alumni in North America:

I have worked here for fourteen years now and have seen various people who talk a good game to start with but then you never see them again. Whether they move, whether it is staff turnover, or they move roles ... As far as we are concerned, our job is to build long-term, meaningful, mutually beneficial relationships with our alumni and our contacts and you would think they would have a similar long-term plan ... They need to make that commitment and [be] involved and I don't think they have done that (educational institution 1).

The Scottish Government's diaspora strategy would appear therefore to be rather problematic in two ways, firstly by its overly economic focus and secondly its overly top-down and centralist approach.

From the perspective of the diaspora, they clearly feel that they have a role to play and want an involvement with the homeland. We would suggest that, in focusing on the business element within the diaspora, exemplified by the Global Scot grouping, the Scottish Government is in danger of overlooking the significant contribution that

can be made by ancestral Scots, which can also contribute significantly to the country's economy, through a more overt cultural engagement.

Following 2014's Bannockburn event, the Government's Tourism Minister, Fergus Ewing MSP, announced the extension of the Scottish Clan Event Fund to support the planning and delivery of local clan events over the following three years. At the time of writing, the Government has revealed that, in 2014/15, the Fund supported clan events attended by 7,700 individuals, 4,000 of whom were international visitors from 18 diaspora communities. A total of £70,000 has been made available for events in 2016/17ⁱⁱⁱ.

Ewing also announced the establishment of the Scottish Clan and Family Forum, which held its first meeting in July 2014 and which brings together a range of stakeholders from home and overseas to develop Scottish ancestral tourism and heritage issues^{iv}. There are signs that the Government is increasingly recognising the importance of the ancestral diaspora to the homeland.

In matters relating to the diaspora, the Scottish Government has often looked to the example of Ireland (Ancien, Boyle and Kitchin 2009). The Irish Government published a new diaspora policy in 2015 (Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2015) and included within the policy are the appointment of a Minister with specific responsibility for Diaspora affairs, a Global Irish hub which provides information for the diaspora, a Global Irish newsletter, and a fund to support media coverage of diaspora issues. While emphasising the importance of business connections, the policy also emphasises the ancestral connection, going so far as to make available a Certificate of Irish Heritage for anyone of Irish heritage not born on the island of Ireland. In keeping with the looser and less bureaucratic approach of the Irish Government, they state that they see their role as one of 'support and facilitation'. This approach offers a significant contrast with that of the Scottish Government and is more closely aligned to the views expressed to us by members of the Scottish diaspora.

Research suggests that other countries are moving in a similar direction to Ireland and Ho, Boyle and Yeoh (2015: 207) suggest that there is increasing criticism of the 'diaspora for development' agenda. They argue for an approach which 'prioritises and undergirds diaspora-homeland relationships built on social relations of reciprocity, trust and mutuality'. Perhaps the establishment of the Scottish Clan and Family Forum suggests that the Scottish Government is also looking afresh at its diaspora connections and that the goodwill which exists there can be successfully harnessed.

This increasing focus on Scotland's diaspora and the development of diaspora strategies takes place at a time of significant constitutional debate and a rekindling of interest in matters of Scottish identity. Such matters are beyond the scope of this paper but we believe that they will undoubtedly affect the future trajectory of diaspora-homeland relations.

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ⁱ The various responses referred to here have been published on the Scottish Government's website. Available at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/committees/europe/reports-05/eur05-01-01.htm> (accessed April 2011).

ⁱⁱ Visit Scotland is the national tourist agency; the Saltire Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation based in Strathclyde University Business School and which promotes entrepreneurship and business leadership; Scottish Enterprise is the Scottish Government's business development agency; and GlobalScot is a worldwide network of business contacts, developed by Scottish Enterprise

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Scottish-Clan-Fund-opens-180f.aspx>

^{iv} See <http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Scottish-heritage-in-the-spotlight-e5b.aspx> and <http://www.cosca.net/07/coscas-most-excellent-trip/>